



## *Exploring the Issues and Challenges of Commerce Higher Education in Pakistan*

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### Abstract

The purpose of the article is to draw attention to the problems and difficulties facing Pakistani commerce education. Pakistan, a developing nation, is dealing with new issues as a result of the numerous social, economic, and political changes and advances that have occurred over the past 20 years. As a result, the country's educational system is under a lot of hardship. Pakistan is currently going through a period of transformation that includes social, cultural, and economic shifts, among other things. On the one hand, there are fewer job openings, but on the other, the industry is finding more commerce graduates with the necessary skills and expertise, even if their numbers are growing. In order to bridge the gap between industry demands and academic curricula that emphasize attitude, corporate awareness, grooming, and the development of managerial abilities, commerce education must be comprehensive, focused, and tailored. Therefore, it is imperative that commerce education be updated and redesigned to make it relevant to the community at large. Therefore, the government need to make an effort to create new trends in order to enhance the nation's educational system.

**Keywords:** Commerce Education, Issues, Challenges, Higher Education.



## INTRODUCTION

Swami Vivekananda said "Education is the manifestation of divine perfection already existing in man" (Bharadwaj & MD, 2023). One of the most important components of any economy's sustainable growth is the development of human resources (NBEAC, 2022). Developed nations realized this early and made investments in their educational systems to produce highly competent individuals in a variety of fields. Developing nations are currently making significant investments in their educational systems after realizing the existence of these phenomena (Asghar, 2026). Knowledge transfer, skill development, and the instillation of appropriate attitudes and values toward life and society should be the three main components of education. It has to enable the individual to attain the abilities and pursuits required to earn and sustain an adequate level of living. Additionally, it should allow him to fully realize his innovative capability in order to enhance his personality on all levels—intellectually, ethically, physically, and spiritually. Commerce education is currently afflicted with fatal illnesses, and both students and commerce professors are extremely frustrated about the future of this field. Over the past 70–80 years, the number of commerce graduates and colleges has increased significantly. Thousands of students graduate and pursue post-graduation studies in commerce each year. Many of them are still unemployed, and the majority are underemployed. In his well-known book "Future Shock," Alvin Toffler states, "To help avert future shock, we must create a super industrial educational system and to do this, we must search for our objectives, methods in the future rather than the past." Education has to change to focus on the future".

A key component of emerging nations' overall economic development is high-quality, need-based commerce education. Basically, the goal of science, business, and management is to improve the nation's citizens' ability to think critically and produce more. Any nation's degree of economic success is largely determined by its level of human resource development as people are a resource that gives life to dead resources so they can contribute to the nation's economic growth. This is particularly true when it comes to teaching commerce. Commerce education has been greatly impacted by the expanding phenomena of globalization, liberalization, and privatization. E-HRM, e-business, e-payment, e-procurement, e-learning, e-marketing, e-health, e-governance, e-commerce, and e-banking have all grown in significance globally as a result of the technology revolution. Meanwhile, small company operations, customer service, outsourcing, IT-based service providers, etc. are all rapidly growing. The concept changes in the teaching and knowledge process is required in light of these advances. To deal with these changes, new training and abilities are needed. Contemporary business transactions education encompasses a wide range of academic disciplines as well as research on several facets of the business world. Professional economists and accountants with sophisticated practical knowledge are necessary to assess and analyze the intricacies of large-scale company, among other things, in order to achieve business expansion in an area or a nation. Many educational institutions have been established to provide students with more practical knowledge in the field of commerce so they may benefit from it. Given that Pakistan's economy is among the fastest-growing in the third world, there is an urgent need for trained employees who can support economic expansion. "Commercial education is fundamentally a programme of economic education that has to do with the acquirement, conservation and spending of wealth" (Paul S. Lomax, 1928).



## LITERATURE REVIEW

Rust and Oliver (1984) presented a three-dimensional model, commonly referred to as the expectation model, for measuring service quality across the board. Paperman and Chandra (1983) noted that to improve classroom instruction and acquire practical skills and experience, learners must be dispatched to firms for on-the-job training. Additionally, having a brilliant student for a brief amount of time will benefit the internship company and aid in determining if the intern is qualified for full-time employment. Rao et al., (2012) came to the conclusion that commerce face significant challenges in producing high-quality products that can meet the demands of the corporate world and meet the expectations of various stakeholders in commerce education due to global competition and the growth of commerce educational institutions worldwide, for example Pakistan.

According to Khairoowala et al. (2002), commerce educationists must adapt regarding demands of the marketplace by delivering commerce education in a practical and convincing way through improved connections between universities and industries. Additionally, it was mentioned that the necessity of commerce education in the upcoming century will rely on the adjustments made now, considering the near future more broadly. Ahmad (2004) developed to the view that, in addition to teaching academic expertise, a student body needed to be ready for real-world challenges and equipped to deal with the issues that arise in the commerce world daily. This meant that commerce curricula needed to be reorganized on a regular basis. Additionally, it was demonstrated that commerce education shouldn't continue as a kind of broad education in the period of specialization, making students masters of none and jacks of all crafts.

According to Gupta et al. (2003), commerce and business schools must imitate US-based organizational, pedagogical, curriculum, industry-interface, and academic research models; however, due to variations in the work culture system, they are finding it difficult to start a number of adjustments. Investigating the obstacles to raising the standard of commerce education in Pakistan would thus be beneficial.

Mishra (2005) emphasized e-learning, virtual classrooms, and online education throughout the post-World War II era, highlighting the significant changes to commerce education. Additionally, it was noted that the nation's educational system was not reacting responsibly when putting the commerce education curriculum into practice, and it was stressed that the teaching community's mindset needed to change.

According to Sangmi, Mohiuddin (2005), the complexity of commerce and business led to the creation of commerce education, which has seen difficult periods throughout its development. Additionally, it was discovered that the difficulties posed by globalization, liberalization, privatization, and information technology have increased the demand on commerce education institutions to adapt and innovate in response to shifting business environment dynamics.

## THE CONCEPT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

After secondary school is finished, higher education—also known as post-secondary education, third-level education, or tertiary education—occurs as an optional last phase of formal education. It consists of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs designed to help students gain advanced knowledge, professional skills, and critical thinking. Preparing people for specialized employment, research, and leadership positions in society is the primary goal of higher education. By motivating pupils to investigate novel concepts and resolve challenging issues, it also fosters creativity, academic advancement, and social



development. Higher education contributes significantly to a country's cultural, technical, and economic advancement through teaching, research, and community involvement. In contrast to higher education, tertiary education at the non-degree level is also referred to as further education or continuing education.

### Research Aims and Objectives

This study has been conducted with the following objectives:

- a) To examine the issues and challenges faced by commerce education in Pakistan.
- b) To propose practical and effective proposals for realizing brilliance in commerce education in Pakistan.

### Approach to the Study

In order to comprehend the problems and difficulties of higher education in Pakistan, a number of papers were examined, along with firsthand observations and conversations with professors and commerce students.

### Concerns facing Commerce Education in Pakistan

Commerce includes a wide range of accounting, finance and economy related topics, is regarded as one of the most popular job options in Pakistan and forms the foundation of the country's commercial and serial growth. People who have a commerce education are more equipped to live in a democratic manner be decent citizens, and use resources wisely. It gives students and society a skill-oriented education. However, the quality of Pakistan's educational system has long lagged behind its numbers.

### Current Issues in Commerce Education in Pakistan

- I. Limited Application of Hands-On Pedagogy: The current educational and instructional approach places more of a focus on lectures. Both innovative instructional strategies and a practical foundation are lacking. This has an impact on the students knowledge's applicability and relevancy.
- II. Variety of Core-Level Courses: Commerce education is the culmination of several different courses. It is basically diversified given that it covers a broad spectrum of topics without concentrating on any one area of study or offering in-depth, specialized information.
- III. Insufficient Practical Exposure: Today's business and commerce education places more of a focus on conceptual understanding rather than how a phenomena or activity really works. This creates obstacles to achieving the necessary level of acceptance and popularity for commerce education.
- IV. Lack of training programs: Many teachers lack the necessary professional training and are ill-prepared. This restricts their capacity to employ contemporary educational techniques and efficient teaching strategies. Consequently, there may be a detrimental impact on both student learning results and the quality of instruction.
- V. Brain Drain of Top Students: Professional courses, especially those offered as PIPFA, ACCA, CFA, CMA, and CA, are taking away the best of commerce potential graduates.
- VI. Narrow Subject Exposure: Commerce education has not yet fully embraced the idea of specialization. Although there are certain specializations at the graduate and postgraduate levels, the course material and specialty proportion do not align with the general curriculum and course structure.



- VII. Disconnect Between Academic Commerce Education and Professional Requirements: As a relatively old field, commerce education is greatly rated and agreed as professional education with more industrial and corporate significance. Commerce education cannot be appropriately placed and recognized in industrial sectors till it is presented into the professional education area.
- VIII. Outdated Practices in Commerce Education: The course is out of date and no longer applicable to the current situation. Even the material (syllabus) is out of current. Every student has to stay up to speed with the newest technological advancements and the evolving corporate climate. Commerce grads are frequently observed to have poor communication and decision-making skills.
- IX. Conventional Perspectives: With minimal focus on specialization, the course is hindered by a conventional perspective.
- X. Dominance of Teaching over Learning: The course has limited opportunity to teach practical instruction and is overly focused on theory.
- XI. Limitations Hindering Progress: With little options to either pursue further education or find work, commerce graduates are faced with a "end-of-the-road" position. In the CSS, FPSC, PPSC and KPSC exams, he or she is at a competitive disadvantage. With fewer students enrolling in B.S. degree programs and the creation of new institutions nearing a saturation point, job opportunities for postgraduates are being constrained.
- XII. Absence of a Governing Body: The creation of a powerful organization to advance and revitalize commerce education has never been considered, despite the vast number of commerce graduates and postgraduates.
- XIII. Diverse Roles of Commerce Instructors: Even if the instructor is interested in finance, accounting, or auditing, it is likely that he will be the only one needed to teach every subject, including business, banking, marketing, management, entrepreneurship, or even economics as compulsory courses.
- XIV. Inadequate Educational Infrastructure: A lot of colleges and universities are said to be essentially academic slums.
- XV. Educational Tools and Resources: Insufficient educational materials, such as CTV-Video films and a commerce lab.
- XVI. Limited Skill and Practice Development: It is less focused on technique and practice and more focused on content.
- XVII. Teacher Shortage in Educational Institutions: High student-to-teacher ratio is observed in many institutes.
- XVIII. Challenges Facing Commerce Education in Pakistan
- XIX. Curriculum redesign: The acknowledgement that conventional teaching methods are insufficient is reflected in the newly updated HEC curriculum for Commerce Studies (April 2025).
- XX. Teacher-centered approach: This method involves teachers imparting knowledge through textbooks and asking students to repeat what they have learned (Nieman, 2006). This method primarily requires students to memorize and regurgitate theory without incorporating critical thinking or problem-solving strategies (Fares, 2019), resulting in a lack of practical trade knowledge.



- XXI. Large scale expansion: The main goals of large-scale expansion are to introduce new courses and programs, enhance infrastructure, and make these programs accessible to a larger audience (Senior et al., 2025).
- XXII. Replacement of obsolete faculty: replacing teachers who are unable to adjust to changing teaching techniques, curricula, or technology (Santos-Jaén et al., 2025).
- XXIII. Internships: Making internships mandatory for educational programs would enhance experiential learning (Lantu et al., 2022).
- XXIV. Examination system: The examination system is also faulty since it does not employ conventional assessment procedures that measure field experience and advanced learning outcomes, instead concentrating primarily on evaluating students at early stages of cognitive learning (Chandio et al., 2024).
- XXV. Incubation centers: Since internet enterprises have made it possible for young traders and entrepreneurs to access broader audiences, incubation centers should be encouraged to develop entrepreneurial abilities among graduates (Panakaje et al., 2024).
- XXVI. Interdisciplinary collaboration: Interdisciplinary cooperation is the process by which specialists from many fields like computer science, engineering, medicine, or business to combine their expertise to accomplish a shared objective (Asghar, 2026).
- XXVII. To overcome the problems of resource crisis: Taking action to address a lack of necessary resources at a department or organization so that research, development, and teaching are not impacted.
- XXVIII. Library and infrastructure up gradation: A department-level library that offers online databases, e-journals, study spaces with Wi-Fi and installing improved campus Wi-Fi, lab automation, and smart classrooms with interactive displays (PS et al., 2022).
- XXIX. Industry-institute interaction: Industry–Institute Interaction is the partnership where both work together so that students gain practical knowledge and real-world experience, and industries get skilled graduates and research support (Asghar, 2026).
- XXX. Management transformation: Traditionally, accounting, finance, and auditing have been the main topics of study in commerce education. Modernizing these areas to meet the expectations of the fast-paced corporate environment of today is part of management transformation (Khan et al, 2011).
- XXXI. Prioritize quality over quantity: When it comes to their curricula and methods of instruction, educational institutions ought to put quality over quantity. Better educational outcomes can result from placing a strong emphasis on curriculum design, instructional strategies, and student learning (Smith & Hudson, 2017).. Instead of only expanding the number of students, this strategy aids in the development of competent and skilled graduates.
- XXXII. Adoption of new education technology: When it comes to professor and administrative staff, the Pakistani education sector is deficient in both number and quality.

The availability of qualified faculty members may be seriously threatened by this, and the government of Pakistan's projected development of educational institutions would need the hiring of additional faculty members. The quality of education would drastically decline if the lack of qualified and effective faculty members persists. The traditional state of the educational system has undoubtedly not altered, despite the fact that educational



methods are evolving. Pakistan's educational system is still characterized by strict curricula and extensive syllabuses. The online educational system is posing some of the biggest obstacles to traditional learning methods.

### Concluding Remarks and Recommendations

In order to prepare our future dynamic managers for the demands of the fast-paced corporate environment, commerce education is essential. The most extraordinary difficulties facing commerce education have been brought about by globalization, economic liberalization, privatization, and the technology revolution. The programs and courses for commerce professors should be modified and reorganized to address upcoming difficulties in manufacturing, service, and economic sectors as trade and commerce take on new magnitudes globally. The knowledge, skill, and practice components must all be included in the commerce education curriculum. The ultimate objective of any business and commerce education is placement. Universities and colleges can set up campus recruiting and placement for recruiting students in companies. Educational policy makers must give this issue careful consideration. As a result, there are several issues affecting commerce education today. The course objectives, content, and conduct are all directly impacted by these issues. These problems require careful consideration and examination. It's time to do some introspection in quest of an unbiased evaluation that will serve as the foundation for developing a fresh approach to improving commerce education going forward. Periodically, specialized seminars and workshops should be held for the benefit of educators and students at various levels. The set of courses for commerce education should be talent-driven, with more emphasis on creating reports and minutes, conducting case studies, working on projects, conducting field surveys, and conducting SWOT analyses of the institutions as well as initiating interactions between industry and the institute for placement. In order to close the gap between industry demands and academic curricula, which emphasize attitude, corporate awareness, grooming, and the development of management abilities, commerce education must be comprehensive, focused, and tailored. Therefore, it is imperative that commerce education be reoriented and redesigned to make it relevant for society.

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