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Some Observations on Social Science Research in Pakistan¹

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Abstract

The present discussion of future social sciences research in Pakistan is mainly concerned with the likely impact of the 18th amendment of the Constitution and the proposed devolution of powers on institutions of higher learning and their personnel. But irrespective whether the central or provincial governments (or both) will be responsible, the major issues will remain the same. Having worked in the field of South Asian studies in general and of Pakistan studies in particular, inside and outside the country, I shall restrict my contribution to some observations to social science research in Pakistan. I made these observations as a member of an institute, i.e. the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University, Germany, that was set up half a century ago to study South Asia in an interdisciplinary way. I am aware of the fact that as an economist and outsider my assessment may be rightfully considered to be biased. Academic interest to a considerable extent depends on the economic and political environment of the social scientist. Career prospects determine the choice of the subject as well as the methods. The availability of generous research funds for some topics and hardly any money for others, plays an eminent role in a country where the teaching load can be heavy and where private means are lacking. Interdisciplinary research needs a deeper understanding of concepts, approaches, and terminology of other disciplines and the insight that there are no lead and supportive disciplines, and that we all need to learn from each other. Research must not be hierarchical: Too much insight is lost, if field work, analysis and reporting are done by different people. Quantitative and qualitative research has to go hand in hand, and last not least, social science research needs international comparison. There are economies and societies to be studied inside and outside of the region. Finally, it should be profitable to do more research on research itself: Not only on who is doing what and how much has been published and where, but also how research results find entry into policy making and teaching. If it does not exist already: A well monitored web site for social science research findings might be helpful. It would be much cheaper than a printed journal and would be instantly accessible everywhere. As for methods, short lectures/films on relevant methods and their application could be put on the same platform or an YouTube. Given the language limitations of students, explanations should be given in English and Urdu. Some quality control might help which could be exacted by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) or by academic institutions in the country assigned by the HEC. In order to create awareness and improve understanding, the abstracts of research articles should be also available in the national language, i.e. Urdu.

Social science research in Pakistan and the HEC

The objectives of the First International Conference on ‘Promotion of Social Science Research in Pakistani Universities: Prospects and Challenges’, organized by the Higher Education

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Commission (HEC) of Pakistan and held in Islamabad on April 18 to 20, 2011, had been lined out by the organizers as (a) developing and promoting an interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary/transdisciplinary approach to study the Pakistan society; (b) forging a common research agenda to meet the contemporary social, economic, political, cultural and environmental challenges faced by the Pakistani society; (c) examining the latest methodological tool, conceptual paradigms and techniques to address the challenging research issues facing Pakistan; (d) building the capacity of young faculty members and PhD/MPhil students to conduct qualitative and quantitative social science research; (e) encouraging and facilitating replication research conducted in the US and other developed countries; (f) providing an opportunity for academicians and professionals from different fields of the social sciences to come together and learn from each other; and (g) establish an inter-university consortium for expanding the role of social science research in Pakistan's public policymaking.

Academic cooperation between Pakistan and Germany in the field of social science research

In the wake of the preparations of Allama Iqbal's centenary, the late Mr. Munir Ahmad, the Cultural Counsellor of the Pakistan Embassy in Bonn, suggested to establish a professorial fellowship, funded by the Government of Pakistan, in honour of Dr. Muhamad Iqbal. The Allama had spent some months in Heidelberg in 1907 when he was waiting to defend his doctoral thesis on the Development of Metaphysics in Persia at Munich University. His letters are proof of his success in mastering the German language. Almost three quarters of a century later, Professor Mohammed Ajmal Makhdum became the first "Iqbal-Professor" at the South Asia Institute of Heidelberg University. He was followed by Professors Mohammad S. Khan Shibli, Fateh Mohammed Malik (two times), Hasan Aksari Rizvi, Pervez Cheema and – presently – Syed Wiqar Ali Shah. They came from different disciplines and blended excellently in our multi-disciplinary Institute, setting fine examples of crossing the borders of disciplines in teaching and research.

The Iqbal Chair at Heidelberg University is just one example of the long-standing and close academic relations between Pakistan and Germany since the early 1950s. Pakistan sent out promising young scholars not only to the United Kingdom, but also to countries of the non-English speaking world, in order to learn more about systems different from that of the former "mother country". At the same time, university teachers and students from all over the world came to Pakistan.

Academics, research and the international labour market

Pakistan was among the first batch of colonies that were 'released' into Independence. But for years to come they remained dependent, politically, economically and culturally. In order to lessen the influence of their former masters, they sent out their young scholars to third countries, where they could learn novel ways of organizing state, economy and society. A considerable number of Pakistani students came to my country and I am particularly indebted to all those who helped when I first came to Pakistan. They regretted that the interest in studying in continental Europe had become less. English-speaking countries in general, and the United States in particular had become much more attractive.

Today, English-speaking countries attract almost all interested in pursuing higher studies abroad.

But language may not be the real cause: The first generation of Pakistani students, who went to non-English speaking countries, had little difficulty learning another foreign language. The fact that South Asia is so rich in languages and that people often speak more than one language, must be the reason that people from the subcontinent pick up languages easily. English-speaking countries have an attraction beyond the familiar language, and that is the prospect of an international labour market. As English has become the working language also of countries that have their own language but use English in business and, especially, in education and research. Countries that promise employment and career after higher studies are most sought after. A higher degree is considered an entry card to academic positions abroad. This, of course, has its impact on research.

As an outsider who comes regularly to South Asia and has worked in different capacities and in different institutions and countries, I have been particularly fascinated by the opportunity of comparing the different systems within a region, where distinct societies share a common history. There are some striking similarities, but not in all fields.

First: Academic institutions all over South Asia **focus** much more **on teaching** and less on research as compared to academic institutions in my country, i.e. Germany. Teaching in South Asia is more *ex cathedra*: Teacher talks, student listens. There is less interaction. Bachelor and Master degrees not necessarily require a dissertation. Students are used to **root leaning** and less to express themselves in discussion, seminars and oral examinations. Where teaching and discussion is not in the mother tongue, students face difficulties expressing themselves and seek help from “model” answers, available from books and magazines, that promise shortcuts to knowledge and success. External evaluation in principle should guarantee certain minimum standards, but often leads to highly predictable standard questions. In short, the system is least suited to develop independent and novel thinking as is required in research.

Second: **Teachers** are **better qualified** than decades ago, at least in principle and going by formal qualification. It was easier, however, to maintain high standards as long as the number of students was small. Students came from families that gave value to education rather than to degrees. The leading institutions of learning on all levels had a considerable number of teachers from outside the country or having been trained abroad. After completing their studies, students could expect to find a job according to their training, preferably in government. With the expansion of education and little emphasis on teachers’ training, such privileged education can no longer be guaranteed. Government also no longer provides enough positions for graduates and postgraduates after completing their education. Employability more and more depends on grades. Teachers’ attempts at trying to be helpful and giving better marks devalue the whole grading system. Students try to cope by copying from the internet, which often is tolerated and even encouraged, and thus remains undetected and unpunished. The easy way out for the teachers is to avoid assignments and wholly to rely on written tests, which is unhelpful, if the students’ writing and analysing skills are to be improved.

Third: **Humanities and social science have to serve as a safety valve** for the many students who cannot be accommodated in discipline that promises higher pay and status: In order to allow as many students to take up higher studies in the face of limited funds available for education (i.e. always), students have to be herded into disciplines where costs per student are less than in sciences and medicine. We can also observe a tendency to go for **post-graduate and**

advanced studies as an alternative to unemployment or to taking up low level and/or low status employment. Theoretically the market would be cleared by lower wages and – subsequently – less demand for social science training. Instead unemployed academics enjoy financial and moral support of their families.

Fourth: In South Asia, it appears that the size of the country and its openness also determines the **value people give to their own institutions**. India, the most populous of the South Asian countries, could never expect to have the growing number of university teachers educated abroad. A policy of *swaraj* and self-reliance, the erosion of wealth of the old elite and repeated depreciations of the Rupee meant that only few advanced students could afford higher studies abroad, especially during the years of the *licence raj*, that is the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The number of scholarships and fellowships did not increase at the same speed as the number of prospective applicants. Large scale nationalisation meant that the number of attractive positions outside the government sector remained limited; an ambitious industrialization and arms programme created jobs in science and technology. As a result, academia became fairly competitive, including arts and social science. Under these conditions most degrees come from India's own academic institutions; to have an Indian PhD is totally acceptable; it is rather that academics returning to the country with foreign degrees find it difficult to get a proper position because they lost contacts over the years of absence from the country and/or they face difficulties having their foreign degrees accepted.

This is very different in Pakistan, where foreign scholarships were available, whenever the country enjoyed good relations with the major donors. More than once I did experience that local PhDs were treated with suspicion, if not contempt. Still the number of qualified persons is limited, as those who obtained their degrees from outside often decide to leave the country and take up a job abroad.

The situation in the other South Asian countries is different in that their own capacities are much more limited and their relations with India are better. As a consequence you find many senior university teachers in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka who obtained their higher degrees from India, as these are more prestigious than their own degrees.

Fifth: The world over, the market for advanced studies in social science seems to be more and more **degree driven**. The degree, however, is not an end in itself. In principle it should be a yard stick for employers. The number of posts for qualified academics, unfortunately, is restricted. Especially in research, there are few attractive permanent positions.

Sixth: What exists in Pakistan (and more so in Bangladesh), however, is a huge market for **consultancy** work for the government, aid agencies and others. The role of the NGOs, i.e. non-government organizations, in Pakistan is less of an alternative to the GOs, i.e. government organizations, than of a complement. This is because smaller action oriented private initiatives aimed at cultural or social tasks, needs little research: People know the problems they are dealing with and try to keep their overhead costs as low and the number of personnel as small as possible, but as NGOs grow in size and their work becomes more complex, the task of gathering information and making decisions becomes more difficult. In principle, the necessary analysis can be done in-house by own staff instead of being outsourced to consultancy firms that are often – quite confusingly – are labelled NGOs. Since few NGOs can raise their funds

themselves, they apply to other NGOs or, in the last instance, to national and international governments and government organizations. That this is true you can see from the last US support package for Pakistan under the PEACE Act that demands that US assistance has to be channelled through NGOs wherever possible. Private donations in many countries are tax exempt, which simply means, that in the last instance taxpayers are refunding private donors.

Seventh: Applications for projects and funds have to be well armed with statistical evidence and the outcome of “research”. Irrespective how good such research is, it is not necessarily gathered in a systematic way (like being part of a larger research agenda), as would be required in social science research; it is also not easily available to the public and/or the research community. The amount of knowledge available in the form of **reports and papers** must be enormous. Only due to the internet much of this material is available now, but most probably not in all institutions. Much of the older material was lost when the US Embassy had to shift into the US-AID-building after the torching of the US Embassy in 1979. The US-AID library, the best collection of social science reports in the country, was dissolved; the reports ended as wrapping paper for roasted peanuts and the like, as the present had to observe.

Eighth: Since writing of aid-related reports serves a particular purpose, namely to enlarge the basis for decision making, action oriented programmes and projects, method and language of such reports do not necessarily reflect **academic standards**, even when the quality is excellent, if measured by the requirements of the respective project or programme. Language and style often address only an inside group. Jargon may be used just out of carelessness; in many cases it reflects the wish to address an in-group and to make it sound “professional”. There is no need, however, to much referencing in a report, and under certain conditions cut-and-paste helps to reduce costs. It reduces, however, the value of such studies for research.

Ninth: There are only **few larger research institutes** in social science in Pakistan. In economics there are two, in other disciplines of social science there seem to be even fewer. Nadeem ul Haq and Mahmood Hasan Khan a decade ago wrote in Shahrukh Khan’s “Fifty years of Pakistan’s economy” (1999) an excellent analysis of the economics discipline in Pakistan. The situation does not seem to have changed much. This might be mainly because the underlying conditions for research have remained the same. This especially applies to the labour market. As one professor of physics of Qaid-i-Azam University explained to me when he just had handed in his resignation: It was not just that he would earn so much more abroad, it was even more that he did not feel taken serious as an academic in his own country.

Tenth: Economic and political conditions have a direct impact on social science research: If one plans to find an **academic job outside of his/her country**, he/she specializes in areas that have a market and that will increase his/her value. Therefore, he/she will try to publish in prestigious journals abroad. And if he/she wants to place his/her article in such a journal, he/she better sees first what kind of article these journals are interested in. The 1980s and 1990s were the high time of econometrics. Given the scarcity, lack of accuracy, if not unreliability, of data available in Pakistan, and the high cost of collection data of a large sample, less econometric refinement might have done to analyse burning social issues in Pakistan. The question, however, would be, whether such studies would have helped to find a teaching position outside the country. Quantitative studies with few and cautiously worded conclusions, did save one also from the risks that a more outspoken critique of government politics might pose, especially in times of

military rule and repression. I remember having been first encouraged to translate my PhD thesis on regional development in Pakistan into English and publish it here. When my colleagues at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIE) found out what it was about, they told me that they would be interested only in the methodological part. Principal components still is a standard method for quantitative studies and even then was well documented in every better statistics textbook. So I decided to publish my results outside Pakistan. It turned out that a parallel study had been done by another foreigner who first was asked to hand in his manuscript for publications and then never heard anything again from the same Pakistani host institute.

What to do?

I have been lining out these facts in order to show that there are good economic and political explanations for some of the research shortcomings here. The question is, what could be done under the conditions prevailing.

The **choice of research methods** reflects not just the state of research. It also reflects the general conditions for and perceptions of research. A century ago the motto of the *Bauhaus* movement was that less is more and that form follows function. The state of social science research, the choice of topics and methods reflect the general climate for research. In line with Say's Law that every supply creates its own demand, one can observe in Pakistan that research follows **data availability**. In social sciences, this would explain the large number of quantitative studies in demography and foreign trade. If research would follow research needs, other topics would capture more attention, but this depends on who is determining the needs.

Haq and Khan in their study deplore the **lack of studies on the impact of adjustment programmes** for the Pakistan economy. Looking back to the 2010 floods, one would see the need for a major endeavour to study Pakistan's ability to absorb "external" shocks and to prevent and manage natural disasters. Traditional systems of self-help and assistance are still intact, so why is it so difficult to organize things on a larger scale? These problems need an interdisciplinary and integrated approach: Take water as an example: As we know, water is not a homogenous good. Its physical, chemical and other qualities vary over space and time; as a flow resource it is subject to formal and informal regulation; it is a scarce resource that seldom is allowed to develop its own price; it is a transnational resource. This country is the lower riparian of most of its rivers, and as such subject to the dealings of the upper riparians; it is subject to massive government interference; water has its cultural aspects; there are groups of people who have lived on and along the waters for centuries; it is of utmost importance to nutrition, health and irrigation, etc. In a country that depends on irrigation like no other, certainly one would expect more research on this precious item. Many aspects do not fall under "socio-economic" disciplines. But that is the point: All aspects are interlinked and all have their socio-economic implications, if not directly, than indirectly.

From the last sentences it hopefully has become clearly that pigeonholing in academics has to be avoided. As an economist I have greatly benefited from **working together with experts in other disciplines**, not to forget that economists takes pride in adapting research methods from other "lead disciplines" like mathematics, physics, and – of recently – life sciences, i.e. the science of living organisms.

Research interests should not stop at the (imagined) boundaries of one's own subject, they also should not stop at the **national borders**. Water might serve again as a perfect example. Pakistan's main rivers come from neighbouring countries, i.e. China, India and Afghanistan. Studying these countries' water needs should help to understand their governments' policies. Managing the waters of the Indus Basin has to be compared to the management of other major river systems, like those of the Ganges/Brahmaputra, the Euphrates/Tigris or of the Mekong River. Similarly, environment has its transnational and global aspects.

Looking across the borders is also needed in economics. I always felt that in Pakistan there is a **lack of interest in the economies of other countries**, especially those who have been on the same level as Pakistan decades ago and now have surpassed it by miles. Conditions might change, as the world economy has undergone sea changes in the past. Simple extrapolations of recent trends can be very misleading. One is remembered of Pakistan's fruitless attempts at recapturing textile markets and how Pakistan lost its early edge in ship wrecking. Pakistan has been surpassed by Bangladesh in garments production and remittances – interesting stuff for analysis.

Pakistan more and more is being discussed as a failing or even a **failed state**. This obviously also has to be a topic of research. One of the methods would be to try to compare Pakistan's situation with that of other countries which have been in a similar situation. Two countries come to my mind: Turkey and Thailand. Other than India they managed to escape foreign rule, but they also have been highly dependent on the richer, "developed" countries. Both have their very distinct culture, both have been under military rule directly and indirectly for much of their recent history. Area-wise both of a similar size as Pakistan, their population is less but they still count among the more populous countries in Asia. In both countries a dominant metropolis (Istanbul, Bangkok) towers over the rest of the country. Both performed much better economically and socially than Pakistan. Both have their own problems of integrating minorities (the Kurds in Turkey and the Malay in Thailand). Both are almost throughout monolingual, but still have an increasing percentage of people who know English. Having a closer look at such countries would not be possible without knowing their languages. That would be an option only for a small number of students, but it would be interesting to see the outcome of a direct comparison rather than to rely on research done on Thailand and Turkey by Western scholars.

The world economy is constantly undergoing severe **changes**. In the last few years we have seen a major crisis of the world financial markets; the rise of China to become the second largest economy and the largest holder of foreign exchange reserves; rising prices of natural resources (especially oil and gas and food stuff); a rising scepticism viz-a-viz nuclear power; global climate change etc. All of them have their repercussions on Pakistan. To understand the actions of the leading players (including BRIC) one has to study their economic system, policy, history and society. Research on trade has to be more demand and less supply oriented: Bangladesh has surpassed Pakistan as an exporter of ready-made garments and knitwear despite the fact that there is hardly any cotton produced in Bangladesh. When in the 1980s I told a Pakistan Minister of Manpower how I was impressed by the emerging ship reeking industry at Gaddani, he told me that there was no future in this business. Without the necessary government support Pakistan lost its early advantage and the industry moved to India and Bangladesh. I have not seen any study of such missed opportunities.

There are interesting examples of **international cooperation** in the face of nuclear threat worth to be studied: In the 1970s the Soviet Union and Germany agreed to exchange natural gas for steel pipes: The USSR laid a pipeline from Siberia to Germany with steel pipes delivered by Germany. Even during the coldest days of the Cold War the gas supply functioned with perfection. Going by our experience, it should be possible to trade oil, gas and electric power across Asia. Pakistan, sitting at the crossroads, could benefit from transfer. Research on other countries' experience should be worthwhile.

Finally, it should be profitable to do more **research on research itself**: Not only who is doing what and how much has been published, but also how research results find entry into policy making and teaching. If it does not exist already: A well-monitored web site for social science research findings might be helpful. It would be much cheaper than a printed journal and would be instantly accessible everywhere.

As for methods, short lectures/films on relevant methods and their application could be put on the same platform or a YouTube. Given the **language limitations** of students, explanations should be given in English and Urdu. Some quality control might help which could be exacted by the HEC or by academic institutions in the country assigned by the HEC. It also would help if Government funding of research would be granted under two conditions, i.e. (i) that a part of the research grant is spent on reviewing and editing the results in order to improve their readability and marketability and (ii) that at least a summary of the **findings would be published in Urdu**. It would help students with a limited command of English to chose articles worth the effort of reading in a difficult language. Finally, the translation of selected research reports into Urdu would help to reach a wider audience and to teach them good academic practices.

Central to all efforts should be the question "What do we want to know, that we do not know already? And why? And what would be the most suitable way, i.e. the best method, to achieve such knowledge? Professor Lawrence Klein, the Nobel prize winner, once thoroughly disappointed his captive audience in Islamabad, with the advice: "In the long run, there is no substitute for hard labour and work ethos."

International collaboration

At the end, a few words on international collaboration might be appropriate. I mentioned the many academic contacts between Pakistan and Germany. There have been more with other countries. Originally with the United Kingdom, later also with other "western" countries, i.e. the major industrialized countries of Europe, North America, with Japan and Australia. Today the majority of social sciences researchers in Pakistan with foreign training have been to the USA, the rest also not exclusively to other English speaking countries. Not so many to China, Pakistan's reliable old friend, few to other Islamic countries or the successful "tiger" economies. Foreigners have come as teachers and advisors. Students from industrialized countries are not too many; those who come often have South Asian roots. Academic exchange with India would most probably more intensive, if allowed.

The countries of the European Union are just finishing a process of bringing their national educational systems in line. Countries like France and Germany had very different systems of

higher education as compared, for example, with the United Kingdom. Switching over to a BA/MA-system has been a sea-change for us. We joined the Bologna process in order to make it easier for students to change universities within Europa at any stage of their studies. But if a student wants to spend a semester or a year at a Pakistan university, that still is hardly possible. There are no general rules. German students, for example, have to hope to be accommodated somehow here and to have their own universities to acknowledge whatever proof of studying in Pakistan they can bring home. But these students would be the ones who would engage later in some joint research project here. DAAD, the German academic exchange service, is supporting so-called sandwich courses/studies, where students go for a PhD in one country, spend a year or so in another country, and finish their thesis and get their degree from their own university. Long absence from home and problems of re-integration are thus avoided. It is also much more economical: At the cost of spending years to obtain a degree abroad, several students can be exposed. It should also facilitate close collaboration between the teachers and researchers from both countries.

Academic collaboration in the field of social science research has an impressive history. In the following I shall list some names that will be familiar to many researchers in Pakistan; for the younger reader it just shows the wealth of collaboration:

Among the Germans, Professor Otto Schiller advised the Government of Pakistan's Agricultural Commission. When he became Head of the Institute of International Comparative Agricultural Policy and Rural Sociology of the newly established South Asia Institute of Heidelberg (SAI) University, he guided a number of doctoral students from Pakistan and Germany working on the agricultural systems of Pakistan in cooperation with the Agricultural University in Lyallpur (now: Faisalabad). Under his successor Professor Winfried von Urff, we were a group of young economists studying Pakistan's development in cooperation again with the Agricultural University, with the Department of Economics of Quaid-i-Azam University, and with the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE). Professors Mahmood Khan, Dilawar Ali Khan (both from AU Lyallpur), Abdul Matin (Peshawar U), Hussein Mullick (QAU) and Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi (PIDE) were among those with whom contacts were closest. Professor Frithjof Kuhnen and Prof. Manig (both Göttingen U) guided a series of studies, mainly in the Peshawar Valley. In Political Science Professor Karl E. Newman (Köln U) and Dr. Hans Frey (SAI, Heidelberg U) taught at Qaid-i-Azam. Professor Karl-Heinz Pfeffer (Münster U) had been teaching at Punjab University and started its Social Science Research Centre; his son, Professor Georg Pfeffer (then: Freiburg U, later Heidelberg and Berlin), started Anthropology at Qaid-i-Azam; Dr. Naved-e-Rahat, Dr. Azam Chaudhury, both now at QAU, the late Dr. Adam Nayyar of Lok Virsa, Ms Naghma Imdad, and Dr. Anis Dani were among his first students. Dr. Doris Buddenberg (SAI, Heidelberg U) also taught anthropology at QAU; Professor Jürgen Wasim Frembgen (Munich U) is a frequent visitor. Among the historians, Professor Gita Dharampal-Frick recently taught at Quaid-i-Azam University. Professor Jamal Malik (Erfurt U), a Pakistan national who grew up in Germany, now is our best expert on religion and society in Pakistan. Professor Hippler of Duisburg U has been to Pakistan several times; he spoke also at the HEC Conference on social science reseearch in Pakistan in April 2011.

The German Democratic Republic, i.e. the erstwhile East German state, had a different approach to South Asian studies with emphasis on languages. Dr. Christina Österheld who now teaches Urdu at the SAI in Heidelberg, Dr. Bettina Robotka, now in Karachi, the political scientist Dr. Dietrich Reetz and the Sindhi-specialist Dr. Michael Schied are among those still active.

Professor Karl Jettmar, an Anthropologist (SAI, Heidelberg U) shared a fascination in the rock carvings in the Upper Indus with Professor Ahmad Hassan Dani (QAU). Every year he would come with a Pakistan-German expedition to study those manifestations of change and exchange of cultures in Northern Pakistan. His work was continued by a larger group of researchers of the Pak-German Karakoram Project, led by Professor Irmtraud Stellrecht (Tübingen U); the work on the rock inscriptions went on under Professor Harald Hauptmann (Heidelberg U, Academy of Science); Professor Hugh van Skyhawk (Mainz U) presently is teaching at the Qaid-i-Azam University. Among the geographers Prof. Fred Scholz (Berlin FU) stands out with his study of the tribes of Balochistan, Professor Hans-Georg Bohle (then Freiburg U) worked on people's coping with disasters; presently Professor Hermann Kreutzmann (Berlin U) comes with a group of students to Pakistan every year. Professor Matthias Wineger (Bonn U) and Professor Marcus Nüsser (SAI, Heidelberg U) have been studying glacial movements in the Karakorum and in the Western Himalayas – an important topic with relevance for social science in the times of climate change.

Professor Michael Jansen (RWTH Aachen) reconstructed the findings of the excavations in Moenjo Daro. As a man of architectural history he taught us what to make out of the archeological findings. We still need to know more about the reasons of decline and erosion of such a great civilization. The puzzle obviously is more complex than commonly assumed. More insight is especially sought on the social organization of the early societies of this country. Maybe we can draw lessons from Pakistan's past for how to react to catastrophes.

Not a social scientist in the strict sense, but a person with wide ranging knowledge and interests who became the personification of German scholarship in Pakistan, has been Professor Annemarie Schimmel (Harvard and Bonn). The famous orientalist over decades came to Pakistan and taught and wrote about the country and its language, i.e. Urdu. Nobody in Germany could rise so much interest in Pakistan, its culture and society as she did. The list is far from complete. Not all contacts led to lasting cooperation. Qaid-i-Azam University, Punjab University, Peshawar University and the Agricultural University in Faisalabad in Pakistan and the German universities in Heidelberg, Berlin, Tübingen and Göttingen see a steady exchange of social scientists.

Outlook

If the reader is surprised that money has not been mentioned, although the writer of this paper is an economist: It is on purpose: I am sure that there is a positive correlation between money spent on research and the outcome, quantitatively and qualitatively. But it is matter of political will to decide how much weight a society and their government give to research. The quality of research also depends on the qualification and mind-set of future researchers. Therefore the foundations have be laid in school. For all practical purposes, it means emphasis on English and, at least in economics, on mathematics. Students have also to be encouraged and trained to express themselves and to give reason for their judgement.

Academic exchange can help not just in disseminating research methodology and quantitative and qualitative techniques of analysis. A steady exchange of ideas and people, rather than short "briefings" and "updates" help to increase the quality of social science research for mutual benefit. Such exchange certainly has not to be one-way. The reader might remember the lasting contribution to social science research by the late Dr Mahbub ul Haq, one of the great Pakistani

social scientists, who developed the Human Developing Index (HDI) and started the annual Human Development Report (HDR) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).