

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN: IN THE PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES AND PLANS

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ABSTRACT

Education is the most neglected social/service sector in most of the third world countries including Pakistan. Among education sector, the share of special needs education is too pathetic to describe. The educational and rehabilitation services provided to disabled children were not worth mentioning in Pakistan at the time of its creation. After independence, Pakistan had to face some serious challenges, due to which no proper emphasis was given to special education and even education. Among other reasons, lack of resources, financial as well as human, was the major one in this context. The need and importance of special education was felt in different educational policies of Pakistan in different times. At the first time, in its report, the Commission on National Education (1959) highlighted the importance of special education. After that the Education Policy (1972) and the National Policy and Implementation Programme (1979) gave some importance to this sector. The same was also reflected in different medium-term (five-year) plans. This was felt more seriously when the Directorate General of Special Education, Islamabad formulated a draft National Policy for Special Education in 1986 and revised it in 1988 to bring it in line with the emerging needs of special/disabled population. After that a special education policy was launched in 1999. Recently, Government of Pakistan has launched a new National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2002, which is dynamically being implemented. The present study highlights the focus given to special education in the educational as well as special education policies of Pakistan and its reflection in different five-year plans.

Key Words: - Special Education, Educational Policies, Educational Plans.