



Policy Brief

From Literacy and Education to Human Capital Development

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty reduction and ensuring participatory development has always been challenging for policy makers particularly in communities like that of Balochistan, where there are multiple challenges across every facet of socio-economic infrastructure.

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon which needs to be handled through holistic and integrated approaches. Some of the poverty imperatives are tangible while others are intangible.

In the intangible landscape of poverty factors harnessing the people's potential is one of the most important enablers for poverty reduction. This policy brief takes a view of poverty reduction and socio-economic development from the perspective of human capital development, based on the findings of the research titled as "Participatory Action Research on Dynamics of Household Poverty and Inclusive Development in Balochistan with a Focus on Women's Empowerment Under European Union (EU) Funded, BRACE Programme".

CONTEXT AND FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

Human resource development/skill training, decreased dependency ratio and availability of water for agriculture produce are the main pull factors, as per findings of the research.

Human resource development leads to decrease in dependency ratio and increase in household income. It is also evident from the research that literacy, education and skill development are the most important enablers for developing value added human resource. Value added human resource simultaneously contributes to the economic output generation for household and economy.

In this context, human resource development becomes significant to the poverty reduction at household level thus leading to an overall decrease in poverty within the economy.

Once the value-added human resource starts transforming its potential into productivity gains, it directly impacts the household income. This increase in household income provides two direct benefits to the household. One, the overall increase in household income while the other is decrease in dependency ratio within the household. Based on these two contributions of a value-added human resource sustainable poverty reduction deems possible.

Women are generally a deprived segment of society in Balochistan in terms of their empowerment at household and community levels. Most of the women are illiterate and do not contribute directly to household income. Women can be significant segment for economic value addition through skill development and literacy.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



1. Ensure access of children to the schools

Government needs to ensure access of children to the schools. All the schools should be functional and equipped with necessary resources for teaching and learning. Ensuring access to functional schools will be the first step towards development of a value-added human resource, as education lies at the center of all the activities planned and implemented for harnessing human potential.



2. Youth skill development programmes

Similarly, youth skill development programmes are the need of the hour. Market based skill training programmes should be introduced by the government for the youth (males and females) of Balochistan. Since girl's participation is not encouraged owing to patriarchal culture in Balochistan therefore support can be taken from community institutions.



3. Women literacy and skill development centers

Women literacy and skill development centers should be introduced as a policy measure for stimulating the role of women in their own development as human beings as well as value added human resource. These literacy centers should introduce basic literacy, numeracy and life skills Culturally appropriate practices should be adopted to include the women in such literacy and skill development programmes so that a considerable proportion of women can participate in the overall socio-economic development process.



4. Community led skill development centers

Community led skill development centers should be established and made accessible by involving the relevant government departments. Integration of the women to their local value chain should be ensured while introducing a mechanism of market linkages by involving responsible community representatives in this process.

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