

# Challenges Faced in Implementation of Gilgit Baltistan Education Strategy 2015-2030: Teachers Perspective

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## Abstract:

No doubt, the success of national goals largely depends on an effective education system; as a country's economic, social, and political growth is closely related with its educational arrangements. Unfortunately, our nation is confronting many problems in the field of education; particularly in Gilgit-Baltistan region. To meet the educational challenges in this region, a viable educational strategy was developed in 2014 by the department of education in Gilgit Baltistan. But, this strategy is still facing many challenges in its implementation.

As teachers play a critical role in implementation of any educational policy or strategy, this research – using a mixed methods approach – finds out teachers' perspective, regarding the failure of 2015-2030 strategy in its implementation.

According to this paper, one of the basic reasons for the failure of 2015-2030 strategy in its implementation from teachers' perspective lies under the underestimation of regional needs of a unique geographical area.

Similarly, this study finds out the poor partnerships between the government and the education department as another root cause of the unsatisfactory implementation of this strategy.

**Key words:** Education Strategy, Modern Education, Evaluation, Teachers' Training, Teachers' Perspective.

## 1. Research Problem

Gilgit Baltistan has a long historical, cultural and educational history. There was a time when religious scholars (*Ulama*) helped people to learn (read & write) and there were no notable public or private arrangements to educate people; particularly at higher education levels. That is why the number of educated people was extremely limited. In 1893, Modern education began in this region when the first three primary schools were established in Gilgit, Astor, and Gupis. It was a turning point in 1946 for the education of GB when Aga Khan's Diamond Jubilee Schools were established and gradually expanded to the colleges. Major developments include the Aga Khan University's Professional Development Center (1999) for teacher training.

In the late 20th century, Teachers' professional development programs were started with the help of NGOs and Agha Khan University. In 2002 at the time during General Pervez Musharraf's presidency, Karakorum International University was established in 2003. Karakorum International University started offering PHD programs in April 2015 for a few departments. In 2017, the second university, University of Baltistan, was established<sup>1</sup>.

It was a transformative shift in 2014 when the Gilgit Baltistan education strategy was introduced. With the help of the European Union and the Australian Government Education Department of GB developed this strategy. This document was developed under the framework of the National Educational Policy 2009 into different phases over a period of six years. The strategy was aimed at improvement of quality education, providing the vision and goals for GB education by 2030<sup>2</sup>.

Unfortunately, Gilgit Baltistan education strategy 2015-2030 faced serious challenges and it couldn't be implemented in its true spirit till today. So, the core problem this paper deals with,

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is to find out the nature and details of challenges faced in implementation of this strategy.

## **2. Research Objectives**

The core objective of this research paper is to investigate the teachers' perceptions about:

- 1) The successness, fruitfulness and challenges of 2015-2030 Gilgat Baltistan Education Strategy in quality enhancement of secondary education.
- 2) The successness, fruitfulness and challenges of 2015-2030 Gilgat Baltistan Education Strategy in gender equity at the secondary education level.
- 3) The successness, fruitfulness and challenges of 2015-2030 Gilgat Baltistan Education Strategy in strengthening governance of the school education department.
- 4) To find out teachers' perceptions regarding the successness, fruitfulness and challenges of 2015-2030 Gilgat Baltistan Education Strategy for further development in school education in GB.

## **3. Research Methodology**

Research Methodology adopted in this paper comprises research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and analytical procedures employed in the study to ensure methodological rigor and transparency. Its details are given below:

### **3.1 Research design**

This study utilized a **mixed-methods approach**. This design was selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining the numerical trends of quantitative data with the in-depth, contextual insights of qualitative data. The concurrent collection and integration of both data types allowed for triangulation, strengthening the validity and depth of the findings.

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### 3.2 Population of the study and sampling

The population of the study consisted of all 285 secondary school teachers from District Gilgit, Tehsil Danyore, including both male and female teachers working in 19 secondary schools. Total population of the study.

|                                 |     |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Total number of schools         | 19  |
| Total number of male teachers   | 200 |
| Total number of female teachers | 85  |
| Total number of teachers        | 285 |

A simple random sampling technique was employed to collect quantitative data. As it was not feasible for the researcher to reach all 285 teachers, simple random sampling was used to select participants for data collection. Both male and female teachers participated in the study. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed among the selected teachers, achieving a 100% response rate. Among them, 100 male teachers and 50 female teachers were included in the sample.

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|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Total number of secondary schools | 19  |
| Total numbers of male teachers    | 200 |
| Total number of female teachers   | 85  |
| Total number of teachers          | 285 |
| Sample                            | 150 |

A purposive sampling technique was employed for collecting qualitative data. Participants were selected based on their diverse positions and roles within different schools. A total of twenty interviews were conducted with members of the target population. Both male and female teachers participated in these interviews. Using the purposive sampling method, twelve male teachers and eight female teachers were selected for the qualitative phase of the study.<sup>3</sup>

|                  |     |
|------------------|-----|
| Total population | 285 |
| Male participant | 12  |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Female participant | 8 |
|--------------------|---|

### 3.3 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Data were collected using two primary instruments:

- **Questionnaire:** A structured questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data. The questionnaire likely included closed-ended questions (e.g., Liker scales, multiple-choice) to measure teachers' perceptions on strategy implementation, gender equity, governance, and quality enhancement.
- **Semi-structured interviews:** An interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. This format allowed for consistent questioning while providing flexibility to probe deeper into participants' responses and gather rich, detailed narratives. 150 questionnaires were distributed with a 90% return rate, and 12 Semi-structured interviews were conducted until data saturation was achieved.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis process was tailored to the nature of the data:

- Quantitative Data Analysis: The data from the questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (Mean, Frequency, and Percentage) were calculated to summarize the data. Additionally, Chi-Square tests were employed to explore relationships between variables.
- Qualitative Data Analysis: The interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis. This involved a systematic process of reading the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, and defining and naming them to identify patterns of meaning across the dataset.

The results of the qualitative and quantitative data were integrated using a convergent parallel design within a mixed-methods approach to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

### 3.5 Validity of Instrument

According to Gay (2012), validity is the degree to which a test

measures what it is supposed to measure, thus permitting appropriate interpretation of test scores. The validity of the instrument was ensured by research expertise. The instruments were completely assessed before use to ensure a satisfactory result.

### **3.6 Ethical Considerations**

Research that involves human subjects or participants raises unique and complex ethical, legal, and social issues. The researcher was vigilant in this regard. Anonymity and information consent were ethical concerns of the research during the conduct of this study.

## **4. Literature Review**

Until the late 20th century, this region remained isolated from the rest of the world. The high peripheral mountains made travel difficult, and in this situation, only religious teachers had access to education, which they then passed on to the people. The number of educated people was extremely limited, so few that they could be counted on one's fingers. However, with advancements in technology, the difficulties and challenges faced by the people of this region gradually decreased. With the support of the Chinese government, the Government of Pakistan initiated the construction of the Karakoram Highway. After 28 years of effort, the highway was finally completed in 1986. This connected the people of the region more easily with both Pakistan and China, enabling them to improve their standard of living and access to education<sup>4</sup>.

Because of its regional and international significance, this area remained disputed between countries. The Government of Pakistan implemented irrational policies to control the region, which severely affected the education system. A shortage of schools and transport facilities in remote areas is a common issue in this region. Sectarianism, which reached its peak and was influenced by state policies, further complicated the situation. Appointments and transfers were often made based on

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political and religious influence rather than merit, allowing unqualified individuals to occupy higher positions. The social status of teachers is lower compared to other professions. Improving the quality of teaching and learning requires proper teacher training, as without enhancing teachers' abilities, quality education cannot be achieved. Teachers are the key to national development. According to the GB Education Strategy, teachers should be academically qualified, adequately trained, and committed to their profession<sup>5</sup>.

## **5. The Concept and Rationale of 2015-2030 Strategy**

The concept of strategy has many varied meanings, yet it remains closely related to planning and planning models. Strategy is a word that was used in the field of education in the 1990s. In the context of education, strategy is a structured approach of decisions and activities aimed at fulfilling institutional goals according to Davies. Despite the conceptual ambiguity surrounding the term 'strategy', its significance and practical value cannot be denied.

So, the rationale of developing the Gilgit Baltistan 2015-2030 education strategy was to improve the quality of education in this region. The heart of this strategy is a long-term vision for education in the region by 2030. In this strategy, there was a focus on 3 principles:

- 1) Accessibility and fairness,
- 2) Standards and practicality,
- 3) Oversight and administration.

According to the constitution of Pakistan, Article 25 A, it is the responsibility of the state to provide free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 5 to 16. The Constitution of Pakistan decreases gender discrimination. Collaboration and partnership are important between the public and private sectors for improving quality education that builds the strength of each partner.

So the focus upon gender accessibility for all, practicality and

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educational administration are three basic principles that show the strength of 2015-2030 educational strategy.

### **5.1 Accessibility and fairness**

Equity leads to equality. Gender equity means equal opportunities for men and women in Society regardless of gender, religion, race, etc. According to Article 25-A of the Constitution of Pakistan, education is a fundamental right of every child, irrespective of gender. While the Government of Pakistan has taken steps to promote gender equality in education, there remains a pressing need to extend these efforts towards ensuring gender equity in the employment sector as well. Despite government efforts, gender discrimination remains prevalent in many parts of the country. In several regions, girls are still denied the right to attend school, as societal perceptions often confine them to the role of housewives.

At the same time, some parents do not like male teachers to teach their daughters, so it is the responsibility of the government to appoint female teachers. In remote areas, there are only primary schools available. Students leave school after primary education. They can't afford to go to big cities to pursue higher education. It is the responsibility of the government to provide distance learning opportunities for those students who cannot attend school.<sup>6</sup>

Deep-rooted cultural beliefs also perpetuate the notion that women are inferior to men, both mentally and physically, and their lives are frequently controlled by male authority figures. In many communities, the birth of a son is celebrated as a source of joy and pride, whereas the birth of a daughter is often regarded as a burden, associated with grief and despair<sup>7</sup> In such a situation, it is the responsibility of everyone to take action against this injustice and provide opportunities for women to work for the development of society and the country<sup>8</sup>.

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In 2000, the United Nations established eight goals known as the Millennium Development Goals. Among these, the third goal focused on promoting gender equality and empowering women. Similarly, in 2015, the United Nations introduced seventeen Sustainable Development Goals in which gender equality was placed as Goal 5, reflecting the continued global recognition of its importance. The Founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, also emphasized the significance of gender equality. He strongly encouraged women's active participation in all spheres of life, stressing that no nation can achieve its objectives without the involvement of women<sup>9</sup>.

Gender difference affects the education system; millions of girls drop out the school every year globally. In GB, this strategy plays a vital role in improving gender equality in education. After 2014 female primary school enrolment rate was continuously increasing. According to Benz, the primary school enrolment ratio of girls in Gilgit Baltistan is 38 percent<sup>10</sup>.

### • **Importance of Girls' Education**

The education of women means the education of the whole generation because educated women coach children perfectly and also contribute to the income of the family if necessary. Gender discrimination is a barrier to national development, and it mostly exists in remote and poor educational backgrounds. Educated parents generally encourage their daughters to pursue education, whereas uneducated parents are often reluctant to send their daughters to school. In Pakistan, as well as in many other Muslim countries, women continue to face the challenge of gender discrimination. This inequality adversely affects national economies, as the role of women is vital for both cultural and economic development. In rural and remote areas of Pakistan, the lack of adequate facilities for girls' education further discourages parents from sending their daughters to school.

The culture and social values of Muslims are unique from those of others; however, the majority of Muslims and non-Muslims

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do not understand the cultural and social values of Islam. Islam is the only religion that gives women equal opportunity of women for get knowledge. In Islam, there is only one label of prestige for males and females, which is piousness. If people are pious among males and females, they are valuable and highly esteemed in the eyes of Allah and Islam. Pakistan is an Islamic country where sovereignty over the whole universe belongs to Allah Almighty. The social and cultural values of Pakistan are Islamic, but we can't follow Islamic values. Islam gives equal opportunity for males and females, but in Pakistan, the gender difference and the majority of women are deprived of their rights, even the right of inheritance<sup>11</sup>.

It is the responsibility of the government to provide facilities that meet the needs of society and the demands of the time in order to improve the quality of education and reduce gender discrimination in this sector. Although Muslim culture is often perceived as male-dominated, this does not imply that women are deprived of the right to make choices in their lives. In fact, Islam encourages every individual, regardless of gender, to pursue the right path for the betterment of both personal and social life. The limited representation of women in the National Assembly of Pakistan is evidence of existing gender inequality. Out of a total of 342 seats, only 60 are occupied by female members. Islam emphasizes that every Muslim male and female, without any gender difference, should get an education. The journey of learning will begin from the womb to death. Educated and uneducated people are not the same in the eyes of Allah<sup>12</sup>.

## **5.2 Standards and practicality**

Standards and practicality mean the mother tongue should be used for the first two or three classes, after this language should be adopted according to the needs and demands of the era. The medium of instruction plays an important role in education. Language barrier is a common issue for the students of developing and poor countries. Teachers should be updated,

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and the generation gap between teachers and students must be decreased so that teachers can understand students' needs perfectly. Student-centered approach should be used and ICTs in class. National education policies and national curriculum do not meet the requirements of GB, which is why all these things should be revised according to the needs of GB<sup>13</sup>.

Cooperation between Governance and Management is important for improving the quality of education. In Gilgit Baltistan, without collaboration between Governance and management, the output of education is impossible. Promotion of teachers should be based on performance, not on seniority. The relationship between the provincial government and the education department should be based on professionalism. Lack of teachers in remote areas is a common issue in this region. It is the ethical responsibility of the concerned authority to appoint Heads and teachers on merit (Muhammad, 2003). GB is already under direct federal government control, the GB assembly. Federal textbooks were imposed on GB, which do not represent Gilgit Baltistan's cultural history and liberty in any form. Teachers of Gilgit Baltistan face many problems, because without teachers' satisfaction education system can't be improved. According to the Gilgit Baltistan Education Strategy 2015 to 2030, teachers face financial problems. It is important to improve the financial status of teachers. The most important thing that needs to be mentioned here is provincial government should provide scholarships for poor students. Providing scholarships to poor students is the best way to improve the primary and middle school enrolment rate<sup>14</sup>.

### **5.3 Strengthen Governance of School Education**

Quality education requires more than resources; it depends on strong leadership, effective management, and good governance to ensure successful policy implementation and better outcomes. Effective leadership and good governance in schools foster collaboration, community cooperation, and autonomy. Governance shapes education policy, resource use, and

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development, while educational management coordinates efforts to achieve goals. Good governance enhances equity, reduces corruption, and improves education sector performance. Good governance promotes transparency and accountability; the appointment of teachers happens on a merit basis. Promotion of teachers linked with the performance of teachers, all these things are possible only when governance is strengthened. Unfortunately, in GB, governance is corrupt due to political instability and irrational federal policies. The education strategy of GB emphasizes strengthening governance of school education in the region. Strengthening governance is one of the important domains that was briefly described in this strategy. Through strengthened governance, we can improve gender equality in education. Good governance distributes resources equally and appoints teachers on a merit-based basis without any gender difference. Corruption should be controlled only through good governance; unfortunately, governance of GB is corrupt<sup>15</sup>.

Effective leadership and governance are necessary to promote a more cohesive and collaborative culture and ethos in schools and to establish good cooperation with the wider community. Even in a more centralized school system, schools must have sufficient flexibility and autonomy. Governance is the process by which the government makes and implements policy decisions that influence the finance and delivery of education to citizens of a nation. It also implies the way and manner of how power is exercised through a country's economic, political, social, and civil society to use the country's resources for socio-economic development, which has an impact on each household, individual, or nation<sup>16</sup>.

Corrupt governance in the education system leads to mismanagement of resources, diversion of funds, and poor infrastructure. It widens inequality by favoring a few while depriving many of quality education. Corruption weakens

accountability, lowers teaching standards, and results in unqualified staff appointments. Ultimately, it reduces trust in the system, hampers student performance, and undermines national development. Corrupt governance causes mismanagement of resources, leading to the collapse of the education system and society at large. It promotes gender discrimination and nepotism, depriving deserving individuals of their rights. As a result, parents lose trust in school administrations and hesitate to send their children to school. Ultimately, poor governance contributes to a declining literacy rate. Bad governance negatively affects the education system of the country. The education strategy of GB clearly mentions the role of the education department in the region for improving the quality of education. This strategy aims to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially quality education and gender equality<sup>17</sup>.

## **6. Challenges Faced by 2015-2030 Strategy**

There are several challenges regarding 2015-2030 Gilgit Baltistan strategy. To ensure qualitative education in this region, it is necessary to overcome these challenges. This research addresses some important challenges, found out through teachers' perceptions. A few challenges are as under:

### **6.1. Untrained Teachers**

Without competent teachers, the dream of education is meaningless. In developed countries, most talented people become teachers. Unfortunately, in our country, teaching is considered an unsuccessful and neglected profession. UNESCO and other NGOs define the teacher's role. It calls for improving their recruitment, training, working conditions, pay, and career development opportunities. According to them, teachers should be trained properly, and the generation gap between teachers and students should be less. In our country, teachers are unenergetic and unmotivated. They are not satisfied with their

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profession. All these issues will be solved when the Government understands the importance of teachers.<sup>18</sup>

## **6.2. Curriculum**

There are two types of curricula: teacher training curriculum and school education curriculum. In Pakistan, both curricula are criticized. It is a common concept in our society that the curriculum is designed just for rote learning. Students get a degree, but they do not know anything. Graduates are not ready to face real or practical life. The common perception of people about school curriculum is that it does not prepare students for the market, and students are not able to face the challenges of the modern and technological era. Students cram things just for papers or to get good marks. There is no concept of conceptual papers. Sometimes, teachers are not well aware of the curriculum and its goals. It is the responsibility of the government to give proper training for teachers<sup>19</sup>.

## **6.3. Basic Facilities and GDP**

Basic facilities include all the things which help get an education, for instance, a school building, electricity, and drinking water etc. Without a proper budget, facilities are not possible. In Pakistan, education is the most neglected sector when it comes to budget distribution. According to UNESCO, the budget of developing countries must be 5 %. Unfortunately, we have just a 2.5 budget according to 2021. Lack of budget means lack of facilities. Technology is rapidly developing; therefore, for demands and needs in education are increasing. If we do not provide needs of education according to the demands of the era, then we will be left behind<sup>20</sup>.

## **6.4. Politics & Governance**

Political instability is a major issue that disrupts the overall functioning of a country. Politics directly and indirectly affects all sectors, including health, education, and the economy. In the education sector, inconsistency in policies poses a serious

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challenge, as every new government introduces fresh reforms rather than focusing on the implementation of existing ones. Due to instability, weak governance, corruption, nepotism, and unfair hiring practices are on the rise. Moreover, the absence of an effective monitoring system, especially in remote areas, allows teachers to neglect their responsibilities and attend according to their own convenience. While political stability is essential, it is not the sole solution. Broader reforms, including social change, are equally important to address these challenges<sup>21</sup>.

## 7. Analytical Discussion

This study set out to investigate teachers' perceptions regarding the implementation of the Gilgit Baltistan Education Strategy 2015-2030. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data reveals a significant gap between the strategy's ambitious vision and its on-the-ground reality. The overarching theme that emerges is one of **systemic failure in implementation**, driven by political, administrative, and socio-cultural factors. This discussion analyzes the key findings against the study's objectives and the existing literature, which are as under:

### a. The Chasm Between Policy and Practice

The most striking finding is the collective perception that the strategy has **effectively not been implemented**. This aligns with the literature on educational reform in Pakistan, which often cites political instability and inconsistent policies as major barriers (Farooq 2018). Respondents highlighted that every new government prefers to launch new initiatives rather than see through existing ones. This creates a cycle of "policy graveyards" where well-intentioned documents, like the GB Education Strategy, are drafted with international support but lack the sustained political will and budgetary allocation for execution. The strategy's principles of "oversight and administration" appear to be its greatest failure in practice.

## **7.2 Bad Governance**

The data strongly indicates that The Core Implementation Crisis layes under the weak and corrupt governance. Teachers reported that appointments and transfers are based on political and religious influence rather than merit. This erodes the very foundation of a quality education system. When incompetent individuals are appointed to key positions, it leads to a cascade of failures: mismanagement of resources, lack of accountability, and the absence of a functional monitoring system. The analysis suggests that without first "strengthening governance," as per the study's third objective, the other goals of the strategy, quality enhancement and gender equity, are unattainable.

## **7.3 Persistent Barriers**

Regarding the second objective on gender equity, there is acknowledgment that gender discrimination has decreased over previous decades, which can be partially attributed to the awareness and framework provided by the strategy. The reported increase in female primary school enrolment (as noted by Benz, 2017) is a positive sign. However, the data reveal that significant barriers remain, rooted in cultural norms and a lack of enabling facilities. The demand for female teachers, separate schools, and safe transportation reflects a need for the strategy to be adapted to the local cultural context, rather than just being a top-down directive. This connects directly to the strategy's principle of "accessibility and fairness," which remains only partially fulfilled.

## **7.4 A Strategy without Its Key Agents**

The findings underscore that teachers feel marginalized, demotivated, and ill-equipped. The lack of confidence reported by 80% of teachers is a critical issue that the current strategy implementation has failed to address. The literature emphasizes that teachers are the "carotid artery" of the education system, and without their satisfaction and professional development, quality education is impossible (GB Education Department

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2021). The analysis suggests that the strategy's focus on "standards and practicality" has not translated into meaningful actions for teachers. There is a clear disconnect between the policy's demand for modern, student-centered teaching and the reality of untrained, financially strained, and traditionally inclined teachers.

## **7.5 Resource Scarcity and Inflexible Curriculum**

The analysis confirms that the chronic lack of resources from basic school infrastructure to a sufficient education budget severely hampers quality enhancement (Objective 1).

Furthermore, the imposition of a federal curriculum that ignores GB's local culture and history, as reported by respondents, creates disconnection between students' lives and their education. This finding aligns with Amir (2020), who argued that national policies often do not meet GB's specific requirements. The strategy's failure to address this curricular incongruity is a significant oversight.

In summary, the analytical discussion reveals that the non-implementation of the GB Education Strategy is not a single failure but a result of interlinked failures in governance, teacher empowerment, cultural contextualization, and political commitment. The teachers' perceptions paint a picture of a system that knows its destination (the 2030 vision) but lacks a functional vehicle and a reliable map to get there.

## **8. Conclusions**

### **8.1 Conclusions of Quantitative Data**

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The provision of free books and financial support for students is important for improving the quality of education because every year, several students leave school because of financial problems.
  2. Resources are important for improving quality education, and without resources, quality education is not possible. The majority of respondents agreed that without a resource
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education system will not improve. Provide facilities for students and teachers because without facilities, policies and curriculum are not implemented.

3. Shortage of educational institutions is a big problem in GB; however, the majority of respondents agreed that the provision of enough educational institutions is important, especially in remote areas.

4. Dropout rate of girls from schools is increasing with the passage of time because in GB, there are no facilities for girls in schools. Shortage of female schools and lack of transport facilities are causes for the increasing dropout rate of female students. The majority of respondents agreed to provide facilities for female students according to the demands and needs of GB culture for improving female enrolment in schools. Without girls' education development of the economy is not possible.

5. Gender discrimination is a symbol of ignorance; however, through awareness, ignorance will be overcome. The majority of respondents agreed that awareness is important for encountering gender discrimination. Gender discrimination in education was too much before a couple of decades ago, but after the implementation of the education strategy of GB 2015 to 2030, gender discrimination has decreased. However, we have to work more on this issue because gender equity is important for national development.

6. Monitoring is important for improving our output and performance. Unfortunately, in GB, there was no concept of monitoring. The majority of respondents agreed that regularized monitoring should be in the education department.

7. Governance is unnatural and does things on bias; it destroys the foundations of the nation. Appointment and transfer of teachers are totally dependent on political and religious influence. Merit was ignored in the Education department. The majority of respondents agreed that the education department should be neutral and ensure merit during appointment.

8. The main purpose of education is to improve values among

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students. People complete graduation, but they don't know about ethics and values; however, it is the job of the teacher to develop values among students.

9. The majority of respondents agreed that co-curricular activities are important for improving quality education; however, the education department should arrange sports and other competition programs between schools.

## **8.2 Conclusions of Qualitative Data**

Based on findings, the following conclusion was drawn:

1. Education strategy is a pathway that guides the new generation about the ideology and national goals of the country; however, curriculum and education strategy are decided future of the nation. In Pakistan and especially GB, we are facing an implementation problem. Unstable policies of government are a big reason because every new government wants to make new policies rather than focusing on implementing existing policies.

2. Increase gender equity because it is important for national development. The majority of respondents agreed that gender inequity is a symbol of ignorance and that gender equity is key to success.

3. Gender equity was improved by creating awareness through social media and seminars because the majority of respondents agreed that without creating awareness, gender equity is not possible.

4. The education department plays an important role in school education; however, the education department should be neutral and appoint teachers on a merit-based basis. Give proper training to teachers to improve the quality of education.

5. The education budget should be increased according to the demands of the era because without a budget, teaching learning process is not possible.

6. Confidence is important for achieving academic and other success in life; however, in GB, 80% teachers face a lack of confidence problem. If teachers are not confident how it is possible they will improve the confidence level of students. The

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majority of teachers agreed that they face problems in life because of lack of confidence. To improve the quality of education, need to improve the confidence level of students so they can deal with their life matters.

### **8.3 Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data**

Triangulation means combining both quantitative and qualitative results for a comprehensive picture of the phenomena under study. Almost half population of our country is below the list of poverty however majority of respondents agreed that the provision of free books, free uniforms, and transport facilities is important for improving children's enrolment in schools. Financial support to students is important for improving the literacy rate in GB. Usage of resources is important and ensures a monitoring system. The head of school should be competent because the performance of the school depends on the head teacher.

The majority of respondents agreed that the education strategy may be updated according to the demands of the era. With the passage of time, demands are changing; however, flexibility is important in policies and curriculum. The role of a teacher is important nowadays as compared to the past. Teachers should be the most competent, talented people in society should be teacher unfortunately, during the appointment of teacher's merit was ignored. The government and the education department select incompetent people for teaching. Appointment of teachers is under political and religious influence. Appoint a competent DG and director for the education department. The first purpose of education is to improve values among students. Unfortunately, this purpose is ignored in schools. Students complete their education, but they do not know about values. lack of confidence is a common problem in GB; however, the majority of teachers agreed that they face problems in their lives because of a lack of confidence. The majority of teachers say that improving the confidence of students is a priority in

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their teaching. Only a teacher cannot overcome the weakness of students without the proper support of the government and the education department. Gender discrimination is a challenge for national development; however, the government, the education department, and teachers play a role perfectly to overcome this challenge and create awareness through social media about the importance of girls' education.

It is important to improve gender equity and provide facilities for students in schools. For improving gender equity, create awareness through social media and arrange seminars. For providing facilities needed for the effective usage of resources. Shortage of educational institutions is a common problem in GB; however, according to respondents, the education budget should be increased and used properly for education. Through monitoring budget will be used properly for education. Quality education may increase through appointing competent teachers on a merit basis and giving them proper training. Bias and unnatural attitude of the education department are the key to all these issues; however, the majority of respondents agreed that the education department should be neutral.

## **9. Recommendations**

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following actionable recommendations are proposed for policymakers, the Education Department of Gilgit Baltistan, and other stakeholders:

1. It is recommended that the Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Education Strategy be urgently reviewed and updated to address the contemporary challenges and gaps identified in this study. Furthermore, greater administrative and curricular autonomy should be granted to the GB Education Department, enabling it to adapt national education policies and curricula in alignment with the region's unique cultural, linguistic, and geographical contexts.
  2. It is recommended that the governance structure of the education system be comprehensively reformed to ensure
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- transparency, accountability, and meritocracy. A transparent, merit-based framework should be established for the appointment, transfer, and promotion of teachers and education officials, eliminating political and religious interference
3. It is recommended to implement a comprehensive and continuous teacher training program emphasizing modern pedagogical skills, student-centered approaches, and the integration of ICT in classrooms.
  4. Prioritize the establishment of girls' schools and hostels in remote areas, ensure the recruitment of female teachers, and implement community awareness campaigns to emphasize the importance of girls' education.
  5. Increase the education budget to meet UNESCO's 5% of GDP benchmark, ensure efficient allocation for basic school facilities and teaching materials, and expand financial support for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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