EDU 2014 kicked off with excitement and anticipation that was almost palpable. Teachers and educationists from all over Pakistan gathered under one roof in the hopes of improving the educational structure and methods in the country. EDU gave teachers the acknowledgment they rarely receive, highlighting their commendable efforts towards shaping future generations and taking into account the importance of their role. With a positive energy in the air, the tone was set for the three-day conference and participants were changed with the challenge of ‘Bending Learning Boundaries’.
SHIREEN NAQVI

ECs had a spirit of its own, rooted in knowledge, wisdom and personal integrity. Through the exchange, learning and networking, a sense of connection, belonging, and identity was developed, which contributed to the overall sense of community. The ECs were not just a place to spend time, but a source of enrichment that contributed to personal and professional growth. The ECs played a pivotal role in shaping the future leaders, helping them develop critical thinking skills and a sense of responsibility.

KAMRAN RIZVI

It was heartening to be part of ECU 2014, which served to be an engaging and meaningful event. Education stakeholders embarked on a journey of exploration, learning and reflection, which were critical for personal growth and development. The ECs provided a platform for dialogue and exchange of ideas, fostering a sense of community and collaboration. The ECs were not just a venue for discussions, but a catalyst for change and innovation.

FAISAL MUSHTAQ

My experience of working with School of Education & Educational Development (UoP) has been educational. It has been a joy of learning, teaching & co-learning. Every single day is an opportunity which is not only a mandate for public, private institutions but also provides options for specialized settings. To provide students an overall education, ECs are an important component which brings together minds, ideas, stakeholders, government and initiatives from across the country to the fore. The School of Education & Learning & Training in Pakistan, in particular, has been an ECU, Long Live ECU, and Long Live the commitment of teachers and educators.

ABBAS HUSAIN

One of Pakistan’s major problems is the “division”, whether it’s between urban and rural, or rich and poor. Education is the key to bridging this gap which demands the resolution of a number of problems. The scourge of illiteracy and the need for proficiency is heartfelt in the community as a whole. It was heartening to talk about what we want from education in order to lay down the foundation for the future of Pakistan. I congratulate the organizers of ECU for initiating a movement to trigger change.
ANOSH RAZZAK
(Project Lead)

It was an honor as well as a challenge for me to lead EDU, especially keeping in mind the need to balance the needs of the students. The project was to help improve the quality of education in Pakistan, and the challenge was to ensure that the curriculum was relevant and effective. The project included the development of teaching materials and strategies, as well as the support of educators and students across the country. EDU’s success hinged on the support of government and private schools. EDU fulfilled the requirements of teachers by providing them with the necessary tools and resources to create an engaging and effective learning environment. The project was a success, and I am grateful for the support I received from my colleagues. I look forward to continued support in the years to come so that we can keep building learning resources together.

MARIYAM IRFAN
(Project Coordinator)

EDU 2014 was a rewarding event where I had the chance to work with teachers from across Pakistan. The event was a great opportunity to learn about the challenges faced by teachers and to help create a platform for them to share their experiences. The event was a huge success, and I am proud to have been a part of it. I look forward to working with teachers and educators in the future.

HAMMAD SAEED
(Project Coordinator)

EDU 2014 was a骄傲 event which managed to gather together teachers from across Pakistan from diverse backgrounds. The event was a great opportunity to learn about the challenges faced by teachers and to help create a platform for them to share their experiences. The event was a success, and I am proud to have been a part of it. I look forward to working with teachers and educators in the future.

UMAIR JALIWAALA
(CEO, EDU)

It was a privilege to be involved with the Educators Development Union in terms of both design and delivery. Inside of education, we are constantly working to put in place the necessary tools and strategies that are required for students to succeed. The project of EDU was to develop programming, teacher resources, and leadership training. There was a strong focus on ensuring that our programming was relevant and effective. I am proud to have been a part of this project, and I look forward to continuing to work with teachers and educators in the future.
Quality education can be a solution for many of the grave challenges faced by Pakistan today. However, simply getting children enrolled into school is not the be-all and end-all of this issue. The lack of a consistent schooling system in the country has been a matter of debate for many years, with discussions ranging from the challenges of quality teaching, a comprehensive curriculum, and the huge gap between the quality of education imparted by public and private schools.

Keeping in mind the need for education stakeholders to connect, converse, and collaborate, the School of Leadership (SOL) developed the Educators Development Union (EDU) in 2014 as the first initiative of its kind. Designed to bring together education stakeholders from across Pakistan under one roof, the EDU is an annual event spread out over three days. The idea behind the EDU is to challenge current practices in education by bending the learning boundaries. Key stakeholders are invited to participate in order to re-discover the essence and value of education and to share insights on the changes that need to be made to enhance the quality of education and make it accessible to all.

EDU is meant to function upon the conviction that providing a platform to explore the root-causes of the challenges faced in education can help education practitioners to arrive at practical solutions that will bring about a much-needed shift in the way we teach. It provides an opportunity for educators to understand the global trends and best practices in education from national and international thought leaders and to align academia with the needs of industry and society at large.
DAY ONE

Revolved around the theme of ‘Bending’, sessions explored the idea that learning should not be forced to follow a single pattern but rather, it should be contextual. Since a bend is a change in an existing route and routine, learning should also be based on the idea of changing and building upon what is already known rather than blindly following a straight path. The first day took on the current best practices and skills of the education industry and encouraged participants to be flexible, to challenge their preconceived notions and notions on the subject and to develop new methods of imparting education. Past of Academic sessions revolved around issues such as the need for lectures, the idea of teaching compassion, nurturing creativity, innovating leadership and teaching life skills through sports. Parallel sessions under Subject-Driven Experiential Learning focused on early education, outdoor learning and a number of courses like Math, Arts, and Business Studies etc. Skill Shops for Teachers and Management sought to encourage discussion on maintaining a work-life balance, handling difficult students and parents, workplace politics and providing career guidance. Each relevant educational concept was discussed and questioned with the objective of ‘Bending’ the participants existing perceptions about them.

DAY TWO

Brought to the theme “Learning”, sessions dealt with the ideas that knowledge, behaviors, skills and values are all reflective syntheses of different types of information. As the EEU event progressed into its second day, it gained momentum and proved to be an exciting roller coaster ride with a sleep-learning curve. Starting off with reflections about day one and a discussion regarding the role of media in education, parallel sessions on different topics took place throughout the day. Planning for the academic year, campus branding, the role of technology, safety and health and the provision of quality education with limited resources were all topics upon which sessions were conducted. Round table discussions were held to instigate healthy debate between parents, students and industry practitioners and to align their needs with each other. Skill Shops for Management and Teachers deal with topics like counseling students, dealing with bullying and bullying, critical thinking, writing letters, values and etiquette, emotional intelligence and handling hormonal changes.

DAY THREE

Explored the theme of ‘Boundaries’. It was based on the idea that boundaries are the rules or limits that people and institutions create to identify what is expected from them and how they tend to become the inhibitors of change for schools and learning. On this day, an interactive session with the theme of ‘together everyone achieves more’ was conducted. It involved discussions on top education issues, brainstorming, debates, skill shops, keynotes and thematic sessions. The event together brought more than 300 education practitioners from all over Pakistan, giving them a platform to learn, debate, contribute and grow, providing them with the tools to overcome the challenges they face in education today and bring about a significant change in the way we teach and learn.
70 sessions in 3 days.

323 participants from 17 cities.

Variety of audience:
- Headmistresses
- Principals
- Subject Teachers
- Dept Heads
- Administrative Staff
- Managers
- Coordinators
- Teacher Trainers

- Male: 101
- Female: 222

- 31% Male
- 69% Female
EDU encouraged participants to seek answers and explore the processes, actions and challenges of learning while also providing a connection between the major stakeholders to promote dialogue and improve understanding between them. It created an environment where all aspects interrelated to teaching, learning and education in today's age were divided into and examined using a number of different tools and methods. This resulted in a range of outcomes being achieved in each category that the sessions were divided under.

Best of Academia

This category provided twenty diverse tracks for the participants to choose from on the first two days, each one independently highlighting best practices in academia to expand the participants' capacities and take institutes to the next level. Outcomes achieved included:

New Perspective on Teaching Methodologies

- The need to overcome teaching challenges through new methodologies and firm determination
- Instilling creativity in students, using puzzles and other tools so that they push themselves harder till they develop the habit of exploring and enjoying new directions
- Techniques to be adopted to encourage students to develop an aptitude for reading
- New methods of testing reading capabilities of students
- A deeper understanding of the need for teachers to be well aware of psychological issues (if any) of a student
- Discussion of the requirement for a teacher to be honest and transparent in any evaluations and not let his/her personal bias play a role
- Development of skills needed to deal with students who create chaos and work effectively on the personal grooming of students
- Recognizing that the teacher’s role extends to that of a leader (leading by example), a follower (following the principles of humanity) and a student (always eager to learn more)
- Perceiving the need to hone entrepreneurial abilities among the children rather than creating a connection between education and jobs
- Nurturing among students the belief that making mistakes is not inherently wrong and that learning to correct mistakes is what develops character
Tuition Culture

- Agreement that a teacher giving tuitions to the same students results in conflicts of interest and should therefore not be allowed
- Students requiring extra help in particular subjects can be given the option of additional one-on-one time with the teacher
- Recognition of the fact that tuitions leave behind little time to pursue extra-curricular activities thereby adversely affecting children’s mental development and confidence building
- Inferring that most tuition centers pursue the objective of money making and result in killing the creativity and initiative among students

Creativity in Schools

- Acknowledgement of the fact that schools focus mostly on convergent thinking and promote one dimensional learning
- Students being labeled as ‘less’ results in undermining their confidence and self-esteem and killing creativity
- Emphasis on the need for children to participate in extracurricular and co-curricular activities once they have identified their field of interest since a child pursuing his favorite activity will be encouraged to be creative
- Discussion of the need to use visual aids and activities in learning and changing the system of examination to encourage students to learn better rather than to learn more
- Creating new experiences for children such as field trips in order to nurture and develop creativity through increased exposure
- Redesigning syllabus to be student centered and skill based with less pressure on teachers to complete the syllabus itself but, rather, to diversity it in terms of activities
- Concluding that education does not always lead to recognition of creativity since even uneducated people can display creative abilities

A Culture of Reading

- Discussion of the tools and methods that can be used to encourage reading among children including audio/visual aids, clay, colors, story-telling and reading competitions etc.
- Emphasis on the importance of sparking children to discover hidden messages in what they read and to present what they understand from their reading
- Consideration of the use of role playing techniques to make the experience more interactive and fun for the children
- Reading to and with the children while acting out the story, identifying their favorite genre and providing books from the relevant genre for them to read
- Developing a reading habit at the early stages of a child’s development to ensure it continues to exist later on in life
- Assuring that the books made available to children are a blend of both English and Urdu so neither language is ignored or overlooked

Homework

- The positive effects of giving homework were acknowledged as nurturing creativity, engaging the students, enhancing their learning, giving students an opportunity to review and revise and providing a self-learning experience
- Evaluation of the fact that homework creates healthy competition among students, builds confidence and develops spirit through appreciative words from the teacher
- Analysis of the negative effects of homework including fear of punishment, jealousy due to competition and personality destruction
- Assessment of the possibility of giving limited amounts of homework focusing mainly on research tasks, practical demonstrations, social action projects, art projects and activities revolving around the students’ hobbies
- Appraisal of the benefits and disadvantages of homework being tied to reward and punishment
Skill Shops for Teachers & Management

This segment focused on sessions diving into a range of pressing issues faced by teachers and management. It took account of the fact that although a teacher’s job is one of the most underestimated jobs of our time, it is, in reality, second to that of a parent with the required skills ranging from stress management to leadership. Outcomes from sessions conducted in this segment include:

Development of Social, Presentation and Negotiation Skills

- Acquiring the skills and tools for giving effective presentations using the acronym ABC (Accurate, Brief, Clear)
- Analyzing the role of a leader and teacher and concluding that it should be informational, interpersonal and decisional
- Evaluating the relationship between teachers, students and parents and preparing their roles using the Victim, Rescuer and Proactive model depicting how they play their parts in encouraging or NOT discouraging a malpractice
- Recognizing the differences in perception between the different stakeholders and emphasizing the need to consider the other party’s thought process before forming a conclusion or judgment
- Concluding that the formula for success should include both confidence (will) and competence (skill) and recognizing that both are needed collectively to achieve results
- Emphasizing the importance of strong, positive and energetic body language along with good content and tone as the recipe for a successful presentation
- Discerning the need to conduct a thorough analysis of an audience before presenting anything
- Deducing that the three stages of developing content include gathering input from various sources, conducting the process of transforming it into original content and the sum of the two resulting in the output of a written document
- Identifying that difference of opinion between management and teachers can be good if it leads to constructive dialogue and exchange of ideas
- Defining emotional intelligence as the ability to use emotions in a positive and constructive way in relationships with others
- Listing the five components of emotional intelligence as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill
- Acknowledging that although IQ is genetically endowed, EQ can be developed at later stages in life

Better Skills for Managing Students

- Identifying the methods through which parents and teachers can manage the behavioral changes in adolescents
- Recognition of the need to have a good gender mix among the teachers in order to ensure that the children are exposed to role models of both genders and therefore less likely to reject hormonal changes
- Discussing the need for parents to have “the talk” with their children so that they are not forced to resort to other sources that are not only morally wrong but also feed them false information manipulating their young, impressionable minds
- Acknowledging the necessity of warning young adults of the consequences of indulging in promiscuous activities, both scientifically and through religious teachings
- Encouraging parents to create a relationship with children based on trust, honesty and the ability to confide in each other thereby creating a high chance that the children will not look elsewhere for information
- The importance of students engaging in physical activity while undergoing hormonal changes in order to help them get rid of extra energy and aggression.

Communication

- Discussion of the relationship between teachers and parents led to the conclusion that there exists a communication gap between these two stakeholders that needs to be addressed urgently
- Consideration of the possibility of arranging workshops to train parents on how to deal with problems relating to their children and how to communicate with the school administration and teachers
- The importance of motivating parents to give more time to their children and teachers sharing with parents any issues that the children confide in them
- The need to arrange regular parent-teacher meetings, especially before exams in order to identify and address the problems faced by the children
- Getting in touch with organizations that train teachers focusing on low salary, low budget schools and guiding them on how to improve their standards
Critical Thinking

- Discussions revolving around the question “What is critical thinking?” revealed a number of different perspectives resulting in a comprehensive definition explaining it as the ability to independently analyze any piece of information.
- Acknowledgment of the fact that critical thinking in children encourages them to be self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, self-corrective, promotes reconstruction of perspectives and improvement in the quality of thinking.
- Specifying that teachers and parents could use a variety of methods and tools to develop critical thinking among children such as case studies, brainstorming, providing different kinds of environments through field trips, debates, reflective writing, and personality analysis.
- Recognition of the various factors that act as roadblocks to the development of critical thinking.
- Identification that elements like role learning, untrained teachers, traditional examination systems, lack of experimentation with teaching methods and pressure to cover the syllabus lead to critical thinking taking a backseat.

Technology

- Observation that only certain aspects of today’s teaching methodology are compatible with technology and the need for a transition to the next phase where technology is incorporated into teaching to a higher degree.
- Suggestion of various tools and ways through which teaching can make greater use of technology including interaction boards, tablets, tech-friendly assignments, learning from students and software seminars etc.
- Training parents and promoting an awareness of the importance of incorporating technology as part of the children’s education in order to prepare them for the modern world.
- The use of online seminars, mobile apps and other resources to train teachers and make classrooms more intelligent.

Workspace Politics

- Discussion of the reasons for workspace politics revealed a number of differing perspectives including male domination, lower salaries for female staff, and an uncomfortable environment between the teachers.
- Observation that competition among the teaching staff can produce a more energetic environment, more effective results, sharing of achievements and setting examples for others.
- Pinpointing certain factors that can make the staff room a more productive place including access to a PC and books, organizing regular peer discussions between teachers and setting ground rules such as discussion of only professional issues being allowed at school.

Emotional Intelligence

- Emergence of the definition of emotional intelligence as the self-awareness, empathy and situational intelligence required to regulate one’s emotions according to the situation.
- The significance of identifying and differentiating between different emotions.
- Understanding the importance of emotional intelligence in manipulating situations to get the required results.
- Identification of the various tools and methods that can be used to create emotional intelligence among students including development of positive behavior, encouraging tolerance, training, creating an awareness through resources and constraining a practical environment in the classroom.

Teachers as Professionals

- Discovering the qualities of professional teachers including punctuality, sincerity, and the ability to understand students, take quick decisions and possess a learning attitude.
- The need to maintain continuous professional development by attending workshops.
- The importance of teachers being aware of new teaching approaches and tools necessary to fulfill their students’ educational needs.
- The significance of teachers developing leadership qualities and conducting self-analysis to identify weak areas to work on.

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Re-designing Extracurricular Activities

- Designing extracurricular activities in a way that they are not only aligned but also supportive of the curriculum
- Understanding that extracurricular activities should equip students with decision-making skills, assertiveness, a sense of productive competition, confidence and punctuality and the ability to think critically

Further Reading:

Focusing on the Bigger Picture for Schools

- The underlying need for schools to not just be bodies that teach but also learn
- Discussing the need to establish a teacher’s section in libraries to encourage teachers to read and educate themselves further
- An exploration of the basic safety and health facts and tips schools need to inform students about including speed limits, flame and electricity precautions, first aid tips and regular doctor check-ups.
- Application of the concept of branding to school and college campuses
- Emphasizing the importance for institutions to develop a hiring strategy to hire and retain value adding employees and providing a career progression path
- The requirement to develop strategies for employee relations, employee support, employee growth and employee compensation

Subject Driven Experiential Learning

These sessions questioned what it takes to renew a classic without changing its core and solved the riddle with the help of innovation experts, transforming subjects like Math, English, History and Science into an experiential and fun-based learning exercise. Outcomes included:

- A more comprehensive understanding of why the sequence of activities is extremely important whilst conducting research and writing a thesis
- Development of an awareness of why a good research project is not just the result of good research but also takes into account aspects like reporting and presentation
- Recognizing what the world would be without history and questioning the notions about the subject ingrained in the audience’s minds
- The need to develop conceptual connections among the various subjects being taught
- Acknowledging the importance of history being recorded in terms of overcoming confusion, making connections, getting the right answers and shifting the truth in an era of information
- An analysis of the steps that can be taken to improve syllabus in schools including judging the cognitive level of students, concept progression at different levels and connectivity among topics
- Comprehending the differences between language, learning and teaching
- Emphasizing the requirement to develop skills continuously and recognizing that learning cannot take place in isolation
- Grasping the fact that adjusting to and accepting change is not only important for better teaching of subjects but to the survival of education itself
- Creating an inclusive environment in the classrooms for all students
- Exploration of the split between the theories of art education and the actual practice with an examination of the ability of theory to spark an intellectual and aesthetic impulse
- Sculpturing the possibility of incorporating contemporary thinking about art and culture into the everyday life of the classroom.

World Cafe!

World Cafe brought together all the 500 participants and turned them into EDU boundary breakers with a new impetus and drive to break boundaries, challenge drawbarks and kick into action using their learning at EDU. This acclaimed plenary session was facilitated by Mr. Abbas Hassan and involved the discussion of a number of relevant topics among the participants. Each topic resulted in a variety of outcomes.
**TESTIMONIALS**

*“I have no words to appreciate EDU efforts towards professional development of teachers. I have learnt a lot during three days session which I will utilize in my classroom. Last but not least I suggest these type of activities should be continued. These efforts will bring private and public institutions, I also salute Mr. Kamran Rizvi, Mr. Abbas Husain, Miss Sheene and their team”*

Shaukat Ali Khanzada - Jamia Milla Government college

*“Educationists from all over country participated and gathered on a single platform to learn and exchange ideas, it allowed us to open our minds towards reforming and updating our educational system”*

Gul-e-Shahwar

*“The cross section of educators across the wide range of schools and systems and having to learn about their ideas. The best part was the impetus provided by the motivational speakers, particularly Mr. Kamran Rizvi, Mr. Abbas Husain and our heart throbs Umair Jakwats”*

Farh Bukhari – Generations school

*“EDU’s effort is truly appreciable in every manner, They made me feel one step ahead and its just a beginning, ALL THE BEST TO YOU FOR THE FUTURE”*

Abbas Amin Mughal - Ali Karim school Lyari

*“In my opinion the most valuable part of EDU was its management, the way they managed it was good. It offered a lot of learning and exchange of views especially to those who don’t have the necessary exposure. A very commendable effort”*

Syed Faheem- Taqween-e-Pakistan

*“Asatizza ko bohat achay tereay say samyhaa gaya, Ha thaz say bhoor thal”*

Faheem Khawaja – Ujjala Public School.

*“The most important part of EDU was to bring the private and public sector at one spot, No resistance of language is the best part, Everyone was free to say whatever they want to. World cafes brought different ideas. All the best”*

Shumaila Shaalib- Nasra school

*“The energy and the passion of the whole team to meet the objectives of the conference was excellent”*

Mirza Arshad Baid- Govt. Secondary School Karachi

*“Fabulous! It is advised that this valuable event must not stop but move on and grow, Congratulations Team EDU”*

Sobia Qadir Future Stars Grammar School
EDU Extensions

EDU Talks
are a series of videos filmed at various EDU events & forums. Each 30 minute talk will cover a topic relevant to the education sector and will be conducted by an expert/practitioner/leader from the field of education. The videos will be devoted to sharing innovative ideas, tools, techniques, technology, projects and stories from the world of education.

EDU District Forums
will take place in twelve different districts throughout the year. As independently organized events by EDU alumni, the idea is to create a space where alumni can share their learning and experience as well as to provide a platform for others in the community to contribute ideas and exchange views regarding the future of education.

Since a large, national conference is unable to accommodate all education stakeholders, these district-level forums, structured as mini-conferences, would bring in local speakers to talk about issues relevant to those specific communities and encourage participants to develop short and long-term solutions to address those issues. By targeting specific districts, the forums would increase the reach of the EDU vision and methodology and create an increased awareness regarding the need to continuously evaluate education practices.

EDU Projects
are initiated and executed by EDU alumni with the aim of furthering the cause of education in new and innovative ways and contributing to the field of education by spreading awareness, encouraging discussion and introducing new methods for developing and shaping young minds. These projects are meant to provide high-impact solutions for educational challenges in the alumni's respective communities. Using knowledge and networking gained at various EDU events, these projects enable alumni to create a fertile environment for groundbreaking collaboration. Recognized projects are featured on the EDU website and shared on social media.

EDU Awards
are intended to acknowledge achievements in the education sector by EDU alumni. Each year, a group of experts will analyze and determine one EDU Project deserving of this award and it will be presented at the annual EDU Conference in the presence of hundreds of education practitioners and thought leaders. These awards are meant to enhance the status of education by giving it the kind of prestige that already exists for various other fields. Award-winning projects as well as the winners will be featured on the EDU website along with a description of their contribution to the field of education.
Embarked on a 400-year vision in 2002, we are a movement led by the youth, positively impacting thousands of individuals from diverse backgrounds.

School of Leadership (SoL) provides a creative platform for individuals to discover and utilize their unquestionable ability and the wisdom to elevate their lives through conscious endeavor.

SoL designs innovative learning programs for people in order to facilitate a greater awareness in them of self, others, and the environment. The resultant broader vision enables them to make a lasting positive difference in their immediate spheres of influence, communities and the organizations they are associated with.

The scope of our learning interventions is not only to develop leadership skills in young adults, but also to strengthen capacity of educational and vocational training institutes to become more effective and inspiring. In addition, we also provide development programs for young professionals who have embarked on their chosen careers.

We firmly believe that our youth are keen to learn, change their paradigms for the better, and act with greater responsibility in pursuit of their dreams. They can be trusted to shape their own destiny, inspire their families and communities and craft a brighter future for us all.