



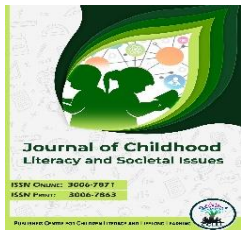
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The Role of Policy Interventions in Improving Childhood Literacy in District Mansehra, Pakistan

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Correspondence: fazalrahmansocio@gmail.com		DOI https://doi.org/10.71085/joclsi.03.02.44
Affiliations ¹Graduate Scholar, Department of Sociology, Hazara University Mansehra Pakistan. Email: sociologistfakhar1995@gmail.com ²Graduate Scholar, Department of Sociology, Hazara University Mansehra Pakistan Email: fazalrahmansocio@gmail.com  https://orcid.org/0009-0001-4597-3936 ³ Graduate Scholar, Department of Psychology, Hazara University Mansehra Pakistan Email: tngofficial007@gmail.com	Abstract Literacy in childhood forms the basis of educational successes and the long-term socio-economic development of a society. The purpose of this research is to investigate ways in which policy intervention contributes towards student performance as measured by the level of literacy among selected primary school students. Using a qualitative case study methodology, data was gathered via structured interviews with 15 participating teachers of primary schools and five local education officers and focus group discussions (FGDs) with parents. Thematic analysis of the data highlight five key themes. Results indicate strengths that reveal benefits of phonics-based curriculum reforms are well evidenced but only slow by poor implementation by teachers resulting from poor training and materials. Socio-economic differences came out clearly as major barriers, whereby parents' support and printed materials impacted literacy levels. Teacher training was pointed out as critical, in reference to the fact that teachers needed to be trained continually. There was evidence that technological interventions had been effective. In sum, the study finds that integrated policy models that focus on socio-economic disparities, school funding, professional's development of teachers, and parents' participation are relevant in enhancing literacy levels in the developing world. Keywords: Childhood Literacy, Educational Policy, Teacher Training, Socio-Economic Barriers, Community Engagement	
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Introduction

Literacy at the early stages of childhood is a basic foundation of education accomplishment and future wellbeing. Over the last few decades, movements have been initiated to understand the factors that inhibit the development of phonemic awareness in young learners especially in low income families. The significance of policies as a key driver of learning has been gradually shifting from the formal education systems to include evaluations of the policies in the early years of the child (Marsh et al., 2019). At social level, governments and international organizations have had different approaches to increase literacy levels for students; strategies and techniques include curriculum improvement, training of teachers, and intervention designed at making sure that every child has the minimum level of education by the time he/she completes the primary school (Gove & Cvelich, 2011).

Majority of the student at early age left their schooling bot voluntarily and involuntarily. Child education play an important role in the development of community, society and even a nation. According to several studies from the UN and UNESCO, South Asia is the most populated area globally, with the greatest number of out-of-school children (OOSC) (Ambreen & Mohyuddin, 2022). Globally, near 162 million kids are of elementary school age, with 42 million

of them being out of school in South Asia (UIS-UNESIF 2015). A document produced collaboratively by the authorities of Pakistan and UNESCO, utilizing data collected by the National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) and historical trends, indicated that 3.8 million children of elementary education age (5-9 years) resided exclusively in Punjab Province (Government of Punjab & UNESCO, 2010) (Mughal, 2018). UNICEF (2015) categorizes out-of-school children based on educational exposure into two categories: those who enrolled in school but subsequently dropped out, and those who have never attended school at any point in their lives. It was necessary to conduct a thorough study to on child education and policy intervention is essential to improve the children literacy rate. According to Ambreen and Mohyuddin, (2022) education is a basic right of Pakistani people as stipulated in Articles 25-A and 37-B. The state is obligated to provide elementary compulsory education to children. However, the present educational standing in the nation, as previously said, presents a contrasting scenario. The allocation of this right to individuals is a significant difficulty for both Federal and Provincial Governments. Still now highly significant gap in the improvement of child literacy has been observed which is mainly attributable to socio-economic factors, lack of access to quality education and insufficient

implementation of the existing policies in the global scale as noted by Adam (2005). Therefore, it is important to assess the impact of the present interventions and to find out which of the policy components contribute to enhancing early literacy (Biesta, 2015). Through this research the effects of three policies on childhood literacy and how these policies seek to redress systemic inequities in the education systems in different regions will be discussed. As a result of exploring the impact of certain educational policies, this study aims to help to extend the current knowledge of the educational policy reform and its effect for early childhood education.

Statement of the Problem

Individual progress alongside societal advancement depends on child literacy because this basic literacy competence then enables cognitive, social and economic development. Within the district of Mansehra child literacy rates persist at alarming levels which defy national averages even after various government education-related policies have been implemented. Various obstacles affect the region because it experiences insufficient educational buildings and teachers are scarce alongside economic differences and traditional beliefs that do not value school learning particularly for female students. The current policies targeting these challenges prove ineffective because they

lack proper resources and implementation along with insufficient community participation. The academic failure of children stemming from nutritional shortfalls creates lasting consequences that block their future development and maintains cycles of poverty across the district. This study assesses the role of policy intervention in improving child literacy in district Mansehra.

Literature Review

To support this work, we carry out a review of the literature. For the literature review, the researcher looks at a variety of sources, including websites, research papers, books, and existing reports. This section contains policy interventions in early childhood education, curriculum reforms and teaching practices, socio-economic disparities and policy responses, global perspectives on literacy policies, and the role of technology in literacy policy.

Policy Interventions in Early Childhood Education

To support the access to effective educational resources for children, increasing numbers of countries have concern to early childhood education, and early literacy has been given special policy attention in education reform throughout the world. Over and over, it is established that early literacy skills matter for learning achievements in later grades (Burchinal et al., 2010). Student attainment enhanced by

policies for early learning, available and effective teaching, and resources are vital in relation to literacy development in the early years (Melhuish, 2016). For example, early childhood education provided for all children of pre-kindergarten age in the USA through programs like Head Start has been found to have early literacy impacts on young children especially those from poor background (Hughes, 2015). Such programs assist children in developing literacy skills that allow them to achieve at basic education without prior learning even through early education enhances achievement gap.

Moreover, childhood literacy is considered to depend on teacher quality and professional development in educational policy interventions. Great quality of teacher training programs teaches early literacy concepts and are capable to prepare an educator with the methods and skills to teach kids early literacy i.e. phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, reading comprehension (Dowdall et al., 2020). The Early Reading First program in the United States, for example, has demonstrated measurable improvement in children's scores on pre-reading and writing measures when targeted teacher training initiatives aimed at implementing evidence based instructional strategies are implemented. Such initiatives highlight the importance of teachers creating a rich literacy environment especially in under resourced

communities where teacher expertise can make a huge difference in outcome. Policymakers may prioritize teacher development to benefit what is, by and large, the poor quality of early childhood education and insuring that all children receive needed support during their most important developmental period. (Miller, 2016).

Teacher quality is also important, but access to literacy rich environments and materials helps develop childhood literacy (Alsubaie, 2024). Research has demonstrated that children programmed with exposure to books, being told stories and work at phonemic awareness (interactive reading activities), as they grow early are likely to have strong language and literacy skills (Beach, 2024). Policies that provide funding for classroom libraries, community reading programs, and family engagement initiatives help create equitable access to these resources, particularly for children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, literacy campaigns like the UK's 'Bookstart' program target children under five and sends out free books to function as a way to force reading, building those reading habits into families and communities (Holzer, 2024). These efforts not only improve literacy outcomes but also foster a culture of lifelong learning by emphasizing the value of literacy in both academic and everyday contexts. Educational policy interventions can address the literacy gap and bridge the gap by

addressing resource disparities and help children set their course for long term academic success. (Melhuish, 2016).

Curriculum Reforms and Teaching Practices

Solutions to low literacy levels have in recent past appears to have focused on set or curriculum reforms. In most countries, the adoption of high-quality basic literacy curricula has been found to change students' literacy performance for the better (Piper et al., 2016). For instance; as articulated by the National Reading Panel, 2000 systemized phonics instruction and influence of early reading capability. Likewise, the identified literature substantiates that the implementation of play-based contexts in early childhood education and care enhances literacy by enhancing students' language and thinking skills (Mostafa, 2023). The usefulness of such changes is sometimes questionable due to the implementation of those reforms, as well as the lack of proper teacher induction coupled with professional development initiatives (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Literacy programs tailored to the linguistic and cultural context of learners are more likely to yield positive results. Moreover, culturally responsive teaching practices encourage inclusivity and help bridge the gap between home and school environments, fostering better learning outcomes (Cheung & Slavin, 2013). A

second promising approach to improving literacy skills is technology driven curriculum reforms. It is well established that digital platforms and tools like e-books and literacy apps and interactive whiteboards can improve reading fluency and comprehension, particularly when used in combination with teacher led instruction. These tools not only provide individualized learning experiences but also allow teachers to track progress and tailor support for struggling readers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Socio-Economic Disparities and Policy Responses

In the enhancement of childhood literacy, one of the most difficult puzzles is to address the socio – economic factors that underpin literacy. As such, children from families with low income arrive at school with lower literacy levels as a result of factors including; poor schooling materials, poor diet, and lack of parental support (Duncan et al., 2019). Science has suggested that means of these policy initiatives to reduce these disparities, including provision of free school lunches, parents' literacy activities and remedial language education students, can enhance literacy rates for low performers (Fitzpatrick, 2013). It also important policy measure that has the analytic potential to improve literacy, this includes the attempt to increase resources allocated to schooling in low income areas, among other measures (Chetty et al, 2011).

The socioeconomic advancement of a nation relies on a robust educational framework. The contemporary technological period heightens the need for survival in this worldwide environment. Nevertheless, Pakistan's government has implemented various harsh steps but is unable to achieve its objectives and continues to contend with low literacy rates. Education is essential for the development of a country since it enhances human capital creation. The ruling coalition of Pakistan implemented many national efforts to enhance the literacy rate by providing basic education to all children (Akram, 2020). Governance is a significant difficulty that severely impacts Pakistan's education system. The word governance is the process by which the government employs its administrative, economic, social, and political authority to execute and manage a certain plan (Sanusi & Martadha, 2012). Effective governance is a structured approach that encompasses fairness, responsibility, the independence of perspectives, integrity, and openness (Sundaram & Chowdhury, 2012). A classification system was established to organize the identified obstacles into nine fundamental domains of educational administration. The findings indicated that 'Governance and Relationships' represents the most significant domain of knowledge recognized in the context of school education (Parveen et. al., 2021).

Low educational achievement rates among students from disadvantaged backgrounds stem from both inadequate literacy resources and poor-quality learning environments plus reduced family support in education (Canjinji, 2024). Strong educational policies must reduce how poverty affects students' educational possibilities. Research indicates that providing reduced-cost books to students and running early childhood programs plus local tutoring helps reduce reading achievement differences. Moreover, evidence suggests that investments in teacher training and curriculum enhancements in low-income schools can further improve literacy rates among disadvantaged children (Lynch et al., 2020).

Global Perspectives on Literacy Policies

Although targets to solve the problem of literacy in early childhood in developed countries have been implemented, increasing concerns towards these strategic intercessions in developing countries have been achieved. Many low and middle-income countries' government policies in this area of literacy enhancement have been hampered by several problems like inadequate funding and quality teaching staff and cultural barriers towards literacy (Gove & Cvelich, 2011). Nevertheless, there has been an effort to make policy interventions in these regions, for example, the 'Read India' program in India has greatly enhanced children's reading ability owing to community participation and teacher education

(Pratham, 2014). The literate practices in question illustrate how certain modifications to policy might indeed be effective in overcoming embedded learning obstacles associated with literacy learning in culture-scarce environs.

The importance of fixing obstacles to reading development beyond simple school problems drives policy changes across nations at different income levels. In low- and middle-income countries, challenges such as inadequate funding, a shortage of qualified educators, and cultural obstacles hinder literacy development (McLachlan & Arrow, 2011). Despite facing many difficulties the "Read India" program in India indicates that literacy programs create real change for society. By combining community engagement with teacher training, the program has significantly improved children's literacy skills, showcasing how targeted interventions can yield positive outcomes even in resource-constrained environments (Nedungadi et al., 2024)

The Role of Technology in Literacy Policy

Concerning the application of technology in childhood literacy policy, research interest has recently attracted attention. ICT learning aids, including websites and mobile application, have been instrumental in practicing literacy policies especially in context of developing nations (Karsenti, 2016). The studies indicate that the

educational technologies can support the conventional forms of teaching by enhancing the learning process with the use of other technologies and can make learning resources accessible for students in the field of digital literacy (Higgins et al., 2012). But equally there is research which suggest that the use of such technologies depends on the level of digital expertise of teaching staff and learners, the quality of internet connection available. Modern childhood literacy policies use technology through digital platforms and apps to improve reading skills for children who absence resources (Norman, 2023). A teacher's online success depends on students and teachers having digital skills plus steady internet access despite their ongoing availability issues (Sikalima, 2023). Defining the phrase educational technology is essential due to its extensive use in literary works. This meta-analysis defines educational technology as a range of digital tools and apps that facilitate the delivery of learning information and enhance the learning procedure, specifically for primary students who are struggling with reading (Cheung & Slavin, 2013).

The existing body of literature highlights various barriers and issues that prevent literacy in the country. Pakistan is confronted with many problems and instabilities that significantly impact the country. The policy intervention is essential to overcome the problem of child

illiteracy within the country and in the district of Mansehra. The reforms in curriculum and pedagogy also play an important role in reducing the problem. The major causes were socio-economic discrimination, which is also a barrier to child literacy. Furthermore, the technology has also played a key role in literacy policy.

Methodology

This study selects a qualitative case study research approach that seeks to utilise a set of policy interventions to enhance childhood literacy in District Mansehra, Pakistan. The study uses self-administered semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions on key informants comprising of primary school teachers, school heads, Local Education Officer (LEOs), policymakers, and parents. In the current study, purposive sampling technique is employed in order to identify participants who either are directly implementing the educational policies or are affected by the policies being developed or under implementation in order to enhance childhood literacy. Fifteen teachers and five local education officers are used for qualitative interviews to establish the viability of policies put in place, the difficulties experienced and perceived efficiency. Furthermore, two Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) of 10-12 parents are carried out to enhance understanding of how community members perceive the impact and

roles of policies before during and after early literacy in homes and other education settings. Education policy report of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Mustafa, G. (2012), and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Sector Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25 (*Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Sector Plan 2020/21 -2024/25*, n.d.) documents were consulted to situate the findings and to determine the distinct intervention that the local authorities have implemented.

The interview scale, which contains open-ended questions, was developed with the help of existing literature. A pilot study was conducted, and the interview was transcribed and reviewed by the experts, such as the lecturer and assistant professor. Qualitative content analysis is used to analyze the interview transcripts and FGD results, as the data is coded according to themes on policy effectiveness, issues, and funding/enforcement, as well as stakeholders' participation. This approach facilitates in gaining insight in the particular determinants of childhood literacy in the district. To maintain credibility, the study conducts member checking in which the early analysis is presented to other participants for confirmation. Issues of prerogatives are solved making informed consent, participant identity to be preserved and data to be stored securely. The given research results are to be beneficial for the understanding of policy impacts in the development of

childhood literacy in District Mansehra and constructive for the discussion of the reform of educational policy.

Results

The results were described with the help of respondent's narrations. The data were analyzed through thematic analysis and the codes were assigned to the study respondents as P1, P2, P3 and so on to ensure anonymity.

1. Curriculum Reforms and Literacy

The introduction of curriculum reforms aimed at enhancing early childhood literacy was a focal point of the study. Respondents highlighted the significance of phonics-based instruction, with many expressing positive views on the structured approach the reforms provided, P1, Noted

“Effective Phonics curriculum I have introduce in teaching have assisted me in the area of word identification whereby children learn to reduce words to sounds as a basis in reading. However, if a country lacks the relevant resources, enacting this is difficult as well.” The reform was recognized as helpful, but inadequate materials, preparation, and time for the reform implementation evoked respondent's inequitable results.

Likewise, P3 said, *“Our curriculum now is based on early literacy but the problem*

is many teachers are not producing because they do not have materials.” As it would have been expected, teachers should be well trained and put in appropriate support for their work, but this has not always been the case. This shows that, although the reform is crucial, the enhancement of this reform requires a massive investment in teacher training and resources.

2. Socio-Economic Barriers

The challenges to literacy learning described by the participants in District Mansehra shows the influence of socio-economic factors with relative ease and were mentioned as the most critical barriers. Participants discussed how children coming from poor background which they said should be lack a solid foundation to enable them perform well in school. P2 respondent noted

“Most of my students have parents who cannot read or write, or who are always at work to support the family. These children are most often learning at a pace that is well below their peers in the basic skills of reading and writing skills and already at first term they are behind.”

They also expressed, what they said, as socio-economic related issues that their

children grapple with. In a focus group discussion P5 said that

“While it may not look like it they poor many of them do not have the money to buy books and/or send their children to after school programs. The results further affirm if the school doesn’t support them it become extremely difficult for our kids to enhance their literacy.”

That is why, policy interventions, directed at reduction of socio-economic disparities, including tuition of free educational materials and other kinds of assistance for disadvantaged families, when proved effective in different settings.

3. Teacher Training and Development

Application of literacy intervention in District Mansehra was very much in relation to the enhancement of teacher training and professional development support. P6, expressed frustration with the lack of adequate training:

“We are supposed to introduce new techniques of doing things, yet no one trains us or even comes back to check on us. “If the teacher has not trained on the curriculum, it becomes very difficult to assist the learning of students on manners of enhancing their literacy.”.

Further, some respondents mentioned though they know the significance of curriculum changes they often lacked adequate preparation to implement those changes P4 noted

“This is why the policies may be good, but they have failed to deliver if there are no trained teachers enlisted by the government. As much as training is an important component it should be an ongoing process complemented with adequate resources.”

This is because teacher quality has been identified as being at the heart of the success of particular educational reforms. Although experiencing changes in policies, effective professional development is left in the cold.

4. Technology in Literacy

Although, many regarding the use of technology in literacy intervention as positive there were some neutral to negative findings concerning the usefulness of technology in the setting up of District Mansehra, P7, noted that

“This time around technology has been seen to assist students but implementing it in most of our schools is a challenge. This is unreliable and many students do not own computers and mobile phones at home, let alone the internet.” This is a significant issue when it comes to using the technological applications as individuals are locked in either receiving enhanced education or receiving education which is relatively similar to

what they have always received but at best, and as a result of this shift, the digital divide widens rather than becomes narrower.

On the other hand, some of the teachers pointed out the advantages of using educational apps and online platforms. P9 shared That

“Some mobile applications have been used with students to allow them practice reading at home. Fortunately for the children who are able to make use of such tools, it does seem to make a whole lot of difference.”

This implies that, if well adopted and integrated into classroom practices, it enhances literacy and a positive supplement to traditional teaching approaches.

5 Community Engagement

Community involvement was found to be a key factor in enhancing children literacy. Several of the respondents focused their comments on the roles played by parents and local communities to the effectiveness of literacy interventions. P8 said,

“We have introduced a community reading group to parents and they take turns to read to children.” It is not much but at least it supports what they learn at school.”

The teachers also pointed out on the positive effects of the community efforts. P11 said it, *“When parents are more involved, the*

children’s motivation improves.” They understand that if coming to school is about learning to read, then that is something that is important in the society and back at home. This supports a point that community-based practices can supplement formal education to effect a change in literacy levels in marginalized areas.

Discussion

The study reveals some noteworthy features of policy interventions in childhood literacy and their consequences for enhancing literacy achievements in District Mansehra, Pakistan. These aspects include the part played by curriculum changes, staff development, socio-political, economic and technological changes together with community participation. These areas are very important in determining the education experiences and literacy of the children especially those from the less developed areas.

The changes in curriculum for better childhood literacy, especially the use of phonics was also regarded as positive development. Reforms were made in the curriculum but it is required to give proper supporting material related to curriculum and train teachers in this regard. Despite substantial efforts to enhance global education, policymakers and scholars express worry over literacy results in developing nations, since 'even after many years of schooling, millions of pupils

lack fundamental reading and numeracy abilities.' (World Bank, 2018, p. 5). This corresponds with prior studies that argue that early reading should be founded on structured literacy instruction (Piper et al., 2016). But this paper's evidence implies that the efficiency of such reforms depends on the preparation of teachers and the quantity of teaching resources. The following is a summary of the findings of this study concerning teachers' implementation of the above-mentioned reforms. Teachers in this study expressed concerns and difficulties in implementing the above-mentioned reforms due to lack of training and lack of resources. In this regard, the finding agrees with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) who stated that teachers require professional development to foster curriculum reforms. If executed without support and proper equipment even the most effective curricula will not yield the intended results in terms of literacy. Effective worldwide literacy initiatives are crucial for enhancing educational results; hence, efforts are increasingly focused on both increasing access to school and improving the standard of schooling in the poor countries (Castillo, 2017; Schling & Winters, 2018).

However, the observations highlight that teachers are not well prepared to teach early literacy effectively, the need for professional development to ensure that the teacher has the necessary knowledge and skills to teach early

literacy is emphasized. Murnane and Papay (2010) also emphasize that teacher training is the main component in the successes of the education reforms pointing out that, if teachers are not provided with constant training, the effects of the curriculum reforms could be significantly reduced. Therefore, the results of the study stress the need for integrating and continuous professional development activities to improve teachers' literacy levels. Norman. (2023) studies found that educational technology is a commonly used tool aimed at enhancing educational achievements; nevertheless, there is little data about its efficacy, especially in poor nations.

This study showed socio-economic differences as one of the main causes of hindrance to early childhood literacy in District Mansehra. Low income students were also observed to have other complications with learning literacy skills because of inadequate learning materials and parental support. This paper supports the conclusion by Duncan and Murnane (2011) who pointed out that socio-economic status plays a role in shaping children's performance at school especially at the initial years of schooling. Learners from poor background homes arrive at school with less L1 literacy skills and experience more challenges that compromise their learning. Such difference calls for the special efforts to the socio-economic aspects affecting literacy learning. The "goals of social and economic

change within the umbrella of the free marketplace" is the definition of neoliberalism (Connell, 2013, p. 100). Following their exposure to these neoliberal influences, education and information in general have been "commoditized" within a "worldwide knowledge economy" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). To engage and achieve competitive advantage in the "global knowledge economy," so augmenting a country's global economic wealth, that nation must cultivate human capital; specifically, individuals equipped with the requisite knowledge (Bromley et al., 2019).

The following policy responses intended to address these disparities including free educational resources, school meals, and parental literacy are vital. Fitzpatrick (2013) has argued that of course, such interventions can enhance literacy for disadvantaged children. This study also has implications for achieving equity in children's learning outcomes by highlighting the need to eliminate socio-economic disparities in and out of classroom for children to have similar opportunity to learn. Technology use in literacy interventions was identified as a promising but challenging approach. In this study, some of the respondents pointed out that the use of digital implements and education applications improve literacy, especially among learners who had access to such resources. However, challenges include limited internet connectivity and access

to technology and to information technology in general. This finding accords with Selwyn's (2016) study that brought into focus digital literacy, particularly in impoverished education contexts. Despite the fact that educational technology can act as an addition to traditional approaches to teaching and learning (Higgins et al., 2012), the effectiveness of the technology use is highly dependent on factors like teacher information literacy and the availability of infrastructures. The results indicate that technological intervention may be useful for enhancing literacy although there should be equal distributions of technology resources to all students with special attention to students in rural and poorly funded schools. This study also shows that teachers training plays a vital role in the development of their teaching techniques and also enhance students learning outcomes. Literacy educators are progressively using electronic resources in educational settings, and prior study has examined how this enhances children's learning (Downs et al., 2020; Vasalou et al., 2022).

Last research question was about community involvement as a determinant for effective childhood literacy programs. There is evidence that both parents and local community activities helped to increase children's motivation and learning rates. This work supports Biesta (2015) who opined that when parents and communities

participate in children's education, there will be improvement in literacy. Reading groups that some parents mentioned in this study, the local initiatives may serve to support formal education, and children may benefit from forming a supportive learning culture. Likewise, teachers said that parents who paid more attention to their children's schooling saw their learners' motivation and performance enhance. (Emerson et al., 2012) Parents have a pivotal role in facilitating learning possibilities at home and connecting children's school education with external experiences. Families and the community may play a big role in kid's general literacy education and development by taking part in and sponsoring a variety of extracurricular learning opportunities (Cosmas, 2017). Building strong bonds amongst parents, the wider society, and educators is essential to supporting kids' learning, especially the growth of literacy (Kefallinou et al., 2020). The focus on community participation is also similar to the effectiveness of such programs as "Read India" that showed that community-based approaches are effective in increasing literacy, even in low-resource environment (Pratham, 2014). The note here is that community-based approaches are not only a way of offering academic support but are

also important in promoting the culture of learning in light with development of literacy within the context of the community.

Conclusion

This work further validates the proposition that any policy intervention to enhance early reading and writing standards must consider a complex system of factors that comprise curriculum change, teacher training, social and economic disparities, information and communication technologies, and community participation. The two papers show that policy interventions have to be contextualised and consider the difficult circumstances of the disadvantaged population. For all the children to have a chance for early literacy, socio-economic barriers should not be an issue, and as such policies, should provide adequate support to teachers, resources to learners, as well as engagement of the community. In addition, the potential of technology in the production of literacy should be properly utilised without deepening the digital gap in education. Finally, a fully integrated, evidence based, and empowering approach is required to promote sustainable positive change in children's literacy.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Author Contributions

Fakhr Ud Din: Conceptualization (equal), Methodology (equal), Qualitative Analysis, Writing – original draft, Writing –review & editing

Fazal Rahman: Conceptualization (equal), Methodology (equal), Quantitative Analysis, Writing – review & editing

Tayyaba Noor Qureshi: Conceptualization (equal), Methodology (equal), Quantitative Analysis, Writing –review & editing

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