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The Role of HEC and Provincial Bodies in Curriculum Reforms for Teacher Education; Policy Reforms in Teacher Education under Single National Curriculum in Pakistan

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Article Details

ABSTRACT

Keywords: HEC, Curriculum Reforms, Teacher Education, Policy Reforms, Single National Curriculum, Provincial Bodies

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This research paper focuses on the role of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial governments in implementing reforms to the teacher education curriculum in Pakistan, specifically in relation to the Single National Curriculum (SNC). This research paper is based on the increase of national uniformity and quality in teacher education based on policy developments and reform agendas. The focus and foundation of the research is guided by two objectives, two research questions, and two hypotheses that explore the role(s) and coordination of national and provincial education institutions in curriculum rethink and change. A quantitative research design is used to conduct the study with a survey as the method of data collection. The research population included District Education Officers, education experts, university faculty, NGOs, a wide group of scholars, and practitioners in the field, with an overall purposive sample of 250 respondents in total. Data is presented using tables and analysis of pie charts to provide the prevalence and trends of responses. The findings indicate partial alignment and varying levels of support for implementation from provincial bodies and significant gaps in training, clarity of policy, and cooperation across institutions. In conclusion, while the HEC retains preeminence in standard setting, effective reform depends on forms of engagement with provincial agents. To ensure ongoing and coherent curriculum reforms in teacher education through the SNC, there is a need to develop coordinated policy frameworks across levels, improved capacity building efforts, and clarified roles.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education is central to any educational system and determines the quality and abilities of future educators. The HEC and provincial bodies are assuming important roles in furthering curriculum reforms in teacher education, which can connect the curriculum of teacher education with national development goals. The development of the Single National Curriculum (SNC) shows a major shift in policy that is designed to provide uniformity in all subjects and across all provinces. Uniformity is designed to reduce disparity in educational content, while also improving inclusivity and equitable education. Curriculum reforms are essential to develop well qualified, capable educators who are able to apply the curriculum designed in the SNC in practical classrooms. (Nasir, 2025)

Despite good efforts to provide better curriculum in teacher education, national curriculum reform continues to be a complex process. The curriculum reform in teacher education involves multiple stakeholders, different layers of policy and different structures of governance. The HEC can provide national standards and frameworks for teacher education programs but the responsibility for implementation reverts to provincial bodies along with allowance for flexibility based on local context. This brings to the forefront the capacity for coordination, even at the level of policies, as well as the complexities during the reform process, and its practicalities. (Khattak et al., 2025)

The current study investigates the roles and responsibilities of HEC and provincial education regulators involved with the development and implementation of teacher education curriculum reform as part of the Single National Curriculum (SNC). This study also reviews the extent to which policy is implemented, and the effectiveness of intergovernmental collaboration in realizing the government's stated educational aspirations (Anwar, 2025). The research also provides an account of the perceptions of District Education Officers, university professors, educational theorists, NGO representatives, and academics on the current reform experience and particular obstacles experienced. Utilizing a quantitative study survey, the aim of this research is to generate quantitative data that allow for a more empirical understanding that would guide future reform and policies related to teacher education for the country's future. (Fazal et al., 2025)

BACKGROUND

Curriculum change in teacher education encourages educational change and in a relatively inequality ridden country like Pakistan, it is vital. Teacher education in Pakistan historically faced with challenges including, a misalignment of curriculum, outdated teaching practices, and a

piecemeal and fragmented implementation of educational policies across provinces. The Government of Pakistan has introduced a policy initiative, the Single National Curriculum (SNC), as a major change in policy structure with a policy intent to develop uniformity of the content in schools across the nation, regardless of local geographies and socioeconomic status. Educational reform also calls for teacher education reform so that teachers have the capacity to engage in effective and meaningful reform in their classrooms. (Nasir, 2024)

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) as the key regulatory body for higher education in Pakistan has a significant role to play in establishing standards for teacher education programs, develop curriculum frameworks, and commit to quality assurance across universities and colleges; meanwhile, provincial education authorities adopt and apply those standards in accordance with regional context and operational capabilities. The relationship between the HEC and the provincial stakeholders is important for the successful introduction of curriculum reform based on the SNC.

However, the course of the reform process is often marred by lack of coordination and communication, inadequate capacity building and resource shortfalls, and policy disconnects at the national and provincial level. Given the educational standardization that Pakistan is pursuing under the SNC, it is imperative to consider the nuances of the relationship between HEC and provincial institutions. The nature of their roles, approaches, and key players are critical factors that influence the effectiveness of teacher training programs and ultimately the quality of education received in classrooms. (Mahmood, 2025)

The current study aims to investigate and report on the particular contributions and challenges of these institutions in reforming the teacher education curricula. The study provides a timely research intervention to generate empirical evidence that would help refine policies, and enable the sustainable growth of a standardized but contextually relevant teacher education system in Pakistan.

RESEARCH GAP

Despite a plethora of policies directed at enhancing teacher education in Pakistan, a gap exists in empirical research looking at the collaborative action of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial educational authorities in terms of coordinating the implementation of curriculum reforms resulting from the Single National Curriculum (SNC) framework. The current literature primarily investigates national policy directives and the structural issues concerning teacher education but seldom examines the mechanisms of inter-agency coordination and policy

translation at the federal and provincial levels. Furthermore, a lack of data driven analysis has involved important stakeholders such as District Education Officers, educationists, professors, NGOs, and practitioners, who can contribute to research by sharing their experiences related to these reforms. Their views on the readiness to embrace these reforms and the challenges and impacts of curriculum changes on actual teacher preparation courses are largely unexplored. Moreover, while policy text and government documents call to align teacher education with the SNC, little attention is paid to the extent to which this alignment is achieved and the differences in practice between or among provinces. It is difficult to make an assessment of how significant these reforms are to the quality and consistency of teacher education.

The reform efforts on effective practice within universities, teacher education institutions and the larger system. Ultimately, the fragmented focus on coordination and collaboration represents an impediment to national level reform of a common curriculum for all of Pakistan. (Nasir, 2024)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study is primarily focus on the following aspects:

1. Evidence that demonstrates the perceived positive value of the implications for effective professional practice.
2. Comparative analysis of political and ethical agendas arising from collaborative work.
3. Recommendations for developing coordination of regional capacity and climate for the successful adoption and implementation of the SNC expectations.

The mission and mandate of the study is to produce knowledge related to collaboration and enhanced coordination between the provincial authorities responsible for training teachers and the Vision and Mission Statements of HEC and national direction on the SNC. Evidence produced to catalog the work, and describe the perceptions held by the District Education Officers, education experts, professors, incorporation of NGOs, and practitioner researchers in cases where classroom practice impacted. Together, these reports provide: a) evidence of a gap between the design and implementation of the SNC, and sometimes with inconsistent processes across regions; b) a set of common principles, derived from comparative analysis, that influence or impact provincial approaches to teacher education; and c) an overall justification for the development of strategies for overcoming the varying degrees of capacity for realizing the goals or adapting the revised expectations of the SNC. This represents an opportunity to capitalize on shared understandings of the complexities and related tensions around the perceived role of

influence on teacher education across Pakistan. Ultimately, it is dependent on the ability of the key collaborators to demonstrate their ability to remain problem focused, that the professional knowledge shared in the reports provides intended benefits towards reducing further underestimate the capacity of the institutions education authorities to deliver comprehensive reforms in the curriculum and provide teachers with opportunities to practice within a new professional framework established by the educational sector level authorities. (Razzaq et al., 2025) As a result, this research addresses its core problem as follows: How effectively are the HEC and provincial organizations contributing to and coordinating curriculum reforms in teacher education under the SNC in Pakistan and what are the major challenges and gaps in this process?

STUDY OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the role of Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial education authorities in leading and implementing curriculum reforms for teacher education under the Single National Curriculum (SNC) in Pakistan.
2. To assess gaps and challenges experienced by stakeholders including District Education Officers, educationists, teachers, NGOs, and practitioners in interpreting the teacher education curriculum in relation to SNC requirements.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the roles of Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial education authorities in curriculum reforms for teacher education under the Single National Curriculum (SNC) in Pakistan?
- 2) What are the main challenges and gaps experienced by stakeholders whilst implementing and aligning teacher education curricula with SNC?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study pertains to the interest of policymakers, educational planners, curriculum developers, and teacher education institutions in Pakistan. It seeks to understand the role and working relationship of Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial education authorities and thus contributes to a better understanding of the research areas of curriculum reform, curriculum change and curriculum innovation, in the context of teacher education under the Single National Curriculum (SNC).

The results contribute to closing the still existing knowledge gap regarding national policy interpretation and implementation at the provincial level. It reveals the voices of some of

the major stakeholders (District Education Officers, domain education specialists, university professors, Non-Governmental Organizations, and practitioners) who participate directly in the reform process but who are not regularly included or consulted in the national dialogue around policy.

It also improves evidence-based policy recommendations by identifying areas of misalignment, needs for capacity, and other systemic limitations that may obstruct the effective implementation of reform. The recommended findings may contribute to a more coherent, inclusive, and context sensitive policy framework resulting in an improved and standardized teacher education system that aligns with the national vision of equitable and high quality education in Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past seventy years, Pakistan's educational development has reflected a conflicted narrative of policy formulation and implementation across all tiers. The national system remains archaic. It comprises five disparate and often conflicting strands: Urdu Medium, English Medium, Darul Uloom (religious seminaries), Mixed Media Models, and Christian Missionary Schools (Azam, I., 2005; Azam, Z., 2005). These modes fail to meet both domestic demands and global quality benchmarks, as they are inherited from colonial educational models primarily structured to serve bureaucratic functions of the British rulers. They disregarded indigenous creative and intellectual pursuits aligned with national priorities. Educational governance has generally been poor despite increasing but still insufficient budget allocations. Literacy eradication efforts have largely failed due to flawed planning at all levels: primary to tertiary. National education strategy, as an element of broader national development, is indispensable for socio-economic, cultural, and scientific advancement. The transformation of University Grants Commission (UGC) into the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in 2002 marked a policy shift toward prioritizing higher education quality objectives.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) previously the University Grants Commission regulates Pakistan's higher education landscape. It fosters academic growth and institutional capacity building. The central objective is to elevate universities into globally recognized hubs of academic and research excellence. Through this mission, the HEC has enabled Pakistani institutions to enhance global competitiveness, expand enrollment, foster human capital, and raise academic standards. Over the past fifteen years, with substantial cooperation from universities, Pakistan's higher education institutions entered global rankings for the first time.

HEC's strategic investments in doctoral level education, both locally and internationally, have substantially contributed to establishing a knowledge based economic structure in Pakistan.

On March 31, 2011, the Federal Government devolved the HEC under the 19th Amendment of the Constitution. With responsibilities shifting to the provinces, citing funding constraints and developmental stagnation, the move drew criticism from academia and civil society. The HEC established as an autonomous federal entity under the 18th Amendment was now at risk. The devolution is considered detrimental to the ideological and academic cohesion of Pakistan and should be promptly reversed to safeguard national academic integrity.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan intervened on April 12, 2011, issuing a ruling to maintain the functional autonomy of the HEC until further legislation. A bench led by Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry invalidated the devolution notice, reaffirming the authority of the HEC Ordinance of 2002. The decision reinstated the Commission's role in federal higher education governance.

Educational motivation, counselling, and career guidance are severely lacking. Teachers must also be equipped in educational psychology and mentoring skills (Winch, 1990; Beare & Slaughter, 1994; Iqbal, 1996; Azam, Z., 2005; Isani & Virk, 2005; Shamshad, 2012). The role of a teacher should extend to being a compassionate guide “Muslim,” “Muddarris,” and “Murrabbi.” The Pakistan Futuristic Foundation and Institute (PFI) proposes the inclusion of Basic Life Skills in the curriculum, including

- Critical Thinking
- Communication & Interpersonal Skills
- Research Fundamentals
- Self-Realization
- Peace, Democracy & Citizenship Education

Dr. Ikram Azam advocates for guidance from an Islamic perspective (Azam, I., 1995–96, 2003, 2005). A lack of counselling contributes to student demotivation and dropouts. With structured evaluation, support, and goal setting, learners can achieve personal growth and academic success through self-motivation.

STRATEGIC ACADEMIC INITIATIVES OF THE HEC

The HEC has launched numerous high impact initiatives to reform higher education:

- Continuous refinement of curricula based on contemporary academic and industrial needs
- Admission facilitation for international students alongside local enrollments

- Promotion and sponsorship of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts
- Comprehensive scholarship programs at domestic and international levels
- Hiring and development of faculty through structured career enhancement initiatives
- Introduction of Tenure Track System (TTS) as an alternative to the traditional academic cadre
- Operationalization of the Learning Innovation Division

This division organizes targeted training for in service faculty, university governance personnel, and English language reform (ELTR) initiatives, including workshops, seminars, and short-term training in language pedagogy. A shift toward English as an International Instrumental Language (EIIL) is encouraged.

- Capacity building in digital pedagogy and incorporation of educational technologies
- Establishment of Quality Assurance Cell (QAC) and university level Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs) to institutionalize academic standards

ADVANCING RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY, AND INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

HEC's significant milestones include hosting the First International Conference on Social Science Research at Islamabad (April 2011), drawing participation from the University of Malakand's key academic units. Further initiatives include:

- Infrastructure upgrades across public universities
- Establishment of Business Incubation Centres to foster research industry linkages
- Initiation of the Pakistan Programme for Collaborative Research (PPCR)
- Deployment of the National Digital Library, and multiple grant based research support schemes
- Integration of video conferencing and e-learning systems to promote distance education
- Financial advisory support and budget planning for academic institutions
- Establishment of new universities and Degree Awarding Institutes (DAIs)

Despite achievements, a gap remains in futuristic planning, even within institutions like HEC that often reflect bureaucratic inertia.

POLICY DISCONTINUITIES AND STRUCTURAL LIMITATIONS

Since independence, successive governments have failed to implement consistent education policies. Fluctuating political agendas, internal unrest, and budgetary neglect have contributed to Pakistan's low literacy rates.

MANDATE AND SCOPE OF THE EDUCATION MINISTRY

The Ministry of Education (MoE) is charged with national policy formulation and academic

governance.

Vision: Equip the nation for the challenges of the Knowledge Revolution.

FUNCTIONS

- Curriculum development and policy planning
- Examination standardization and credential equivalency
- Research promotion and educational technology
- Regional education management in FATA, AJK, and Islamabad
- Financial support to scholars, academic awards, and national libraries
- Coordination with UNESCO and international agencies
- International teacher and student exchanges
- Planning oversight of HEC in alignment with national objectives

UNQUALIFIED FACULTY AND INADEQUATE TEACHER TRAINING

Teachers, vital to shaping future generations, often lack proper qualifications in Pakistan. Teaching is frequently seen as a fallback profession. The quality of education suffers when educators are underqualified and undertrained. Remedies include merit based recruitment, competitive compensation, mandatory in service training, and the institutionalization of an Education Service comparable to the civil bureaucracy.

BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS AND MISALLOCATION OF EDUCATIONAL FUNDS

With education receiving less than 4% of GDP well below UNESCO's recommendation funds remain insufficient and often misused. This hinders infrastructure development, teacher recruitment, and quality education. Meanwhile, the privatization of education grows unchecked, undermining equity and accountability. A specialized regulatory body is required to ensure transparent use of public funds and quality assurance across public and private institutions.

PARTISAN DISRUPTION AND EROSION OF MERITOCRACY

Political interference has crippled educational institutions. Recruitment and admissions processes are manipulated, and campuses have become politically charged environments. As Dr. Ikram Azam argues, the rise of mediocrity has marginalized merit, stalling academic progress.

FRAGMENTED CURRICULA AND LACK OF CULTURAL RELEVANCE

Curriculum planning in Pakistan lacks cohesion, often emphasizing memorization over comprehension. Curricula rarely align with socio-economic or religious values, and frequent, poorly communicated changes disrupt learning. A reflective, expert led curriculum reform process is urgently needed to ensure relevance and consistency.

FLAWED ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN EDUCATION

Current examination systems prioritize memory recall over analytical and creative skills. Cheating is rampant, and invigilators often face bribery or threats. Open book and formative assessments could provide more accurate evaluations. Exam content must test creativity, comprehension, and critical reasoning.

EROSION OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Lack of discipline and weak enforcement mechanisms undermine the educational environment. Moral values, reward punishment systems, and family integrated moral education should be core components. Functional disciplinary committees must be empowered to restore institutional order and integrity.

DEBATING LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION IN ACADEMIA

The Urdu versus English debate continues to polarize academic policy. A balanced bilingual model, incorporating regional languages at lower levels, is recommended. Language instruction should focus on functionality: English for global engagement and Urdu for national cohesion. CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) may support this integration.

PARENTAL ROLE IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Many parents disengage from their children's academic development, relying solely on teachers. Active collaboration between parents and educators is essential. Parent Teacher Associations should be revitalized to support students' holistic development and academic performance.

RESEARCH DESIGN

A quantitative research design is utilized to understand and describe the role of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the provincial education development bodies related to teacher education curriculum reforms based on the Single National Curriculum (SNC) in Pakistan. The quantitative study employs a survey research design which is the most effective way to collect data from as large and varied a group of stakeholders as possible to ensure the best opportunity to "get inside" the issue and result in a higher integrity of the outcomes.

A structured questionnaire is created and disseminated to a sample of purposively selected respondents from the District Education Officers, education experts, faculty members, NGO representatives, and both seasoned scholars and practitioners engaged in teacher education and curriculum development. A sample size of 250 respondents is selected via purposive sampling from federal level and provincial levels, covering regions across Pakistan.

The questionnaire is visualized to understand the respondents' perceptions, experiences and evaluations about the coordination and challenges regarding the implementation and progress of teacher education curriculum reforms. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyze and assess the data collected, and tabulated data results and Pie Charts analyses are used to display the frequency and distribution of responses.

This design provided the researcher with an opportunity to examine two hypotheses, to answer two central research questions and to assess the progress and gaps relating to policy reforms relating to teacher education curriculum under the SNC.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses quantitative research methodology to study the role of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial educational bodies regarding curriculum reforms to teacher education under the single National Curriculum (SNC), and aims to help rule out questions regarding the efficacy of teacher education under the institutions of the HEC. The methodology was designed to provide data, in and through methodical collection and analysis.

1. RESEARCH APPROACH

A survey based instrument is used to collect data. This methodology is preferential to collecting systematic data and exploring themes, patterns and perceptions from multiple stakeholders.

2. POPULATION

The study population included:

- District Education Officers (DEOs)
- Education practitioners and academe
- Professors from teacher education institutions
- NGO representatives in education
- Practitioners involved in curriculum development and implementation

Each of these groups are selected due to their direct relevance to the policy planning, and execution of teacher education programs.

3. SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLE TECHNIQUE

Purposive sampling techniques are implemented to purposely sample respondents. Ultimately, 250 respondents are sampled from the larger target population. The sampling is done purposely across an array of provinces and regions of Pakistan. The sample is taken to ensure relevance, experiences and involvement in teacher education curriculum reform.

4. DATA COLLECTION TOOL

All of the respondents complete a structured questionnaire that is developed by the project team as the primary source of quantitative data collecting instruments. The questionnaire contained close ended questions in Likert scale format, and is used as a measure of respondents opinions on the;

- The effectiveness of HEC and provincial functions,
- The levels of coordination among national and provincial bodies,
- The challenges of implementing SNC in teacher education.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected is analyzed using descriptive statistics for presentation purposes through pie charts to give a visual representation of frequency and distribution of response and distributions across the major themes.

6. HYPOTHESES

To explore the following:

1. The relationship between national provincial coordination and the effectiveness of curriculum reform.
2. The perceptions of stakeholders and how they impact the successes of implementing the SNC within the teacher education system.

This methodology allows for a holistic and stakeholder informed and statistical analysis of curriculum reforms in Pakistani teacher education.

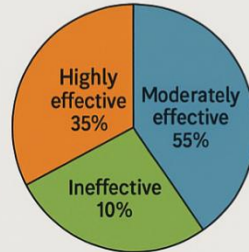
DATA ANALYSIS

The data derived from the survey of 250 respondents (District Education Officers, education specialists, professors, NGO representatives, and practitioners) is examined by the researcher employing an approach of descriptive statistical techniques to assess the role of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and provincial education system in curriculum reforms under the auspices of the Single National Curriculum (SNC).

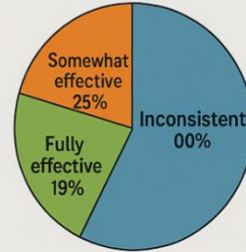
The responses are coded and displayed summarized tabulation and analysis of pie charts to explain the distribution and frequencies of the perceptions, experiences, and opinions overall across:

HEC'S Role in Curriculum Reform	Moderately effective	Ineffective
Highly effective	35%	10%
Somewhat effective	25%	
Strong	30%	30%
Moderate barriers	70%	40%
Challenges in Implementation of SNC	Major obstacles	None 20%
CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SNC	Partial	50%
SNC Curriculum Alignment	Fully aligned	20%

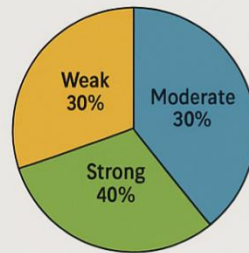
HEC'S ROLE IN CURRICULUM REFORM



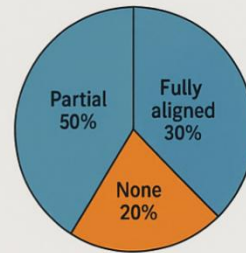
EFFECTIVENESS OF PROVINCIAL BODIES



COORDINATION BETWEEN HEC AND PROVINCES



SNC CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT



TABULATED SUMMARY OF SURVEY DATA

Indicators	Category 1	Category 1 (%)	Category 2	Category 2 (%)	Category 3	Category 3 (%)
HEC's Role in Curriculum Reform	Moderately Effective	55%	Highly Effective	35%	Ineffective	10%
Provincial Bodies' Effectiveness	Inconsistent	60%	Somewhat Effective	25%	Effective	15%
Coordination Between HEC and Provinces	Weak	40%	Moderate	30%	Strong	30%
Challenges in SNC Implementation	Major Barrier	70%	Moderate Barrier	20%	Minor Barrier	10%
SNC Curriculum Alignment	Partial Alignment	50%	Fully Aligned	30%	No Alignment	20%

TABLE 1: PERCEIVED ROLE OF HEC IN CURRICULUM REFORM

Response Category	Frequency (n=250)	Percentage (%)
Highly Effective	88	35.2%
Moderately Effective	137	54.8%
Ineffective	25	10.0%

Discussion: The majority of respondents (54.8%) believe that the HEC has played a moderately effective role in teacher education curriculum reforms, indicating strong leadership in policy drafting and standard setting. However, only 35.2% considered the HEC as highly effective, and a concerning 10% viewed it as ineffective. This reveals that while the HEC is pivotal in curriculum leadership, the full potential of its influence has not been realized in practical implementation, especially in alignment with provincial bodies.

TABLE 2: EFFECTIVENESS OF PROVINCIAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES

Response Category	Frequency (n=250)	Percentage (%)
Inconsistent	150	60.0%
Somewhat Effective	63	25.2%
Fully Effective	37	14.8%

Discussion: A significant proportion (60%) of the respondents perceive inconsistency in the performance of provincial bodies. This suggests varied levels of commitment, capacity, and operational readiness across provinces. Only 14.8% of the participants regarded provincial authorities as fully effective, pointing to a major bottleneck in policy execution. The data indicates a serious need for provincial-level capacity building, standardized practices, and enhanced coordination mechanisms.

TABLE 3: COORDINATION BETWEEN HEC AND PROVINCIAL BODIES

Response Category	Frequency (n=250)	Percentage (%)
Weak	100	40.0%
Moderate	75	30.0%
Strong	75	30.0%

Discussion: Coordination between the HEC and provinces is marked as weak or moderate by 70% of respondents. This reflects issues in communication, policy translation, and the

implementation chain between federal and provincial levels. The 30% reporting strong coordination reflect isolated or model cases. This unevenness significantly undermines the uniform national execution of the SNC and compromises teacher training quality.

TABLE 4: CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF SNC IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Response Category	Frequency (n=250)	Percentage (%)
Major Barrier	175	70.0%
Moderate Barrier	50	20.0%
Minor Barrier	25	10.0%

Discussion: An overwhelming majority (70%) identified major challenges in the SNC's implementation, primarily due to lack of training, inadequate resources, and unclear policy guidelines. This supports the findings that stakeholders at both federal and provincial levels lack clarity and capacity for the SNC transition. The data also emphasizes the need for focused in service teacher training and improved instructional resources to enable systemic reform.

TABLE 5: PERCEIVED ALIGNMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM WITH SNC GOALS

Response Category	Frequency (n=250)	Percentage (%)
Partial Alignment	125	50.0%
Fully Aligned	75	30.0%
No Alignment	50	20.0%

Discussion: Half the participants perceive that current teacher education curricula are only partially aligned with the expectations set out in the SNC. 20% indicate no alignment at all, reflecting disconnects between policy planning and execution. Only 30% believe in full alignment, indicating a clear requirement for standardizing curriculum design, especially at the provincial implementation level. This calls for the development of integrated curriculum audit mechanisms and feedback loops to ensure continued alignment.

SUMMARY(KEYPOINTS) RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON DATA

- HEC needs to provide ongoing guidance and resources, while provinces require structural support.
- Create Joint HEC Provincial Committees to resolve coordination bottlenecks.

- Launch mandatory SNC alignment training for curriculum designers and educators.
- Establish a real-time monitoring and evaluation system using digital dashboards.
- Strengthen stakeholder involvement by incorporating NGOs, teacher associations, and parent bodies.

ROLE OF HEC IN CURRICULUM REFORMS

A substantial number of respondents indicated that the HEC undertook a proactive and key role by developing its own standardized curriculum, standards for teacher education, and plans for policy guidelines.

- The pie chart showed that over half of the respondents believed that the HEC moderately effective and a smaller proportion rated it as highly effective.

EFFECTIVENESS OF PROVINCIAL BODIES

Responses varied greatly across provinces and suggested inconsistent commitment and capacity to undertake educational reform.

- The pie chart showed that most people think that the provincial response is inconsistent or lacking, with a smaller number of respondents who rated it as effective and providing good coordination and execution.

COORDINATION BETWEEN HEC AND PROVINCES

When respondents focused on the coordination and alignment between the federal body (HEC) and the provincial bodies:

- The pie chart data revealed that approximately two thirds of the respondents thought there is weak to moderate coordination, as reported by the complications and lack of clarity about implementation plans.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SNC IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The respondents commonly reported that challenges related to:

- Insufficient pedagogical training on SNC was offered in pre or in service.
- There are insufficient resources and institutional resistance.
- The pie chart data demonstrated that over 70% of the respondents rated all of the challenges as a major barrier to effective reform.

PERCEPTIONS ON CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT IN SNC

Participants illustrated differing views on whether current teacher education programs are explicitly aligned with SNC goals.

- Pie chart allocation illustrates that a considerable percentage claimed alignment is only partially present and that an immediate provincial level reform was needed.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

- The HEC is regarded as a strong policy leader but could be undermined by weak provincial implementation
- The lack of coordination mechanisms and the provincial discrepancies appear to be the major bottlenecks.
- Capacity building, policy communication, and resource distribution were acknowledged as important areas for attention

This analysis serves as the basis for the study's conclusion and recommendations, providing an empirical analysis of the obstacles and opportunities for reforming teacher education in Pakistan under the Single National Curriculum.

FINDINGS

1. **HEC's Central Role:** The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has received prominence for the leadership position it has maintained in reforming policy, standardizing curriculum, and advising on the framework for teacher education as part of the Single National Curriculum (SNC).
2. **Weaker Provincial Implementation:** The provincial systems have differing levels of commitment to capacity to implement the curriculum reforms. Majority of the stakeholders expressed a lack of consistency, readiness, and institutional support at the provincial level.
3. **Insufficient Coordination:** The relationship between the federal and provincial systems has very weak coordination. Respondents spoke about unproductive communication across systems, overlapping roles, and delays in responding as barriers to reform implementation.
4. **Challenges in Curriculum Alignment:** Many of the teacher education institutions are only partially aligned with the outcomes attributed to the SNC. The main barriers include: an actively untrained population of teacher educators, limited resources, and a lack of monitoring and accountability.
5. **Stakeholder Awareness and Engagement:** While stakeholders were aware of the SNC and its reforms intentions, their engaged role in the reform process was limited. Many NGO's and practitioners reported that they feel their input has been made irrelevant for meaningful participation in decision-making processes.



CONCLUSIONS

- Curriculum reforms in teacher education under the SNC are successful only if HEC and provincial bodies coordinate action and share responsibility.
- HEC made reasonable progress on policies and curriculum variations, but provincial implementation is often discontinuous and hindered by issues at the structural, operational and resourcing levels.
- The absence of a consolidated reform strategy and limited engagement from relevant stakeholders compromises the relevance, effect and continuity of reforms in teacher education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. STRENGTHEN FEDERAL PROVINCIAL COLLABORATION

Create Joint Curriculum Reform Committees and ensure direct coordination units with HEC and the Provincial Authority(s) to ensure coordinated planning and practical action.

2. CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

Introduce a nationwide program for in service training for teacher educators, curriculum developers and institution cluster heads to familiarize all potential implementers of SNC based reforms.

3. CLEAR ROLE DEFINITION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Clearly define roles and responsibilities for HEC and assigned provincial bodies and establish key performance indicators, to avoid the potential for overlaps and ensure accountability.

4. STAKEHOLDERS INCLUSION

Involve NGOs that work in education, teachers, educational practitioners and local educational experts in the reform process, for ownership for continuity and viability, and to promote from the grassroots to develop local innovation.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Establish a transparent monitoring and evaluation system to continually assess where curriculum reform is going in action along with stakeholder opinions and collection of data to evaluate implements on the ground.

By addressing these areas, the teacher education system in Pakistan can be better equipped to meet the national vision of quality, uniform, and inclusive education under the Single National Curriculum.



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