

# Public Education System In Pakistan: An Exploration Into Major Problems

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## Abstract

This was a qualitative study that has been conducted as a follow-up of a quantitative study. This study has been conducted to explore the major problems in Public education system in Pakistan at Primary level. The primary school teachers serving in Lahore city were selected conveniently as a sample for the study. There were eight primary school teachers who took part in this study. They have been interviewed by the inquirer(s) with the help of a semi-structured interview protocol. After the data collection, the data was analyzed with the help of Thematic analysis. The themes which emerged from the collected data were “Infrastructure; Availability of Resources; School Discipline; Implementation of Curricula: School Curricula.” It has been revealed by the research findings that the basic facilities have been available in schools which includes school building, electric fans and basic water cooler etc. However, there were lack of electric water cooler and school ground etc., which are recommended by the inquirer. These findings have validated the quantitative findings which were; the basic facilities like school building, electric fans and basic water cooler etc., were available for the students. However, there were lack of electric water cooler, school ground and CCTV cameras etc., which are recommended by the inquirer.

**Keywords:** Education System; Public Schools; Problems of Education; Primary School Teachers

## Introduction

Education is something you do from the time you are born until the day you die. The early years are important because they affect things that happen later. However, we cannot exert complete control over the early years since children remain in their families' care until they join school (Krishnamurthi, 2021). Several variables, such as friendships inside and outside of school, influence their intellectual development even if children attend school. The educational system

prioritizes children from preschool to graduate school. As students attend a higher level of schooling each year, the majority of their gains transfer from public to private (Vayachuta et al., 2016).

This is why children are required to attend school for the first 10 or 12 years of their lives. If we could not teach them to be decent citizens, larger and more expensive societal issues would result (Zeitlyn & Meke, 2015). Education is the impact of mature generations on

those who are not yet ready for social life. In other words, education's major purpose is to assist youngsters in acquiring intellectual and physical capacities (Pradhan et al., 2018).

In addition, students should be incentivized at school to learn the moral principles expected by political society since if we do not assist children in achieving these goals, society may experience social issues and incur more costs to resolve them. Education occurs successfully when there is a link between the person and the environment and that the objective of education is not to prepare pupils for future life but rather to live for the now (Bashir-Ud-Din et al., 2016). Therefore, schools should first provide moral education and act as "a type of community." In addition, education is not a component of life but rather seen as "the ongoing rebuilding of experience." If youngsters get experiences in school, they may be able to learn about the real world and become future-ready (Talreja, 2017).

Consequently, "what experiences will they gain?" The questions that must be addressed are "how should we assist them in acquiring these experiences?" and "how should we assist them in acquiring these experiences?" Specialists examine curriculum in terms of grade levels and topics in order to assist students in developing the appropriate behaviors for a more harmonious society (PA, 2021).

Education has been analyzed in terms of society's aspiration for a desirable sort of person and the requisite values. Consequently, youngsters may exhibit certain desirable features, attitudes, knowledge, and abilities (Pradhan et al., 2018). The author asserts that a well-educated individual must possess the necessary intellectual skills and be sensitive to moral issues, have mathematical efficiency, and have a scientific vision and a historical and geographical perspective. When examining society, it seems that the educational system has failed to produce the desired educated man (Lyimo et al., 2017).

Education should guide the development of children's capacities and skills. A system of education should provide boys and girls with the chance to attain the greatest degree of education. The aim and main function of education are to prepare children for their duties as workers and members of broader society and define the purpose of education as the formation of the social being (Herwan et al., 2018).

Education is one of the key factors that affect the nation's progress. It takes part in the development of the country regarding the social, socio-economic and political aspects. The current age is the age of technology (UNESCO, 2015). Progress in technology can't be achieved in the absence of Education. Similarly, the health sector is also indebted to education (Ailaan, 2017). It is through education, due to which skilled health workers and personnel are available for the treatment of the patients. Even democracy can't prevail without the education of the nation (Witte, 2013). Similarly, if the labor of any country is educated and skilled, better productivity and production can be taken out of their efforts as compared to that of the uneducated and unskilled labor (Marks & Roads, 2016). It is education that boosts the efficiency of the workers and enables them to work efficiently. It enables the industry to achieve the objective of progress (Farwis, 2020). This lets the top managers efficiently manage the human as well as the material resources. Without education, the dream of a nation's progress and success cannot come true. This would result in better growth and development rate for the country. In simple, it is education that transforms a group of people into a nation (Vayachuta et al., 2016).

Education is a powerful catalyst that trains people mentally, physically, ideologically, and morally. This helps people understand their mission and purpose in life and gives them the tools they need to reach that goal. It is a tool that helps people grow spiritually and fulfill their needs in the physical world. From an Islamic

point of view Govt. of Pakistan in 1998, education is a way to help people develop attitudes that are in keeping with righteousness's worth (Pradhan et al., 2018). This contributes to the development of an Islamic society that is beneficial. Education is a key part of developing people as resources. It makes people more productive and efficient, and it creates skilled workers who can lead the growth of the economy (Jumanovich & Eshboevna, 2019).

There is no need to explain or defend the importance of education for developing human resources. Education is the most important thing for developed and developing countries alike. Education is one of the basic rights of a Pakistani citizen, and the country's constitution says that the government must make sure that every citizen has access to education (Black & Wiliam, 2018).

Schooling plays a significant role in an individual's later life as the schools educate the individuals for their late life. It instills in them the knowledge that is necessary for spending a balanced life (Reviews, 2021). It also proves to be a base for the later technical education which is given in the higher schools. However, for reaching such a level of technical education, basic school education is vital otherwise, it would be not possible for any individual to seek technical or vocational education (Siddiqui & Gorard, 2017).

As far as the education of male and female students is concerned, both should be educated as it is their right. Even Islam is the major religion followed by Pakistani citizens, which also advocates knowledge attainment for both males and females (UNICEF, 2013).

It is stated that quality education is the basic right of any child under the age of 18. The aforementioned has been accepted and agreed upon by 193 signatories (Mughal, 2018). The education should be inclusive for the learners. In this way, the maximum number of individuals could be brought into the streamlining of education. All of them must be provided the

facilities related to education including an appropriate learning environment followed by qualified teachers and an updated and modern curriculum (Mehmood, 2016).

Education is very beneficial for the individuals as well as society. First, the bulk of high-tax payers are highly educated; as a result of the economy's qualifications and competencies, people seek more education in order to be qualified for or promoted to a higher-paying job. The more tax money paid by citizens in a society, the more government programs are sponsored, resulting in enhanced lives for the populace and quick economic growth. Second, they become more open to novel concepts and market adaptability (Berkowitz et al., 2017). Different nations' economies are now competing, necessitating that they enhance their tactics and goods to attract better commercial possibilities, such as a large number of investors leading to firm growth. By doing so, they are contributing more tax income to the economy and creating more employment possibilities for members of society. Thirdly, better collaboration with other socio-economic policy areas, such as crime and health, might reduce the demand for public spending (Naveen, 2016). If individuals of society are able to afford health care owing to their money, they may redirect monies from the department of health to other parts of the budget that are in greater need (DBISD, 2013).

In addition to the knowledge of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle for themselves and their family. Education also reduces the incidence of theft since the administration has had a budget to give vocational and training courses to moderate/low-income or unemployed individuals (Talreja, 2017). This results in people receiving an education, which might lead to work or the opportunity to establish a small business to support their everyday requirements. Campaigns, seminars, and workshops have been held to educate underprivileged people in order to help them understand and improve their health,

therefore there is a clear link between health and education in society (Mujahid & Noman, 2015).

A person's level of education may open up several doors and opportunities for them in life. Because they have more options for where to earn their money, they are less inclined to steal and more likely to be politically engaged (Wang, 2010). They live longer because they are more informed about health and are hence more willing to practice preventative medicine. In addition, kids are less likely to engage in risky behaviors like drinking, smoking, or being overweight since they have a better understanding of the consequences of doing so (GoP, 2016a). Individuals with a higher level of knowledge are more likely to vote properly, volunteer, trust and accept others, have a reduced proclivity for (non-violent) crime, have better-educated parenting, and live longer owing to their capacity to afford (expensive) medical care (World-Bank, 2013).

Due to increased individual health awareness, people smoke fewer cigarettes, consume less alcohol, and have a lower risk of being fat. Additionally, people are more likely to seek preventative medical treatment, have higher life satisfaction with a stable mentality, and have improved mental acuity (Tooley et al., 2010). They also have superior mental health, and in addition, they must be able to participate in economic development while simultaneously obtaining self-fulfillment (UNESCO, 2015).

Educated individuals enjoy greater life satisfaction, including the capacity to finance quality housing and their needs and wants, since they earn more (Norwich & Black, 2015). In addition to this, they are more adaptive, which encourages them to study more so that they may fulfill themselves. As a consequence of this, individuals are not only helping the economy (by paying taxes), but they are also helping themselves on a more philosophical level (UNDP, 2016). In a similar vein, one of the purposes of education for people is to foster their own personal development and advancement. A

healthy and prosperous society is hard to achieve without educated individuals (SDPC, 2015). It is the belief that a curriculum that places a strong emphasis on the individual's growth makes a rock-solid basis for human ethics. On the other hand, it is stated that education has the power to alter the perspective and comprehension of a person, and as a result, it possesses an ethical component (Motala et al., 2007).

As a consequence of continuous education, an individual's awareness eventually develops the ability to discern between moral and immoral concepts or choices, as stated as an order for learners to boost their employability and grow their skill sets, it is essential for them to plan their personal (Rizvi, 2015). Individuals may be supported and encouraged in their personal development, but they must have the ability to adjust their perspectives and attitudes (Menashy et al., 2014). In a position of secondary importance is a thesis, in which she asserts that people who have developed personalities are capable of exercising control over their behaviors (Härmä, 2011).

The researcher went on to state that personality is a system made up of numerous psychological processes that, when integrated, determine the distinctive manner in which each individual behaves in the world. Those were her exact words (Schargel & Smink, 2014). This is a reliable approach to take. As a result, a fully formed persona exemplifies not just unit values but also univocal responses to events (the ultimate unity of attitude or conduct, the individual's response to what's happening in his or her environment) (Berkowitz et al., 2017).

Education played a vital part in the development of a person's personality since it enables a person to perform all of the roles that come with being a human, which in turn makes that person a more capable individual (GoP, 2009). Additionally, a successful individual could contribute to the betterment of society (Malik, 2010). The results of a study suggest that the

achievement of individual goals may contribute to the development of a wealthy society (Day-Ashley et al., 2013). And the societal benefit or goods may be accomplished by allowing individuals to choose what they genuinely want, rather than compelling them to make choices about something they don't want to do (World-Bank, 2013).

Children's schooling has a direct bearing on how well they do in high school, college, and beyond (Bruns et al., 2011). Population increase and the fast ascent of private education—seen by many as a lucrative economic opportunity—have contributed to this trend (Khalid, 2010). Because of this, some English-medium schools provide a mediocre educational experience for their students by using English as a second language in the classroom, despite the fact that this is the medium of instruction in which they specialize (Hancock et al., 2013). Dini Madrassas operate side by side with English and Urdu language schools, with the former emphasizing religious instruction (Farooqi, 2011). Therefore, there are four distinct types of schooling in Pakistan:

- Dini Madaris
- Government Urdu medium schools
- Private elite English medium schools
- Private non-elite English medium schools (madrassas)

The essential features of the four types of schools are shown in Figure 2.3. There has never been consensus on how to best educate Pakistani children in the local language, and opinions on the matter shift often according to who you ask. Urdu is used as the language of teaching in public schools (KPKG, 2012). However, Sindh and KP each have several public schools that provide instruction in both Pushto and Sindhi. Many government schools and cadet colleges are federally funded and run, and English is used as the medium of instruction (Rizvi, 2015). Urdu-medium schools have a lower position in the government sector than English-medium schools (ESED, 2013).

Teachers who become teachers because they couldn't find other jobs tend to flock to Urdu language schools. As a consequence, many teachers are less dedicated, which may affect student progress. The language used in the classroom has far-reaching consequences for higher education (Ali, 2011). As a result, many children are disadvantaged, and many leave school unable to comprehend basic English ideas (Iqbal et al., 2017). It is found in the LEAPS research (Learning and Education Achievements in Punjab Schools), that a child who quits school at the end of year is likely to be mathematically and functionally illiterate (Ahmad, 2012). A youngster must complete the early stages of school in order to be literate. Even after finishing high school, such students are significantly disadvantaged in contrast to their classmates, regardless of hidden potential (Iqbal, 2011). The low literacy rate in Pakistan disadvantages many young people and makes it difficult for them to attend college (Ali, 2011).

Furthermore, owing to the very fragmented educational system, many parents have lost trust in government schools to give an outstanding education. In many cases, parents seek to enroll their children in private schools or make arrangements for further private tutoring, but, in other situations, children are required to forgo their education and find employment (GoP, 2011).

Many issues in Pakistan's educational system derive from how it is managed and organized. The federal government is in charge of curriculum creation and textbook approval. Provincial textbooks and examination boards, on the other hand, are in charge of creating and evaluating textbooks (GoP, 2016b). At the district level, it has been the responsibility of the District Education Office to be in charge of in-service teacher training, budgeting for schools, and recruiting new teachers. All levels of government must work together to develop policy implementation methods (Iqbal, 2011).

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, on the other hand, has regulatory responsibilities that include advancements in university-level teacher education. The previous example demonstrates the many barriers to education in Pakistan. This concept is relevant since schooling is predicated almost exclusively on lecturing and then testing on memorized material (Rashid & Mukhtar, 2012). There is a severe lack of broader abilities. Students entering higher education encounter obstacles on many fronts, including language ability, confidence, thinking processes, and attitudes toward studying, in a system where educational experiences vary substantially from school to school (Zembylas & Papanastasiou, 2015). As a result of schools' lack of emphasis on developing generalized skills like critical thinking, some students may find it challenging to pursue further education (Vayachuta et al., 2016).

Almost in all of the educational policies of Pakistan, it has been proposed that primary education should be provided to children free of cost regardless of gender and locality. Furthermore, the provision of education equally to all the children of Pakistan has also been part of the recommendations of the educational policies (Reviews, 2021). However, primary education has been facing different problems that are hindering its way to eradicating illiteracy and educating all of the children in Pakistan. The literature review of the phenomenon under study showed that there was a lack of research regarding the problems being faced by the public education system. In such a situation, it is quite impossible to address the issues and the problems unless they are known. Therefore, the current study has been conducted to identify the concerning problems so that suggestions could be made for the solution of the problems.

### **Methodology**

This was a qualitative study that has been conducted as a follow-up of a quantitative study.

This study has been conducted to explore the major problems in Public education system in Pakistan at Primary level. The primary school teachers serving in Lahore city were selected conveniently as a sample for the study. There were eight primary school teachers who took part in this study. They have been interviewed by the inquirer(s) with the help of a semi-structured interview protocol. After the data collection, the data was analyzed with the help of Thematic analysis. The themes which emerged from the collected data were “Infrastructure; Availability of Resources; School Discipline; Implementation of Curricula: School Curricula.”

### **Results**

The results are as under:

#### **Infrastructure**

When the PSTs were asked regarding the condition of their school building, the majority of them responded that their school building was cemented however, the most of the schools have been located in the small streets where the students' mobility was difficult some. There half of PSTs affirmed the availability of the school ground however, the half of the participants denied of the existence of the ground within the school premises. One of the participant said that:

Yes, our school building is a cemented building. Our department has constructed it recently so that the students could study at ease without worrying about the weather conditions. But our school location is not as good as it is situated in a small street where there is a rush and traffic jam when the students come to school early in the morning and also at the time of getting free from school. (P2)

Similarly, another person responded that:

Building of our school is reasonable and cemented. However, the maintenance needs to be done properly and continuously as per the need. As far as

the building is concerned, there is no issue except that of its location which is in a narrow street. It causes the traffic blockage usually. (P5)

When the participants were asked regarding the availability of the water facility and the fans for the students. The majority of them affirmed the availability of the basic water coolers and the fans as well. However, the electric coolers were reported to be needed but they were unavailable. One of the participant said that:

Although the basic water coolers are available for the students. We use to fetch the ice in these coolers so that the cool water remain available for the students. However, its not sufficient. The need of the time is water cooler which is not available.(P1)

Similar stance was given by another participant: “Yes, the students are served with the water cooler in the summer. However, this is a basic water cooler. The electric water cooler is not available yet.” (P7)

### **Availability of Resources**

When the students were asked about the availability of the resources, their majority responded that the library was available for the students. However, the science laboratory was found to be unavailable. So the students were deprived of the practical aspect of the science. When they were asked about the availability of the AV aids, they confirmed the availability of the basic AV aids. One of the participant said that:

Library is available for students but usually there is no specific period for the students. So, their visits to the library are not frequent. On the other hand, there is no science lab for the students. Therefore, they study only theoretical knowledge of the science subject. They can't perform the practical of the attained science knowledge. (P3)

Another participant said that:

“The students’ library exists in our school but neither there is any science lab, nor any computer lab. However, the basic AV aids like black board etc., are available in the school.” (P8)

### **School Discipline**

When the participants were asked regarding the school discipline, the majority of the participants said that school hours were followed punctually by the teachers. They even follow the set rules and also manage the classroom discipline well.

One of the participant said that:

There is no issue of the school discipline as the school hours are followed properly. No teacher violates them in any case. They also maintain the discipline in their classes accordingly for the smooth run of the educational process. (P4)

Another participant responded that:

“Discipline of the school is ok. Everything goes on as predetermined. There is nothing like unscheduled or indiscipline. The teachers also manage their classes at ease.” (P6)

### **Implementation of Curricula**

When the participants were inquired regarding the implementation of the Single Nation Curriculum, the majority of the participant reported no difficulty regarding the implementation of the curriculum. Similarly, they also reported that it was the need of the time to introduce a curriculum which could be accepted and studied by all of the students in Pakistan so that there could be single educational upbringing of the students across Pakistan. One of the participants said that:

It's a good initiative to introduce and implement the single nation curriculum in Pakistan. Before this, there were different curriculums across the Pakistan. However, now all of the students are studying the same curriculum. It's a good step to maintain the oneness among our nation. (P2)

When the participants were asked regarding the teachers' training regarding the implementation of the curriculum. The majority of the participants affirmed the provision of the training so that the teachers become able to implement the curriculum.

“Yes, were given the training for the effective implementation of the single nation curriculum. I think it was good for us and we are easily and effectively implementing the current curriculum.” (P1)

### **Students' Dropout**

When the participants were asked regarding the parental involvement in the students' education. The majority of the participants responded that the parents value their children's education. However, some of the participants reported that the parents do not take much interest in their children's education. Similarly, some of the participants responded that the parents do not help their children regarding their studies. However, the opinion of the majority participants was contradictory to it. They said that the parents help their children to the extent they could. It depends on their own education and understanding. One of the participant said that:

The parents try hard and best to help their children in their education. However, in case they are not so much educated themselves, in such a case they remain unable to do so. Otherwise, they take much interest in their children's education because they want their children to get education for their better future. (P8)

Another participant responded:

“The time when parents think their children as of their earning hands has gone. Now the parents want their children to get education so that they could attain a reasonable livelihood for themselves in future.” (P6)

### **Conclusion & Discussion**

Based on the results of this study, it has been concluded that there were no major infrastructural problems faced by the primary school in Lahore. However, the electric water coolers are still needed for the students in the summer season. Similarly, the location of the schools is also a problem where the school buildings are situated in the small or narrower streets. It also has come into light that the science and computer labs are not available for the primary students in the schools. On the other hand, the discipline of the school is running smoothly. The implementation of the curriculum is also being done effectively by the teachers. The parental interest and involvement are also found to be satisfactory. The findings of this follow-up study has validated the findings of the Quantitative study.

Although the topic understudy is a common one, however, there is a lack of the research on it. Especially, the available local researches are almost before 2015. However, Zafar & Ali (2018) sampled 210 participants for the conduction of the survey to investigate social functions and the challenges faced by the education system of Pakistan. It has been reported by the researcher(s) that there is a class-based education system running in Pakistan. It is a challenge that was recommended to be addressed in a way that a unified system of education should be established in Pakistan. Furthermore, it was found that the quality of education has been compromised due to the attention of the private sector. The reason behind this was that the businessmen have entered in the field of education and opted it as a profitable business for them. So, they just think of the profit and thus the quality of education is compromised. The aforementioned findings have been supported by the current study.

Yousaf (2014) also conducted a survey research for the exploration of the problems that have been faced by the education system of Pakistan. The results highlighted the problems



like there was a shortage of teachers due to which the student's education has been getting disturbed. Similarly, there was the lack of infrastructural facilities like library and laboratories. So, it was recommended by the researcher to facilitate the education department by staffing the able, skilled and qualified teachers so that they could educate the children as per the needs of the modern age. Similarly, the provision of the required infrastructural facilities is also recommended for the smooth and effective run of the educational system. The aforementioned findings have also been supported by the current study.

Ahmad et al. (2014) conducted a study to suggest remedies for the issues faced by schools in Pakistan. It has been suggested by the researcher(s) that budget allocation should be appropriate as per the need of the school education system. Similarly, there should be quality teacher education institutions so that the passed out teachers from them could instill the desired and required knowledge as well as the skills in the students effectively. It was also suggested that there should be a proper workable system of the accountability of the staff so that each of the staff members may excel the best of the efforts for educating the children. Furthermore, it was also suggested that the political involvement in schools, especially in the education system must be eradicated so that the concerning staff and teachers could work effectively and efficiently without any unwanted and undesired fear. As far as the policies are concerned, it was also suggested that the educational policies should be implemented right after they are approved by the concerning authorities. There must be no delay in their implementation. Then the system of education could run efficiently and effectively. The promotion of the research culture in the schools should be ensured by the education department. Furthermore, the examination system must be invigilated well so that there could be no usage of unfair means and corruption. The aforementioned

findings have been supported by the current study as the current study have also similar results.

Ahmad et al. (2013) conducted a study to explore the problems faced by the primary education system in Pakistan. For this purpose, a critical review of the available literature has been done by the researcher(s). It has been revealed in the results that the primary level education in Pakistan has been facing poor management as well as financing. It would be not wrong to say that education on the primary level has been facing negligence from the side of the concerning authorities. Corruption is also faced by the system due to the involvement of the political stakeholders. Similarly, they also promote favoritism in the education department. Furthermore, the curriculum has been reported to be outdated as per the need of the time. Similarly, educational attainment has been assessed while measuring the students' memory instead of their performance. The aforementioned findings have been supported by the current study.

Saeed et al. (2013) investigated the problems that have been faced by school teachers. Although the school teachers' problems are not the main topic relevant to the study. However, this is one of the indicators/problems that has been studied by the current research too. The study results revealed that there was a lack of staff in the schools due to which the available teachers had to take on the overburden of the work. This affected the teachers' performance negatively. Furthermore, there was a lack of the learning material and necessary aids due to which the teachers were facing the problem regarding the instructions and their effectiveness. This study recommended that there must be the provision of the learning material and teaching aids to the teachers so that they could instruct the students effectively. Furthermore, it was also recommended that the teachers should be given appropriate incentives so that there remains no need for another job to fulfilling their family

expenditures. The aforementioned findings have also been supported by the current study.

Memon (2010) also conducted similar research to find out the key issues faced by the education system in Pakistan. It has been brought to light that there is a need for the provision of proper infrastructure. There is a lack of qualified staff in the education department. It has been recommended by the researcher that Libraries, Labs and other learning facilities should be provided to the schools so that they could educate the students effectively. The aforementioned findings have been supported by the current study as the current study have also similar results.

### Recommendations

On the basis of the results, it has been recommended that the electric water coolers should be provided to the primary schools by the School Education Department. Furthermore, the schools should be accommodated on the main roads so that the students' mobility could be no issue for them.

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