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# Culturally responsive teaching: a missing element of teacher education in Pakistan

Shaheen Pasha

University of Education Lahore, Pakistan.

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### ABSTRACT

Culturally responsive teaching is usually advocated for making teaching effective and to let students from diverse background feel comfortable. The study is aimed to explore to what extent in-service teachers observe culturally responsive teaching in their professional practices, to what extent in-service teacher training opportunities are available regarding culturally responsive teaching and to what extent existing teacher education programs address these aspects. The study reveals that, in Pakistan, the element of culturally responsive teaching is missing both from the curriculum of teacher education programs and education systems as a whole. Teachers encounter cultural diversity in their classrooms but lack of knowledge about students' cultures and culturally responsive teaching cause hindrances to teach children from diverse background more appropriately. Non-availability of teacher training opportunities regarding culturally responsive teaching further undermines their professional responsibilities. This study has made some recommendations to prepare prospective teachers ready to teach in culturally responsive classrooms.

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### Introduction

Teachers are an integral part of education system. They not only play an important role in students' lives but also have an effect on their beliefs, views, conceptions, and behaviors (Ming & Dukes, 2006). To be truly effective, teachers in today's classrooms need to be culturally competent (Erickson, 1987; Asanti, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 2001; Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbell, 2005; Thompson, 2010; Yang & Montgomery, 2011). According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), a culturally competent teacher is aware and respectful of the importance of values, beliefs, traditions, customs and other aspects of his/her students' culture. He/she is also aware of the impact of his/her own values, beliefs, and culture on his/her interactions with others and take all of these factors into account when educating his/her students and interacting with students' families. Villegas and Lucas (2002) have identified six salient characteristics of a culturally responsive teacher: (i) Socio-cultural Consciousness, (ii) An affirming attitude towards students from culturally diverse backgrounds, (iii) Commitment and skills to act as an agent of change, (iv) Constructivist views of learning, (v) Culturally responsive teaching strategies, and (vi) Know about the lives of his/her students.

The notion of culturally responsive teaching comes from Sleeter and Grant's (1988), Banks' (1991), and others approaches to multicultural education like teaching students from diverse cultural for mainstream society, preparing students from diverse culture and background to live together harmoniously, reducing prejudice, providing equal opportunities and social justice for all groups, empowering children from ethnic or cultural groups, teaching students to become analytical and critical thinkers and social reformers who are committed to redistribution of power and other resources among diverse groups, etc. (Tiedt & Tiedt, 1976; Gay, 1988; Derman-Sparks, 1989; Bank, 1993).

Culturally responsive teaching is usually related to the notion that all children have a right to equal educational opportunities regardless of gender, social class, race, ethnicity or cultural background. It is a holistic approach towards cultural diversity with respect to instruction, pedagogy, and the curriculum. It can be conceptualized in terms of four conditions: (i) Establishing inclusion, (ii) Enhancing positive attitude, (iii) Enhancing meaning; and (iv) Engendering competence (Pewewardy, 1994; Schmidt, 2005; Gay, 2002 & 2010; Smith, 2010; Singh, 2011).

For producing competent teachers equipped with these traits, a culturally responsive teacher education program is needed (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Irvine, 2003; Brown, 2007; Taylor, 2010; Griffin, 2011). Educators and researchers around the globe have been striving to restructure teacher education programs to promote prospective teachers' culturally responsive teaching skills (Grant & Secada 1990; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Camille, 2004; Trent, Kea & Oh, 2008; Singh, 2011).

The importance of teacher education cannot be denied. The better a teacher is trained; the better he or she can educate his/her students. Research shows that 'school achievement improves when protocols and procedures of teaching are synchronized with the mental schemata, participation styles, work habits, thinking styles and experiential frames of reference of diverse ethnic groups' (Gay, 2000). Coggins & Campbell (2008) have demonstrated a correlation between the teacher-student cultural mismatch and students' achievement gap. There is an assumption that the cultural responsive teaching can enhance the academic achievement of students from diverse backgrounds (Rothman, 2002). Consequently, the idea of culturally responsive teaching has been put forward as a promising remedy to overcome the issues related to cultural diversity & multicultural education (Singh, 2011). In parallel,

Tele:

E-mail addresses: [drshaheenpasha@hotmail.com](mailto:drshaheenpasha@hotmail.com)

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due to the increasing trend of global research, cultural responsive education has become an important feature of today's education system (Dewey, 1966; Broudy, 1975; Heath, 1983; Boykin, 1984; Marsh, 1984; Lynch, 1989; Comer, 1989; Banks, 1991; Moll, 1992; Au, 1993; Davidman & Davidman, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Grant, 1995; Teidt & Tiedt, 1995; Osborne, 1996; Bennett, 1999; Gay, 2000; Schmidt, 2001, Teidt & Tiedt, 2002; Schmidt, 2003; Schmidt, 2005, Boykin, et al., 2006; Brown, 2007; Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Algozzine, O'Shea, Obiakor, 2009; Taylor, 2010; Griffin, 2011).

The purpose of culturally responsive teaching goes beyond taking necessary steps to make teaching effective and to let students feel comfortable. Rather, it aims to improve opportunities for academic success and removing the disposition that teachers have towards their students (Phuntsog, 1999; Conrad, 2011; Griffin, 2011). However, it has been observed that school professionals including administrators and staff often lack skills to identify and intervene with students at risk of cultural diversity. Even they are unable to understand their own concerns, which include how to effectively cope with job stress while increasing teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction (Johnson & Hawkins, 2008). Therefore, at global level, there is a call for a paradigm shift at the university level to diligently assist in collaborating with schools to prepare all school-based personnel to proactively confront the challenges of today's youth as they service this diverse population (Howard, 2002; Ebmeier, 2003).

Pakistan is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic society. Due to the increasing trend of urbanization (Arif & Ibrahim, 1998; Jan, Iqbal, & Iftikharuddin, 2008) and internal migration (Khan & Shehnaz, 2000; Oda, 2007) in Pakistan, students' population in schools is increasingly becoming diverse (Zia, 1999; Shah and Amjad, 2011). Teachers are intended to practice culturally responsive teaching to achieve educational equity in their classrooms. Whereas, they lack this skill of culturally sensitive teaching as it is missing from the curriculum of teacher education programs offered in Pakistan (Khatoon, Rehman, & Amjad, 2011). le Roux & Möller (2002) view it as a global problem: 'Research all over the world indicates that initial teacher training, as far as multicultural education is concerned, is grossly inadequate or, in many instances, non-existent. In many cases it is still regarded as a luxury which cannot be afforded in a time of scarcity of resources, or as a contentious politically sensitive area best avoided' (p. 184). This study is an attempt to explore the state of the affairs of culturally responsive teaching in primary schools of Pakistan. The study also tries to explore in-service primary teachers' experiences with respect to existing teacher education programs and in-service teacher training opportunities regarding culturally responsive education. Towards the end of this paper, the study makes some recommendations to promote culturally responsive teaching in Pakistan.

### **Cultural Diversity in Pakistan**

Pakistan is a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic society comprising an estimated population of approximately 187 million<sup>1</sup> that is diverse in terms of ethnicity/race, language and religion. Pakistan is situated in South Asia. The people of Pakistan are generally considered to be a mixture of Indo-Iranian (Renfrew, 1987). The multi-cultural society of Pakistan

comprises of different sub-cultures. The distribution of ethnic groups on language basis include Punjabis, Pashtuns, Sindhis, Seraikis, Muhajirs (Urdu speaking), Balochis, Hindkowan, Chitralis and other smaller groups. The demographic details of population by mother tongue is shown in

The multilingual society of Pakistan is a mixture of six major and over fifty-nine small languages. The main languages include Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pushto, Balochi and Saraiki. Most people are bi-lingual, speaking their regional language and Urdu with almost equal facility. Urdu enjoys the status of the national language, widely spoken and understood all over the country. English and Urdu are commonly used in government, corporate sector, media, education, etc. English is considered a symbol of the upper class, sophistication and power whereas the less powerful indigenous languages of Pakistan are becoming markers of lower status and culture shame (Rehman, 2006).

Religiously, Pakistan is a predominantly Muslim country. According to 1998 Censuses report (GOP, 1998) among the total population 96.28% Muslim, 1.5% Christian, 1.6% Hindu largely concentrated in Sindh, 0.22% Qadiani also known as Ahmadi who assert to be Muslim but in 1974 were declared non-Muslims through a constitutional amendment, 0.25 Schedule castes and 0.07% others (GOP, 1998). The Muslim population divided into about 77% Sunnis and about 20% Shiites. The demographic detail of population by religion is shown in

In addition to ethnic and religious divisions, the issues of class and power also prevail in Pakistani society. Pakistan is a highly power segregated society due to strong patriarchal and feudal backgrounds and a deep rooted social class division. In many instances, the issues of ethnic or religious identity are tightly interconnected with the issues related to power and class (Hofstede, 2001). A strong caste system (Biraderis/ Quoms - such as Jatt, Arain, Rajpoot, Syed, Sheikh, Pathan, Mirza, and Malik etc.) also prevails in the society. Caste system mold the identities of people in the course of their socialization and shape their later experiences, constrain the society sections from whom they chooses their friends and trade markets, restrict their opportunities for education, employment and socialization, and also affect their life style (Akerlof and Kranton, 2000).

In Pakistan, cultural diversity is protected constitutionally. The 1973 Constitution (GOP, 1973) guarantees fundamental rights, including equality of status, of opportunity and freedom of belief, faith, worship and association. The Constitution also ensures for adequate provision to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes (Preamble). The Constitution guarantees the protection of the right to education of all ethnic groups (Article 22), the equality of all citizens before the law and guards against gender imbalance and exploitation of children (Article 25). It also contains elements of time-barred affirmative action for marginalized and disadvantaged groups (Article 27). Also, there is protection for groups and individuals with a distinct language, script or culture (Article 28) and the discouragement of parochial, racial, tribal, sectarian and provincial prejudices (Article 33).

Pakistan is one of the most dynamic and diverse cultures of the world in terms of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, artistic expression and creativity, ethnic/religious groups and languages. Pakistan is also one of the 185 countries who have adopted the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNHCHR, 2001). By doing so, Pakistan has an obligation to protect the cultural diversity for a more open and creative world in the 21st century.

<sup>1</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics\\_of\\_Pakistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Pakistan)

### Statement of the Problem

Being a member of multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-ethnic society of Pakistan, teachers encounter with students from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. The study is aimed to explore to what extent in-service teachers observe culturally responsive teaching in their professional practices, to what extent in-service teacher training opportunities are available regarding culturally responsive teaching and to what extent existing teacher education programs address these aspects. Teacher education institutions and other education departments need such information to take appropriate measures to promote culturally responsive education in Pakistan.

### Significance of the Study

This study provides insight about three important aspects: (i) State of the affairs about culturally responsive teaching in primary schools, (ii) Effectiveness of the existing teacher education program with respect to preparing prospective teachers ready for culturally responsive teaching, (iii) Teacher training opportunities for primary school teachers with respect to culturally responsive teaching. These aspects are significantly important as in Pakistani schools both teachers and students are usually come from diverse cultural back grounds. Consequently, they encounter issues related to cultural diversity. Research shows culturally responsive teaching can offer a graceful solution to such problems. The outcomes of this study will be a valuable source of knowledge for teacher training institutions, policymakers and professionals conducting in-service teacher training workshops to get awareness about the current state of affairs in schools and teacher education institutions regarding culturally responsive education.

### Research Questions:

**The study addresses the following questions.**

1. To what extent primary in-service teachers in Pakistan are aware of cultural diversity in their classrooms.
2. To what extent primary in-service teachers in Pakistan are using culturally responsive teaching in their classrooms.
3. To what extent the curriculum of teacher education program in Pakistan promotes culturally responsive teaching skills of the prospective teachers.
4. To what extent in-service training on culturally responsive teaching are available for primary in-service teachers in Pakistan;

### Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to elementary in-service teachers within the city limit of Lahore, Pakistan. The study includes a small sample size and the data is based on self-reported information from the respondents, therefore, findings may not be generalized all over Pakistan.

### Research Design

For this cross sectional descriptive study (Nardi, 2006) a quantitative approach is adopted for the reasons: firstly, quantitative approach is context free and relies upon statistical results. It allows determining causes, effects and their relationships for generalization (Creswell, 1994). Secondly, quantitative approach allows testing objective theories by examining the relationship among different variables which can be measured through different instruments and the acquired numerical data can be analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2009). For data collection a survey questionnaire is designed and distributed among the sample group. The collected data is analyzed using Excel software.

### Population and Sampling

The population of the study consists of 625 in-service teachers randomly selected from 125 primary public & private

schools within the city limits of Lahore. From 625 in-service teachers, who were given the questionnaire, 597 (92%) of them returned the questionnaire. Out of 597, only 583(90%) questionnaires were selected for data analysis as 14 respondents returned the questionnaire incomplete. The 90% response rate is adequate to ensure that the survey results are representative of the survey population.

### Instrument

In literature, many instruments have been used to investigate issues related to cultural diversity, for example, the instrument used by Davis (1993) investigates the cultural sensitivity level of elementary pres-service teachers, the instrument used by Milner, et al. (2003) examines the extent to which teacher education programs were helping prospective teachers to become multi-culturally competent, the instrument used by Brown (2004) examines the effect of instructional methodology on changes in cultural diversity awareness, and the instrument used by Walker-Dalhouse and Dalhouse (2006) investigates elementary teachers' awareness of cultural diversity. Such instruments are designed for western society fostering different cultures. Therefore, for this study, after consulting these instruments, a new instrument is designed keeping in view the Pakistani culture and the key objectives of this study. The newly designed instrument consisting of 16 items, divided into three groups, to which respondents indicated the extent of their agreement or disagreement to statements in each of the items. Group 1 (5 items) explores respondents awareness about cultural diversity, group 2 (3 items) explores existing teaching practices, group 3 (4 items) explores culturally responsive teacher training opportunities for in-service teachers, and group 3 (4 items) intends to explore the appropriateness of teacher education curriculum for developing prospective teachers' culturally responsive teaching skills.

The instrument uses a 3-point Likert-type scale (Likert, 1933) (1 = disagree, 0 = not sure, 2 = agree) to measure the responses. The demographic details of the respondents, their native language, race/ethnicity, gender, level of education, and teaching experience, although collected within a separate part of the questionnaire, but have not been included in the data analysis as they are not directly related to the objectives of the study. Through a disclaimer, all the respondents were ensured about their anonymity and confidentiality.

### Findings

Table 1 shows the participants' responses regarding 'Cultural Awareness' indicator. 97% 'Agree' response to statement A1 illustrates that the cultural diversity exists in their classrooms. Whereas, the response rate of statement A3 (80%-agree) and A4 (97%-agree) reveal three important aspects: (i) participants' lack of awareness about various cultures, (ii) ineptness of existing teacher education programs regarding culturally responsive teaching, and (iii) participants' desire to learn about various cultures. Although only 19% (Agree to A5) participants put efforts to learn their students' culture, it shows some teachers' positive attitude towards culturally responsive teaching. However, they were not fully aware of culturally responsive teaching as they have not learnt about it during their teacher education program. Similarly, the experience of 39% (Agree - A3) respondents of creating embarrassing situation for students leads us to draw a conclusion that students from minority groups encounter similar kinds of problems already reported in literature.

Table 2 reflects the participants' responses regarding 'Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices' indicator.

<b>Table 1: Population by Mother Tongue (In percent)</b>							
<b>Administrative Unit</b>	<b>Urdu</b>	<b>Punjabi</b>	<b>Sindhi</b>	<b>Pushto</b>	<b>Balochi</b>	<b>Saraiki</b>	<b>Others</b>
Pakistan	7.57	44.15	14.1	15.42	3.57	10.53	4.66
Rural	1.48	42.51	16.46	18.06	3.99	12.97	4.53
Urban	20.22	47.56	9.20	9.94	2.69	5.46	4.93
N W F P	0.78	0.97	0.04	73.9	0.01	3.86	20.43
Rural	0.24	0.24	0.02	73.98	0.01	3.99	21.52
Urban	3.47	4.58	0.11	73.55	0.03	3.15	15.11
F A T A	0.18	0.23	0.01	99.1	0.04	-	0.45
Rural	0.18	0.18	0.01	99.15	0.04	-	0.43
Urban	0.18	1.85	*	97.00	*	-	0.96
Punjab	4.51	75.23	0.13	1.16	0.66	17.36	0.95
Rural	1.99	73.63	0.15	0.87	0.90	21.44	1.02
Urban	10.05	78.75	0.09	1.81	0.14	8.38	0.78
Sindh	21.05	6.99	59.73	4.19	2.11	1.00	4.93
Rural	1.62	2.68	92.02	0.61	1.50	0.32	1.25
Urban	41.48	11.52	25.79	7.96	2.74	1.71	8.80
Balochistan	0.97	2.52	5.58	29.64	54.76	2.42	4.11
Rural	0.21	0.43	5.27	32.16	57.55	1.87	2.51
Urban	3.42	9.16	6.57	21.61	45.84	4.16	9.24
Islamabad	10.11	71.66	0.56	9.52	0.06	1.11	6.98
Rural	2.33	83.74	0.08	7.62	0.02	0.3	5.91
Urban	14.18	65.36	0.81	10.51	0.08	1.53	7.53

Source: 1998 census report (GOP, 1998)<sup>1</sup>

<b>Table 2: Population By Religion (In percent)</b>						
<b>Administrative Unit</b>	<b>Muslim</b>	<b>Christian</b>	<b>Hindu(Jati)</b>	<b>Qadiani (Ahmadi)</b>	<b>Scheduled Castes</b>	<b>Others</b>
Pakistan	96.28	1.59	1.60	0.22	0.25	0.07
Rural	96.49	1.10	1.80	0.18	0.34	0.08
Urban	95.84	2.59	1.16	0.29	0.06	0.06
N W F P	99.44	0.21	0.03	0.24	*	0.08
Rural	99.65	0.03	*	0.22	*	0.08
Urban	98.42	1.06	0.11	0.31	0.01	0.09
F A T A	99.6	0.07	0.03	0.21	0.03	0.07
Rural	99.63	0.04	0.03	0.21	0.03	0.06
Urban	98.16	1.17	0.32	0.10	.007	0.23
Punjab	97.21	2.31	0.13	0.25	0.03	0.07
Rural	97.66	1.87	0.15	0.19	0.05	0.08
Urban	96.25	3.27	0.06	0.37	0.02	0.03
Sindh	91.31	0.97	6.51	0.14	0.99	0.08
Rural	88.12	0.14	9.77	0.12	1.79	0.06
Urban	94.67	1.84	3.08	0.17	0.14	0.10
Balochistan	98.75	0.40	0.49	0.15	0.10	0.10
Rural	99.42	0.06	0.15	0.14	0.12	0.10
Urban	96.61	1.49	1.58	0.16	0.05	0.10
Islamabad	95.53	4.07	0.02	0.34	*	0.03
Rural	98.80	0.94	*	0.23	*	0.03
Urban	93.83	5.70	0.03	0.40	*	0.03

Source: 1998 census report (GOP, 1998)

**Table 1: A: Cultural Awareness**

S. No.	Statements	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
A1	In my class I always have students from different cultural and socio-economic background.	97%	3%	3%
A2	Sometimes I feel guilty when my examples from daily lives put some children of the class in an embarrassing situation.	39%	7%	54%
A3	Sometimes I feel my lack of knowledge about other cultures cause difficulties to make some simple concepts clear to the students from different back ground	80%	7%	13%
A4	I wish, I would have learnt about the culture of different ethnic groups of Pakistan during my teacher education program	97%	1%	2%
A5	Through my own efforts I have learnt about the cultural background of my students and it helps me to handle them more effectively	19%	21%	60%

**Table 2: Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices**

S. No.	Statements	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
A6	In my class I try to use culturally responsive Teaching	2%	23%	75%
A7	some of my colleagues use culturally responsive Teaching	0%	69%	33%
A8	School administration encourage to use culturally responsive Teaching	0%	13%	87%

**Table 3: Availability of Teacher Training**

S. No.	Statements	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
A9	During my job I have attended a teacher training workshop on Culturally Responsive Teaching	0%	3%	97%
A10	I am willing to attend in-service teacher training of culturally responsive teaching;	88%	9%	3%
A11	In-service teacher training on culturally responsive teaching are available for primary in-service teachers in Pakistan;	0%	64%	36%

**Table 4: Effectiveness of Teacher Education Program's Curriculum for Culturally Responsive Teaching**

S. No.	Statements	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree
A12	During my teacher education program I have learnt about Culturally Responsive Teaching	0%	10%	90%
A13	I wish, I would have learnt about culturally responsive teaching during my teacher education program	85%	14%	1%
A14	The curriculum of teacher education program in Pakistan promotes prospective teachers' culturally responsive teaching skills;	0%	10%	90%
A15	Teacher education institutions need to include culturally responsive aspect in teacher education curriculum	85%	14%	1%
A16	The exiting curriculum of teacher education program is responsible of their ignorance about culturally responsive teaching	84%	15%	1%
17	The teaching practices used in teacher education program do not appreciate culturally responsive education	83%	12%	4%

The participants responses to statement A6 (75%-disagree) and A8 (87%-disagree) reveal that neither teachers follow culturally responsive teaching in their classes nor school administration encourage culturally responsive teaching in schools.

Table 3 shows the participants' responses regarding 'Availability of Teacher Training' indicator. 97% participants disagree with the statement that they have received any in-service teacher training regarding culturally responsive teaching. Even 64% of them were not aware of any such training available for in-service teachers. However, the most encouraging aspect is that 88% participants shown their interest to receive in-service training on culturally responsive teaching.

Table 4 shows the participants' responses regarding 'Effectiveness of Teacher Education Program's Curriculum for Culturally Responsive Teaching' indicator. 90% respondents confirm that they have not learnt about culturally responsive teaching during their teacher education program. However, 85% of the respondents have shown their concerns that it should be taught during their teacher education program. 90% of the respondents confirm that the curriculum of teacher education program in Pakistan does not promote prospective teachers' culturally responsive teaching skills. 85% of the respondents

were in favor that teacher education institutions should include culturally responsive aspect in teacher education curriculum. At the same time 84% of the respondents confirm that the exiting curriculum of teacher education program is responsible of their ignorance about culturally responsive teaching. Sharing about their personal experiences, 83% respondents consider that the teaching practices used in teacher education program do not appreciate for culturally responsive education.

### Discussion

Developing students' positive attitude toward learning is central to teaching. As discussed above many studies have reported that students show positive attitude towards learning when they identify their perspectives, needs, and values in the content, pedagogy and assessment processes of the program. Although the study found the evidences of cultural diversity in Pakistani schools, the teachers' lack of cultural awareness and culturally responsive teaching skills restrict them to handle students from diverse cultures effectively. For example, the lack of cultural awareness of the respondent causes them to create embarrassing situation for students. It means that the students from minority groups encounter the kind of problems already reported in literature.

Recent research in neuroscience confirms that emotions influence students' motivation (Ratey, 2001). It has been reported students' emotions are influenced by their language, beliefs, values, culture, and behaviors; when students see that what they are learning makes sense and is important, they become motivated (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Lambert and McCombs, 1998; Ryan, & Deci, 2008). Culturally ignorant teacher sometimes create embarrassing situation for some students, as also revealed in this study, de-motivating students to learn (Kitayama and Markus, 1994). Kitayama and Markus (1994) argue that culture and emotion are inextricably linked: cultural experience shapes one's emotional experiences and emotions, in turn, play a pivotal role in bolstering and sustaining motivation which is essential for learning. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching can prevent such incidences as it intends to respect individuals' cultures and strives to create a common learning culture which not only acceptable to all students but also motivate them to be curious, to be active, to make meaning from their experience (Morrison, Robbins & Rose, 2008).

An overwhelming majority of the respondents reveal that they have not learnt about culturally responsive teaching during their teacher education program and feel that the curriculum of teacher education program in Pakistan does not promote prospective teachers' culturally responsive teaching skills. At the same time they believe that the existing curriculum of teacher education program is responsible of their ignorance about culturally responsive teaching (Khatoon, Rehman, and Amjad, 2011). They also consider that the teaching practices of existing teacher education program do not appreciate culturally responsive education. At the same time, they have not been provided with any in-service teacher training opportunity regarding culturally responsive teaching. Consequently, neither the teachers observe culturally responsive practices in their classrooms nor the school administration encourages them to do so. They were in favor that teacher education institutions should include aspects related to culturally responsive education in teacher education curriculum so that various aspects of culturally responsive education could be taught to prospective teachers. They also believe in-service teacher training opportunities can help them to learn about cultural responsive teaching.

The influence of cultural on education process cannot be denied (Ho, Holmes, and Cooper, 2004). Factors like cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, cognitive and communication styles and linguistic patterns, socio-economic status of the learner, peer pressures, the nature of the relationships between dominant and minority groups, and the impact of technology on the society, as Sing (2011) suggests, entrench teaching and learning processes. The result of the study clearly shows that students in schools are taught by teachers who have been trained through a curriculum which does not appreciate culturally responsive education. The severity of the problem further enhances as these school teachers have been taught by teacher educators who did not use cultural responsive teaching in their class activities (Khatoon, Rehman and Amjad, 2011).

Being a member of a multicultural, multilingual, multiethnic society, teachers in Pakistani schools have to teach students from diverse ethnic, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds. Keeping in view the true spirit of 'Education for All' and 'No Child Left Behind' philosophies, it is the role of our schools to ensure that every child, irrespective of his/her background, progress and make appropriate achievements both academically and socially. For this purpose teacher education institutions need to revamp teacher education

program keeping in view the various aspects of culturally responsive education including instruction, pedagogy, curriculum and assessment practices. It is a challenging task and requires from every one involve in the education process to develop attitude and to acquire knowledge, skills, competencies which enable them to ensure the academic and social achievements of students from diverse backgrounds. In addition, aspects like curriculum, pedagogical practices, educational environment, school policies & practices, home-school relationship, and other educational processes etc. need to be in harmony with the dynamics of culturally responsive education.

Grant (1995) recommends,

"Any program aiming to increase positive interaction among racial groups

Must include processes which teach people ...qualities of the ethnic groups involved," (p. 21).

Ladson- Billings (1994) argues the teachers who recognize and value the racial and ethnic background of their students, create vibrant learning environment through mutual respect and collaboration and engage in culturally responsive practices can raise students' academic achievement.

The time has come; educators in Pakistan have to acknowledge that learning has cultural meaning for every child in the classroom. It could only be possible when teacher and administrator should appreciate that culturally responsive curriculum, culturally responsive pedagogy and knowledge of the cultural background of students can enhance students' learning and their social and academic achievements. Equally important is the realization of school teachers and administrators that they are now required to learn new techniques and skills for understanding, motivating, teaching, and empowering each individual student regardless of race, gender, religion or creed (Coggins & Campbell, 2008). Educating children with this perspective, as Doll (1992) argues, will naturally assist in the ultimate realization of culturally responsive education.

An effective parent-school relationship is another essential ingredient of a culturally responsive education. Since the teacher is in a position of power, it is believed that the teacher has a responsibility to blur the boundaries between home and school (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Teachers who make efforts to communicate with families know that these contacts have greater access to information regarding students' lives, and as a result are able to work more effectively with families for student achievement (Epstein, 2001; Epstein & Janshorn, 2004). Therefore, developing prospective teachers' skills to develop a positive parent-school relationship has to also been addressed in teacher education program. Teachers should also be taught about various aspects of cultural diversity of Pakistani society so that they could know about students and their families' culture norms, values and other such aspects. Such knowledge can help them to develop an effective parent-school relationship. Many studies have shown that strong home, school, and community connections not only help students make sense of the school curriculum, but also enhance their academic and social achievements (Au, 1993; Hoover-Dempsey, & Sandler, 1997; Christenson, 2002; Reali & Tancredi, 2004; Greenberg, 2006; Kong & LI, 2008; Shute, Hansen, Underwood & Razzouk, 2011; Gestwicki, 2012).

### Conclusion

Although the ethos of cultural diversity has been appreciated in the Constitution (GOP,1973) and National Education Policy (GOP, 2009) and clear guidelines for curriculum development are provided to encourage the acquisition of learning experiences relevant to the needs and

purposes of each individual (GOP, 2005), no noticeable efforts have been made/reported yet to address the implication associated with the education of children from diverse cultures. Rather it has been accepted as a challenge, as written in a government publication 'Education For All: Mid Decade Assessment Country Profile' (GOP, 2008): 'Challenge is to provide education for all to the masses regardless of income status, gender, location and development. It implies access, equity and quality education for all children.'

The study has concluded that, although culturally responsive teaching has been advocated globally as an important and effective tool for social and academic achievements of students from diverse backgrounds, in Pakistan, it is missing from teacher education programs and education systems as a whole. This study reveals that in-service teachers encounter cultural diversity in their classrooms but their lack of knowledge about students' cultures and their ignorance about culturally responsive teaching cause hindrances to teach children from diverse back ground more appropriately. One of the main reasons behind this situation is that teachers have not been taught about culturally responsive teaching during their teacher education program as the curriculum of teacher education program in Pakistan does not covers aspects related to culturally responsive education. At the same time, in-service teachers have not been provided with any in-service teacher training opportunity regarding culturally responsive teaching. Consequently, neither the teachers follow culturally responsive practices in their classrooms nor the school administration encourages them to do so. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the teacher education institutions in Pakistan should include aspects related to culturally responsive education in teacher education curriculum so that various aspects of culturally responsive education could be taught to prospective teachers. At the same time, the government should provide training opportunities for in-service teacher to learn about cultural responsive teaching. It is believed, the proposed measures, on the one hand, will help to promote culturally responsive practices in schools. On the other hand, prepare prospective teachers to teach in culturally responsive classrooms.

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