

Effectiveness of Private Sector Participation in the Delivery of Quality Education at Secondary School Level in Kurram Agency

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This research analyzes the effectiveness of private sector in the delivery of quality education at secondary level in the tribal areas of Pakistan by using survey and case study method. Thirty private secondary schools were operational in Kurram Agency. The population of 30 schools and their respective 30 principals were taken as sample of the study for questionnaires. Whereas, 150 teachers, 300 parents and 260 students of 30 private secondary schools were selected through cluster random sampling procedure while for interview six private secondary schools, three each from Upper Kurram and Lower Kurram were chosen on the basis of access. Data were collected through four separate questionnaires and interviews which were validated through a pilot study in 2013. Data were then computed and interpreted by simple percentages and Chi-Square at a 0.05. The findings revealed that majority of the private secondary school teachers were academically qualified but one fourth of them were untrained and just less than half were not professionally qualified for secondary classes. Teachers were not satisfied with their pay because of having no job security and reasonable pay. Private sector had higher percentages of student passed; A¹ and A-Grade holders while lower number of failure, B, C and D- Grade holder students in SSC examinations during (2009 – 2013). Management was effective and parents were fully satisfied about their children's' progress. All schools follow the same curriculum as prescribed by Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Kohat. The buildings of majority private schools were rented and have adequate physical facilities except science laboratories and properly equipped libraries.

Key words: *quality education, secondary level, private secondary schools, kurram agency FATA*

Introduction

Quality education ensures social development of the society but quality outcome is strongly based on quality input which includes quality of teachers, quality of curriculum, quality of physical facilities, adequate expenditure on education and quality of management that ensure smooth implementation of regulatory laws for quality output. Advanced countries allocate sufficient amount on the provision of education while the spending on education of developing countries is inadequate. In Pakistan the budget allocation for education is 2 percent of its GNP which is insufficient (Govt. of Pakistan 2009). Hence, the paucity of resources and

inadequate physical facilities encouraged high drop-out from schools (Govt. of Pakistan, 2011 & 2012).

Due to insufficient budget for education, it would be impossible for public sector to accommodate the influx of rapidly increasing population of Pakistan which is 2.7 percent. So it will be idealistic to expect that public sector may participate in educational efforts (Govt. of Pakistan, 2010-11). Private sector has been offering support to share the burden of its counterpart public sector since 1947 but the policy of nationalization, 1972 brought severe disappointment amongst private sector because their provision was restricted and its ultimate impact was reflected on students enrolment of in public and private sector i.e. 70: 30 (Isani and

Virk, 2003). Though the policy of nationalization was reversed in 1979 and the nationalized schools were handed over to their earliest owners. However the laissez-faire policies of government toward private schools have polarized the education. The government of Pakistan gives no financial backing to private schools and they survive purely in response to market forces.

In spite of the laissez-faire policy of the government, the private sector extended its educational services even to rural areas in a short span of time to improve literacy just after 1979. Afterward, the government recognized that the rapid expansion of private sector education in Pakistan made possible due to the poor performance of public sector in education (Wotson, 2005).

Objectives of the Study

The current study was conducted to cover the following objectives:

1. To analyze the teachers' academic and professional qualification and their pay in private secondary schools.
2. To analyze SSC II results of students at secondary level as their academic performance.
3. To analyze the quality of education in terms of quality of management, quality of curriculum, quality of co-curricular activities, quality of physical facilities and quality of teaching methodologies of private secondary schools.
4. To make recommendations for the improvement of quality education in schools.

Literature Review

It is easy to explain the term quality instead of its definition. When things are compared, and the better we choose have more quality. Quality can be viewed as confirmation to a standard (NAAC, 1995).

In similar context, the role of private sector is considered as market-based education which is mostly run for commercial purposes while on the other hand public sector is generally regarded as traditional provider of educational services because there is a great concern regarding public sector as they impart lower quality education to the children (I-SAPS, 2010).

According to Iqbal (2006) "Private English medium schools provide more instructional material and their teachers use activity based teaching methodologies and arrange more co-curricular activities as compared to public secondary schools.

Furthermore, Farida and Madeeha (2000) also concluded in their work that in private sector, the heads were more worried regarding co-curricular activities because they consider it an integral part of education. The ASER Pakistan (2010) survey also exhibits that in private schools there were more classrooms, better drinking water, toilets and secured boundary walls. According to the Learning and Education Achievements in Punjab Schools (LEAPS), despite of higher pay and twice as better resources in public sector, the students learning levels in private institutions are better than public sector. However, the Govt. of Pakistan, shows serious concerns and recommend to monitor the functioning of private institutions in terms of teachers' qualifications, curriculum, physical facilities and buildings because it would be unwise to rely on private sector institutions. Because, the culture of practical and science experiments in private secondary schools is increasingly fading away, this trend will carry dangerous consequences in education. So there is an instant need to strengthen the public-private partnership because one of the main challenges as a part of private sector is a tendency to maximize profit. There is also a concern that private sector cuts the wages and benefits of the employees. In private sector there is a little chance for employees to get benefits and pensions owing to fewer Employment Rights, which need urgent reforms because the teachers' sincerity and loyalty become doubtful (Govt. of Pakistan, 2005). Another justification for regulation, focused on private schools teachers' professional status and qualifications because in most private schools low qualified and less professionally trained teachers were hired therefore some scholars argued regarding quality issues. Even some private schools of remote areas have appointed locally available female teachers who have no vision outside their villages (Andrabi et al, 2002).

While Mustaqeem (2008) concluded that private school teachers' have higher morale than the teachers' of public institutions. Moreover, Liaquat

(2009) found that the quality of private schools teaching is better as compared to public schools and the students of private secondary schools consistently showed better performance as compared to public secondary schools.

Research Methodology

The study was broadly related to descriptive domain. Primary information was collected from principals, teachers, parents and students of the private secondary schools throughout Kurram Agency while secondary data was collected from official documents of BISE Kohat, Agency Education Office and FATA Directorate Peshawar. Survey procedure and case study method were adopted to get the opinions through four separate questionnaires and interviews from principals, teachers, students and parents. Inter-items correlation Cronbach Alpha technique was used for internal consistency of the items of questionnaires. The alpha value of each question was higher than 0.907. The statements of questionnaires were framed on five point Likert scale and its results were conveniently quantified by SPSS software package. Percentages were calculated to examine the data and Chi-Square was applied as a contingency test for statistical treatment. Ellington et al (2003) and Gillham (2004) sorted out some flaws of questionnaire that:

1. Questionnaire lacks in emotions, feelings and behaviours.
2. It asks information without explanation which cannot correct the misunderstanding.
3. There is also respondents' literacy problem in questionnaire.
4. Most of the people can talk easily but feel difficulties to fill in the questionnaire.

Keeping the above flaws of questionnaire into account, the researcher developed four separate interviews each for principals, teachers, students and parents based on each item of questionnaires which were validated by relevant field experts. Keeping the rules and regulations of the sampled institutions in mind, the participants were not forced for interviews or for filling in questionnaires during data collection process. The students' consent were sought through principals and concerned teachers. The element of privacy was also kept in mind while,

conducting interviews. Fraenkel and Wallen, (2006) also stressed to follow all ethical considerations by keeping interviewees' name and identity secret.

The researcher selected six private secondary schools, three each from Upper Kurram and Lower Kurram on the basis of access. Allama Iqbal public secondary school, Kurram public High school, Islamia Boys public secondary school were selected from Upper Kurram, while, Cambridge public High school, Oxford public High school, Iqra public secondary school Sada were selected from Lower Kurram with the permission of principals to record the interviews from principal, two teachers and five students of each sampled schools. During each visit, the researcher got the parents' addresses from school record. Interviews of teachers and students were videotaped in schools.

However, interviews of parents were recorded at their residences. The researcher recorded interviews from 78 participants, 48 from six sampled schools and 30 parents pertaining to schools. The process of interviews was completed in two months.

Population and Sample

The population comprised of 30 principals, 330 teachers, 1500 parents and 2532 students of all 30 private secondary schools. Cluster random sampling procedure was adopted for choosing 150 teachers, 260 students and 300 parents. Sampling procedures are described as under.

Sample of Schools

Thirty private secondary schools were functional in Upper, Lower Kurram while there was no private secondary school in Central Kurram. Total population of private secondary schools was taken as sample for study.

Sample of Principals

All the thirty principals of private secondary schools were taken as a sample.

Sample of Teachers

In first phase two geographical clusters Upper and Lower Kurram were randomly chosen out of three clusters Upper, Lower, and Central Kurram. In the second phase four sub clusters "(a) M. Ed/ MA Education, (b) B. Ed/ BS. Ed, (c) CT/ PTC and (d) Untrained" were made according to professional

qualification of teachers. Two sub clusters (a) M. Ed/ MA Education and (b) B. Ed/ BS. Ed was randomly taken out of four sub clusters. The description of teachers' sample was shown in table 1.

Sample of Students

In first step two geographical clusters "Upper and Lower Kurram" were randomly taken out of three clusters "Upper, Lower, and Central Kurram." In second step four sub clusters of "grades "A" and above, "B", "C" and "D" were made according to academic grades achieved by secondary students in last Annual and Board examinations. Two sub clusters of "A" and above and "B" grade holders" were randomly taken out of above four sub clusters. The two sampled sub clusters comprised of 260 students in which

representation of students from class (IX and X) were taken in equal proportion. The descriptions of students' sample are shown in table 1.

Sample of Parents

Total 1500 parents were sending their children to private secondary schools in Kurram Agency. In first step two geographical clusters "Upper and Lower Kurram" were randomly chosen. In second step three sub clusters "Male (Educated), Male (Uneducated) and Female parents" were made. Out of which "Male (Educated)" parents was taken out of three sub clusters while "uneducated male" and "female parents" were exempted because the uneducated were unable to fill in questionnaires and the female were socially bond to avoid free mixing with male. The descriptions of parents' sample are shown in table 1

Table 1

Samples of Private Secondary Schools Teachers, Students and Parents

Total Number of sampled Teachers = 150			
Professional Qualification	Upper Kurram	Lower Kurram	Total
M. Ed/ MA Education	50	25	75
B. Ed/ BS. Ed	50	25	75
Total	100	50	150
Total Number of Sampled Students = 260			
Clusters of students	Upper Kurram	Lower Kurram	Total
A and above grade holders	90	40	130
B grade holders	90	40	130
Total	180	80	260
Total Number of Sampled Parents = 300			
	Upper Kurram	Lower Kurram	Total
Male (Educated)	200	100	300

Data Analysis and Results

This part deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from official documents through questionnaires and interviews with the stakeholders holding information

regarding private secondary schools that is, principals, teachers, parents and students of Kurram Agency.

Table 2

Qualification and Experience of Teachers of Private Secondary Schools

Academic Qualification						
Qualification	Ph. D	M. Phil	M.A/M. Sc	B.A/B.Sc	Others	Total
Number	0	04	145	130	51	330
Percentage	0	1	44	39	15	100
Professional Qualification						
Qualification	M. Ed	B. Ed	C.T	PTC	Untrained	Total
Number	80	100	40	30	80	330
Percentage	24	30	12	9	24	100
Experience (Years)						
Administrative Experience	1 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 15	16 to 20	21 & above	Total
Number	120	113	76	20	01	330
Percentage	36	34	23	6	1	100

Table 2 shows that in private secondary schools of Kurram Agency just less than half are educated to master level while only 15 % are low qualified in terms of academic qualification. Table 2 illustrates

that nearly one fourth of the teachers are untrained and another about 21% are not professionally qualified for secondary classes.

Table 3*Percentage of Appeared Students in SSC Examinations*

Years	Public Schools Class X			Private Schools Class X			percentage
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Gross Total
2009	52	21	73	24	3	27	100
2010	52	21	73	24	4	27	100
2011	47	21	68	25	6	32	100
2012	39	23	62	31	7	38	100
2013	34	22	56	36	8	44	100

Table 3 Over the five year period, a significant proportion of boys has been steadily shifting from public to private schools but there has been no similar trend in girls' enrollment although the

number of girls in private schools has risen slightly. The figures illustrate that private secondary schools did not attract a significant number of girls as compared to boys during the study period.

Table 4*Percentage of Passed Students in SSC Examinations*

Years	Public Schools Class X			Private Schools Class X		
	Boys	Girls	Total Passed	Boys	Girls	Total Passed
2009	69	28	97	82	11	93
2010	65	28	93	85	13	98
2011	65	30	95	81	16	97
2012	40	19	59	68	14	82
2013	47	36	83	70	14	84

Table 4 shows that there is decreasing trend in the boys of public and private secondary schools while on the other hand shows an increasing passing rate of girls in both public and private secondary schools. The cumulative pass rate of private sector is comparatively better than public sector during study period (2009-2013).

Table 5

Percentage for Grades of Passed Students in SSC Examinations

		A ¹		A		B		C		D	
		Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
2009	Boys	0	3	15	66	61	18	27	1	1	0
	Girls	0	50	18	63	69	8	14	0	0	0
	Total	0	7	16	68	63	18	23	1	1	0
2010	Boys	0	0	3	30	29	55	29	55	10	0
	Girls	0	9	4	80	65	8	65	8	1	0
	Total	0	1	3	37	40	48	40	48	7	0
2011	Boys	0	1	6	37	31	46	53	21	10	1
	Girls	0	7	7	63	61	4	30	3	2	0
	Total	0	2	6	41	41	39	46	18	7	1
2012	Boys	1	1	8	38	25	48	49	14	17	2
	Girls	0	6	0	80	15	3	63	2	22	0
	Total	0.5	2	6	45	22	40	54	12	18	2
2013	Boys	0	1	1	26	18	49	62	21	19	5
	Girls	0	14	1	64	23	5	65	2	11	1
	Total	0	3	1	33	20	42	63	18	15	5

Table 5 shows greater number of “A¹” and “A” grade holder students in private sector in which

girls’ achievement level is better as compared to boy in public sector while there is lower

representation of private sector students in grades “B”, “C” and “D” as compared to public sector during the period of five years. This shows higher achievements of private schools in Kurram Agency

at secondary level, which indicate that private sector, reasonably addressed the quality dimension of secondary education

Head Teachers’ Opinion

Table 6

Principals’ Opinion about Teachers’ Salaries and Incentives

Teachers of your school:	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total	X²
Have job security	02	04	03	05	16	30	21.66*
Are encouraged by giving incentives	02	08	06	10	04	30	6.64*
Are satisfied with their salaries	04	03	07	06	10	30	5.00*
df = 4					Table value = 9.488		

Teachers’ Opinion

Table 7

Teachers’ Opinion about Their Salaries and Incentives

Teachers of private secondary school:	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total	X²
Have service structure	06	10	21	45	68	150	90.87*
Are encouraged by giving incentives	02	20	19	59	50	150	74.86*
Are satisfied with their salaries	05	13	08	37	87	150	156.5*
df = 4					Table value = 9.488		

Tables 6 & 7 indicate that there was no service structure, job security, incentives and reasonable

pay for teachers in private secondary schools. Teachers were not satisfied with their pay.

Table 8

Teachers’ Opinion about Curriculum of Private Secondary Schools

Curriculum of private secondary schools:	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total	X²
Is similar at secondary level	58	57	19	06	10	150	87.00*
is dynamic	24	99	17	04	06	150	207.2*
Is competent to meet the present needs	18	105	21	02	04	150	243.6*
df = 4					Table value = 9.488		

Table 8 shows that curriculum of private schools is dynamic and uniform at secondary level which provides material to meet the needs of desired standard. These private schools follow the

curriculum of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board Peshawar as prescribed by Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Kohat.

Students’ Opinion

Table 9

Students' Opinion about Physical Facilities of Private Secondary Schools

Your school has:	SA	A	N	DA	SD A	Total	X²
Equipped library	36	78	22	64	60	260	39.23*
Equipped science laboratory	71	107	29	34	19	260	102.4*
Well maintained classrooms	84	128	25	11	12	260	207.8*
Sufficient furniture for students	101	112	28	11	08	260	196.0*
System to provide hygienic drinking water	82	96	22	32	28	260	90.62*
Sufficient number of toilets for students	106	116	16	10	12	260	224.4*
Proper play ground	78	99	27	27	29	260	89.69*

df = 4

Table value = 9.48

Table 9 shows that in private secondary schools, there were sufficient number of toilets, hygienic drinking water, sufficient furniture, well maintained

classroom and playground but there were no adequate science laboratories and equipped libraries in majority of these schools.

Table 10

Students' Opinion about Co-curricular Activities

In your school:	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total	X²
Co-curricular activities are organized	63	144	30	14	09	260	237.7*
Intra-school sports competition is arranged	97	106	22	18	17	260	158.1*
Students are motivated to participate in it	112	110	25	07	06	260	227.5*

df = 4

Table value = 9.488

Table 10 exhibited that majority of private secondary schools organizes co-curricular activities

and intra-school sports competitions. Students are motivated to participate in various activities.

Parents' Opinion

Table 11

Parents' Opinion about the Management of Private Secondary Schools

Management of your children School:	SA	A	N	DA	SD A	Total	X²
Informs you about your children progress	105	113	51	17	14	300	148*
Invites you in parent related occasions	63	176	29	20	12	300	305.5*
Is committed in maintaining discipline	82	136	54	19	09	300	176.3*

Encourages students to have good behavior	80	156	38	17	09	300	242.5*
Manages qualified teachers & latest teaching methodology for students	82	148	45	13	12	300	216.8*
Gives prizes to students of special abilities	89	149	33	17	12	300	227.4*
Has succeeded to satisfy parents and students	69	167	43	13	08	300	278.8*

df = 4 Table value = 9.488

Table 11 indicates the qualified teachers and their latest teaching methodologies in private secondary schools. They invite the parents in their related occasions and inform them regarding their children

progress. Majority of the parents were satisfied with the behavior and discipline of their children.

Table 12

Parents' Opinion about the Standard of Private Secondary Schools

Your children school:	SA	A	N	DA	SD A	Total	X²
Is English medium	68	169	41	16	06	300	285.96*
Has better teachers-students ratio	53	176	53	13	05	300	313.13*
Maintained effective classroom management and discipline	69	160	43	13	15	300	243.4*
Gets higher marks in SSC examinations	73	161	45	17	04	300	259.67*
Is competent to maintain the standard	64	180	34	11	11	300	331.56*

df = 4 Table value = 9.488

Table 12 shows that majority private secondary schools are English medium and have better teacher-student ratio. These schools maintained effective classroom management and discipline. The students of these schools secure higher marks in SSC examinations and uphold the standard of education.

Conclusions Drawn from Interviews

1. Parents expressed positive opinions about the management of private secondary schools. They were fully satisfied regarding their children progress, behavior and discipline. They can easily approach to principal when they need.

2 Principals and students expressed positive opinion about teachers' subjects command and teaching methodologies.

3 The principals and teachers" exhibited fairly negative opinions regarding private secondary schools because of having no proper service structure, job security, incentives and reasonable pay for teachers hence teachers were not satisfied with their pay.

4 Students expressed positive views regarding physical facilities in terms of hygienic drinking water, sufficient number of toilets and furniture in private secondary schools but contrary to it, showed negative opinion because of having no adequate science laboratories and equipped libraries.

5 The present study deduced from the teachers and students' views that in private secondary schools, co-curricular activities, like "debate and intra school sports competitions"

are organized. Students are motivated to participate in various activities. Majority of the teachers also had highly positive opinion regarding the students' participation in co-curricular activities.

6 Majority of the parents and students had highly positive opinion regarding standard of private secondary schools in terms of teachers' teaching methodologies, classroom management and teacher-student ratio.

Discussion

The main purpose of the current research was to analyze the effectiveness of private sector involvement in the deliverance of quality education at secondary level in Kurram Agency FATA. Secondary education holds central position in system because it supplies basic level workforce for the economy and acts as an input for higher education as well. The private sector not only addressed the quantitative dimension but also focused on the quality aspects at secondary level. The current study pertained to the years 2009-13. It was found that the widespread network of private secondary schools has significant year wise increase of students appearing in SSC examinations. Similarly higher percent of passed, "A¹" and "A" grade holders and contrary to it lower percentage of failure, "B" "C" and "D" grade holders reflect its high achievements.

Management has central position in the institution because management is responsible to run the entire system. Parents expressed positive opinions about the management of the private secondary schools in terms of effective communication with parents, discipline, teaching programs, even in inviting the parents in all the students' related affairs which have positive impact on the students' achievements. The present study showed that one quarter of the entire secondary school teachers were untrained and just less than half were not professionally qualified for secondary classes while on the other hand majority were qualified in terms of academic qualification. The work of

Andrabi et al, (2002) also support the finding of the current study that in most of the private school professionally less qualified teachers were hired. The finding of present study was also supported by Memon, (2007). He found that majority of private schools have appointed low-qualified teachers and who have less knowledge about students' psychology and desired instructional methods. These institutions ignore the B. Ed and M. Ed degree holders and prefer to appoint those who have good fluency in English language. Likewise there was no proper service structure, job security and incentives for teachers in private secondary schools.

The teachers were not satisfied with their salaries. Therefore amongst them a sense of deprivation is developed and they consider the private schools as temporary abode. Due to sense of insecurity they leave their jobs which have negative effects on students' psychology. Likewise, Memon, (2007) supported the finding "private sector lacks of support mechanism for teachers. In the absence of proper service structure and job security, the teachers of private sector show lack of interest".

In private secondary schools adequate number of toilets, hygienic drinking water, furniture, sports and equipment were available but were deficient in equipped libraries and science laboratories.

Curriculum is a set of activities that is chosen carefully to achieve the desired objectives. If curriculum is not well-defined then there is risk for teacher and students to be involved in meaningless activities. Ahmed (1993) focused during his study that private sector offers various foreign curricula at all levels which reflect different culture and civilization which are extremely harmful. But on contrary, it was reflected from the finding of present study that there was harmony and uniformity in the curriculum of private schools at secondary level. Majority of the private secondary schools were registered with BISE Kohat, therefore, their curricula were as

prescribed by BISE Kohat. They consider this curriculum as dynamic and competent to meet the present day needs which contradicted the work of I-SAPS, (2010) "private schools do not follow the government policies and they offer various curricula.

The responses of students showed that private secondary schools organize co-curricular activities and students were encouraged to participate in various activities like, in intra school sports. Iqbal (2006) supported the finding of present study that private English medium schools keep limited class size and organize co-curricular activities in extensive ground as compared to government "Urdu medium" schools.

Parents expressed that in private secondary schools there was better teacher-student ratio. Moreover, the students of these schools got better position in SSC examinations. The work of Andrabi et al.

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(2002) support the finding of present study, "Private sector has comparatively low student-teacher ratio which is in most region 15 to 25. Students of private sector get better positions in SSC examinations. Although the researcher made an effort to get primary and secondary data along with the views of respondents about the actual state of private secondary schools of Kurram Agency and spotlighted issues and prospects of private secondary education, yet the outcome of this research work might be inaccurate. It is unfortunate that a reliable research in Pakistan is difficult due to reluctance and non-serious attitudes of respondents because they conceal the factual views due to different reasons. So observational study in this regard may yield more reliable information and may supplement to testify the data obtained through questionnaires and interviews

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