

Status of Cultural Heritage Education in Primary Schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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ABSTRACT

Every nation desires to preserve distinctive features of the achievements, traditions and culture of its predecessors. Hence, the people at the helm of affairs leave no stone un-turned to preserve the features of their glorious past. Incorporation of heritage studies at primary schools is a step towards the same purpose. This land of Pakistan is very rich in archaeological sites because it remained a hub of different civilizations. These sites need good management and preservation. This study on the status of cultural heritage education at primary level aims to create awareness in the students about their history and to teach them how important it is to learn about their cultural assets. The research employed mixed method by following two pronged strategy. In the first phase, curricula of selected primary schools were thoroughly studied to find out the contents of cultural heritage. In the second phase, a questionnaire comprising questions regarding cultural heritage awareness was distributed among the students of primary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The study found some significant contents of culture heritage in the syllabi of the English and Science whereas, useful and significant contents related to culture heritage was found in the syllabus of Social Studies. Results, however, indicated significant student's awareness with regard to the contents on culture heritage and the school role in inculcating the same. This research study is fruitful enough to play a part in providing material for the curriculum with regard to the national heritage and its significance. Furthermore, the study proves to be crucial in line with making pedagogical decisions and drafting preservation laws and policies for the endurance of the historic structures.

Keywords: Cultural heritage; Heritage education; Student's awareness; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

INTRODUCTION

Pakistan has been gifted with a hefty number of beautiful historic structures and ancient sites. The land of Pakistan ablaze with historical structures is a major link with the past. It is the responsibility and is incumbent upon all Pakistanis as custodians to protect the remaining buildings and structures as well as stabilize those on the verge of being washed away. It is necessary to make them safe enough so that the future generations can

also view them as a part of our nation's heritage. In this era where globalization is at peak with its persuasiveness, the Pakistan's ancient lineage provides us with a distinct and strong identity. As an independent country, Pakistan is a precious treasure-house filled with ancient heritage, extending over centuries. The rapid demographic and economic changes within Pakistan over a period of many centuries are now becoming a consistent threat to the endurance of our national heritage. Preservation of monuments is frequently ensured through

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legislation and national services in which we are lacking the most.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the existence of contents related to cultural heritage in the syllabi of government primary schools in KP.
- To find out similarities and differences regarding the subject of cultural heritage in primary school's curricula.
- To search out the outcome of teaching of the cultural heritage related contents

Research Questions

- Whether the subject of Cultural Heritage incorporated in the syllabi of primary level schools in KP?
- Whether uniformity exists in the syllabi of primary level schools with regard to the subject of cultural heritage?
- Whether the existing curriculum creates awareness among the students about the cultural heritage?

Review of Relevant Literature

Zimolmak & Stansfield (1983) describe culture as the people's living style associated with a certain locality as well as time. Change is essentially associated with the human nature, due to which changes in human culture are observed with the passage of time. Another perspective by Tumertekin & Ozguç (2015) describes culture of a specific society as an aggregate of different aspects like architecture and art, utensils, clothing, foods, and other civilizational habits, belief system, tools, values and customs.

Cultural heritage classifies and discovers the precise cultural qualities of a certain community. It is the study of preserving the cultural characteristics, and transmitting them to the existing generation for onward transmission to the next generation. This pattern keeps in touch the present generation with the bygone human race, paving a way for establishment of strong unity, belongingness, and common origin. Eventually, the pattern fortifies the co-existence attitudes combined with mutual respect for assortment that are the chief ingredients of consuming peace needed by the mankind.

Guvenc (1994), views that the survival of people against the nature in certain manner has remained a regular practice. This method of living and survival against nature created and consistently established the culture of that specific community. Another perspective shows that all the non-material and material aspects of value of a certain community present that community's culture (Alim, 2009). In the same way, social academics like Uygur & Baykan (2007) viewed culture as an outcome of the people's accumulation process which with the passage of time progressively improves innovative familiarity to the specific community's culture. Moreover, culture is perceived as multi-disciplinary in nature where societal experts from history, psychology and sociology have variation as per the respective disciplines in defining culture (Gulcan, 2010).

According to Zialcita, (2007), cultural heritage is the combination of all the belief systems and values and practices combined with certain distinctive art objects as well as the

artefacts of a specific community. Cultural Heritage has been summarized as complete set of values, beliefs, objects and practices that characterize a place giving it identification. The study is vital for the linkage it provides between various people providing a closer heritage of a certain culture. It also develops the feeling of unity and we feelings amongst the community people.

Given this, Doganer (2003) places importance on the safeguarding of these symbolic statures such as places of worship (churches, masjids and temples), historical buildings, ruins, sites and monuments that provide identity to a specific culture. This is only possible when people, are provided with knowledge regarding the importance of this cultural heritage and the role it plays in making who they are today. The best and most effective way to achieve this is through education.

Cultural Heritage Education in KP Primary Schools

Zia and Tahir (2014) conducted a study with objective of the role of the monitoring of primary education with respect to the curricula and education delivery system in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa, Pakistan. A very low level of satisfaction was showed in results by stakeholders in terms of monitoring syllabus and corresponding academic activities. There were different reasons told for such low level of monitoring. Few of them are; less or no interest of education officers, lack of interest on the part of parents and Parents-Teachers Committee (PTC), and no proper visits by concerned officials (Zia & Tahir, 2014).

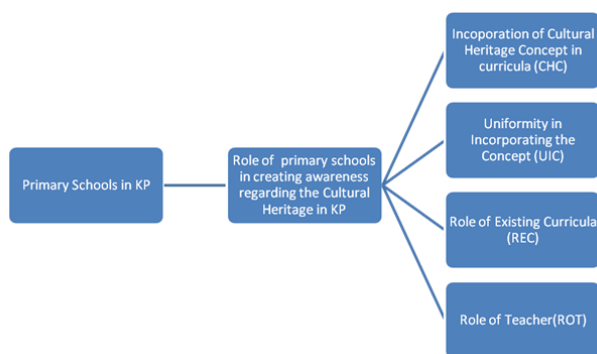
Lack of understanding of the importance of cultural heritage on the part of the public, government and its machinery has created problems in protecting the heritage sites in Pakistan. Community participation in this process and their ownership of the heritage sites can prove to be vital in protecting it. Primary education is a very important element for preparing future builders of the nation. The objective of primary education in Pakistan is to inculcate love for learning and polish their skills to use them in future for all of their lives. Primary education highlights the personality standards of children and prepares them to play their due role for socio-economic development of the country. Hence mass awareness programs should be introduced in educational institutions, schools, colleges and universities to highlight our cultural heritage importance and teach them how to preserve and protect this heritage.

The heritage education involves the process of teaching the cultural identity and society's history to the learners. Huhta & Hankis (1988) defined heritage education with the inclusion of various important aspects in the systematic teaching of heritage such as traditions, history, monuments, ancient cities, architecture, museums, newspapers, cultural landscapes, documents, memoirs, court records, photographs, and handicrafts. The European Committee of Ministers Council (1998) described the cultural heritage teaching with a wide assortment of active teaching approaches. Copeland (2004) perspective shows that heritage education empowers the students to respect cultural traditions and sites, as it gives the students a sound understanding of why and how to protect the cultural sites. According to the Europa Nostra (2004), the aim of heritage education is to facilitate the learners to research,

understand as well as study their relative cultural heritage and history. It is appropriate to comment that the formal education’s possible role is to promote heritage education(Donmez & Yeşilbursa, 2014).

Conceptual Framework

This exploratory research follows the conceptual framework mentioned in Fig. 1 below. The independent variable is primary student’s awareness regarding the cultural heritage of Pakistan. These are measured with four distinct variables including: incorporation of cultural heritage concept in school’s curricula, uniformity in concept introduction, role of the existing curricula and role of the teachers in creating awareness of the cultural heritage through teaching the same courses.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Survey of schools was conducted and curricula were examined to assess the contents on the cultural heritage and the level of understanding of the students regarding the same courses. Population of the study comprised of the primary schools’ students of KP where the courses of heritage are offered in their respective syllabi.

In the first phase, forty schools from different areas of KP were selected and their curricula of “English”, “Science” and “Social Studies” were explored to find out the courses of cultural heritage. In the second phase, the students were surveyed through a questionnaire consisted of close ended questions with options in Yes and No to assess their knowledge with regard to the cultural heritage.

METHOD

In order to find out answers to the research questions, a structural equation modeling (SEM) was run using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18.0. The statistical tests such as Pearson Correlation, Stepwise Regression and Correlation Coefficient were applied for analyzing the data obtained from the sample students.

In the first phase, the subjects identified with historical cultural heritage in the syllabi of “Social Studies”, “English” and “Science” of the 5th class were investigated in detail. The syllabi of four publishers were inspected to search out the contents relating to cultural heritage. These publishers included: Association for Academic Quality (AFAQ), Text Book Board Peshawar, GABA Educational Books and Oxford. In the

second phase a questionnaire was distributed among the students of the respective primary schools for assessment of the teacher’s role in creating awareness of the cultural heritage among the students. Likewise, the questionnaire was aimed to solicit students responses with regard to their know how of the cultural heritage sites.

For this research paper, 140 schools with 20 each from seven geographical divisions of KP were selected as a sample. In total 700 students with five each from every school were taken into account for the survey.

Total 500 students took part in the final survey after eliminating in-complete and wrongly filled questionnaires.

Results

Analysis of the books containing content on culture heritage

In the course of English by AFAQ Publishers there are topics related to culture heritage such as in unit 7 “The Architect”, in unit 9 “Ibn-e-Sina” and in unit 11 “In search of Allah”. In the course of Science by the Text Book Board Peshawar (PK), there is one topic relating to cultural heritage that is “environmental pollution” in the 4th chapter. This topic displays pictures of before and after pollution to show the students adverse effects of Pollution. Likewise, in the 4th unit of “Science” by GABA Educational Books, “continuity of /life” tells the students about how life was formed and how it continues throwing a light on the ancestors giving the students a concept of cultural heritage? Similarly, the social study book “Know your World” by Oxford provide students the concepts and detail on the topics such as: (1) “Our Past and Our Present” with sub-topics of “The Stone Age” and “Metal Age”, (2) “Early Civilizations in Pakistan”, with sub-topics of “Archeological Sites in Pakistan” that includes: (i) Saan Valley (ii) Mehargarh (iii) Mohenjo Daro and (iv) Harappa, (3) “The Coming of Islam to Sindh” with sub-topic about the old city of Daibal (Sindh) and (4) “Allama Iqbal” with the a picture and a paragraph on the Iqbal Manzil (House) (see table 1).

Table 1: Publishers and the topics related to cultural heritage in the subjects “English”, “Science” and “Social Studies”.

Publishers	English	Science	Social Studies
Association for Academic Quality (AFAQ)	The Architect, Ibn-e-Sina and In search of Allah	Nil	Allama Iqbal Mausoleum
Text Book Board Peshawar	Nil	Environmental pollution	1.Badshahi Mosque Lahore, 2. Islamia College Peshawar
GABA Educational Books	Nil	Continuity of / life	Nil

Oxford Publishers	Book Nil	Nil	1.Our Past and Our Future, 2. Early Civilizations in Pakistan, 3. The Coming of Islam to Sindh, 4. Allama Iqbal
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Survey of the Students

After knowing demographics such as gender and permanent residence, respondents were asked whether they have ever visited historical sites such Zuro Dheri, Akra (A) Mound, Akra (B) Mound, House of Dilip Kumar, Sheri Khan Tarakai, Ghundai Ranigat, Rahman Dheri, Northern Kafir Kot and Badalpur Buddhist stupa and monastery. Likewise, the students were required to show their interest in the subjects of “Social Studies”, “Science” and “English” and also in traditional food, traditional handicrafts and traditional heritage. (Table 1) below indicates the same data.

Characteristics	Respondents (Grade 5 Students)		
		(n)	(%)
Gender	Male	355	71.1
	Female	145	28.9
	Mean	24.45	
Family Background	Rural	198	39.51
	Urban	303	60.58
Subjects	Science	123	45.90
	Social Studies	115	42.90
	English	9	3.40
Filled questionnaires		500	71.80
	Traditional food	11	4.10
	Traditional Handicrafts	107	39.90
	Traditional Heritage	22	8.20
Heritage Sites Visited	ZuroDheri	77	28.70
	Akra(A) Mound	52	19.40
	Akra (B) Mound	41	15.30
	House of Dilip Kumar	87	32.50

Sheri Tarakai	Khan 11	4.10
Ghundai	44	24.44
Ranigat	89	49.44
RahmanDheri	56	31.11
Northern KafirKot	31	17.22
Badalpur Buddhist stupa and monastery	10	5.56

Mean scores and standard deviations of scale items

Table 3 reflects the mean scores and the standard deviations for each item of the scale. Respondents in the sample were requested to check with yes or no for the statements for their assessment. The first item (Does your teacher give importance to teaching cultural knowledge?) has a mean of (1.3652). The second item (Do you feel that your school teaches the same value of cultural heritage as compare to your friends in another school?) has a mean of (1.0674). The third item (Do you find that your school encourages the learning of your own culture?) has a mean of (0.2978). The fourth item (Does the current syllabus has any topic related to cultural heritage?) has a mean of (0.6348). The fifth item (Does your teacher tell you about your culture and its importance) has a mean of (1.0674). The sixth item (Do you find that you know more about your culture than your other friends?) has a mean of (1.8483). The seventh item (Do you think that the knowledge about cultural heritage is important?) has a mean of (1.0344). The eighth item (Do you gain more knowledge through curriculum books about cultural heritage?) has a mean of (1.3112). The ninth item (Have you gained knowledge about the cultural heritage with the help of textbooks) has a mean of (0.6008). The 10th item (Is it easy to gain knowledge about culture in school?) has a mean of (1.7893). The 11th item (Does teacher show you the videos of cultural sites in KP?) has a mean of (1.0084). The 12th item (Have you visited any cultural site in KP?) has a mean of (1.7191) (see table 2 below for details of the data).

Items	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
1. Do your teacher give importance to teaching cultural knowledge?	1.00	2.00	1.3652	0.48284
2. Do you feel that your school teaches the same value of cultural	1.00	2.00	1.0674	0.89313

as compare to your friends in another school?				
3. Do you find that your school encourages the learning of your own culture?	1.00	2.00	0.2978	0.89313
4.Does the current syllabus has any topic related to cultural heritage?	1.00	2.00	0.6348	1.28279
5.Does your teacher tell you about your culture and its importance	1.00	2.00	1.0674	0.89313
6.Do you find that you know more about your culture than you're other friends?	1.00	2.00	1.8483	1.14710
7.Do you think that the knowledge about cultural heritage is important?	1.00	2.00	1.0344	0.89313
8.Do you gain more knowledge through curriculum books about cultural heritage?	1.00	2.00	1.3112	0.48284
9.You have gained knowledge about the cultural heritage with the	1.00	2.00	0.6008	1.28279

help of textbooks				
10.Is it easy to gain knowledge about culture from schools	1.00	2.00	1.7893	1.14710
11.Does your teacher show you the videos of cultural sites in KP?	1.00	2.00	1.0084	0.89313
12.Have you visited any cultural site in KP?	1.00	2.00	1.7191	0.45071

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this paper was investigation of the content related to cultural heritage in the curricula of primary school in KP. The study also aimed to determine the extent of the students' understanding of the national heritage and to determine the role of schools in increasing awareness of the national heritage. Text books of the four publishers for 5th class were analyzed for contents on cultural heritage. Specifically, the curricula of Social Studies, Science and English were explored for searching out the same content. The assessment of the books was followed by a survey of the students of the 5th class with regard to their awareness level relating to culture heritage and role of the schools in inculcating its importance. The study found some significant contents of culture heritage in the syllabi of the "English" and "Science" and "Social Studies".

Most of the publishers included the chapters that employed significance of international culture. Analysis of the contents in the syllabi of "Science" and "English" showed a medium stature associated with the information available on the cultural heritage. The analysis indicated around 20% coverage of cultural heritage of the curricula out of which 15% is covering global heritage while only 5% revolves around the cultural heritage of KP.

With respect to the uniformity in introducing culture heritage education, the study found significant differences in the syllabi of "Science" and "English" by four publishing companies.

Results of the survey indicated significant student's awareness with regard to the contents on cultural heritage and the school's role in inculcating the same.

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