

Educational Services Delivery System by District Government Peshawar: A Parents' Perspective

Zia ud din*, Naseer Ahmed** & Muhammad Imran Malik***

Abstract

Data for the current study was collected via questionnaire in 2008 from parents who have children studying in government schools. The parents were told about the benefits of the research study that motivated them to provide handful of information for the study. Educational services delivery system decides the future of the students regarding learning and leading a successful practical life. This study provides a picture of parents' perceptions about the governmental educational system. The result of this investigation resulted in dissatisfaction of parents from management of schools, performance of schools, monitoring of schools, transparency of systems followed at schools, fair delivery of educational services, performance of governmental schools as compared to the non – governmental schools. The reasons for the dissatisfaction from the above mentioned factors are also discussed in this study.

Keywords: Education, Services Delivery System, Government Peshawar.

Introduction and literature review

Major motive behind providing education is to the individuals is sustainable society besides providing them with comforts of life. It is possible if education supports a just/fair society and teaches individuals to believe in the possibility of a better future. Consequently, education must create a spirit of enquiry, teaching our children to challenge the status quo via education that imparts values but does not indoctrinate. An important purpose of education is to enable an individual to honestly earn his/her livelihood through skills that contribute to the national economy. Education should help improve skills, raise aspirations, and enable individuals to make informed choices in life.

* Zia ud din, Professor, Iqra National University, Peshawar.

Email: alishahzadpk4@yahoo.com

** Dr. Naseer Ahmed, Ex-Chairmen, Department of Administrative Sciences
Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad

*** Muhammad Imran Malik, Assistant Professor, Department of Management
Sciences, COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Attock

It is evident from the research studies that the parent involvement in a child's educational process is fruitful (Cotton & Wikelund, 2004). Keeping in view the said argument, the current study is conducted for the parents views about the education delivery system. The research studies have reported that 86 percent of the general public believes that support from parents is the most important way to improve the schools (Rose, Gallup, & Elam, 1997). It is also observed that lack of parental involvement is the biggest problem facing public schools (Rose, Gallup, & Elam, 1997).

Meager evidence has been found regarding the similar issue, that is, parents' involvement and their views regarding the delivery of educational services by the district governments. On the other hand, researchers have highlighted the issues of English Medium Schools offering "O" and "A" levels, which is regarded as the quality education in Pakistan (Ishfaq, 2009; Younis, 2004; Ahmad, 1986; & Sabir, 2002). Whereas Rehman (1990), talked about hurdles faced by people in education in Pakistan.

Very little or no evidence is available regarding the parental views about the delivery of educational services by the district governments but the researchers have discussed the issue of parental involvement in their children education (Mustafa, Malik & Shah, 2012, Khan, 1996).

Parents' involvement in the childrens' education is the key to success for the students (Mustafa, Malik & Shah, 2012). Keeping in view this argument, the current study has been focused on the parental views about the educational system provided by the government at district level.

The focus of this study is on the government schools. The government school system consists of primary, middle, high schools. Primary schools have five classes (1-5) for children of age 5-9 years. Middle school consists of classes 6-8 for children of age 10-12. Secondary or high schools offer education in 2 classes 09 and 10 for children of age 13-14.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhuwa (KPK), among all schools 74 percent (26866 out of 36430) are government schools, 13 percent (4884 out of 36430) are non-government schools, and 13 percent (4680 out of 36430) are religious schools. From the perspective of students attending these institutions, 77 percent (3702276 out of 4820841) attend government schools, 19 percent (931762 out of 4820841) attend non-government schools, and 4 percent (186803 out of 4820841) attend religious schools (Go-NWFP, 2008:4). Present study is conducted in Peshawar, capital of KPK. Peshawar has been a center of trade and commerce between sub continent and central Asian states.

The purpose is to modify the behavior of the child in order to shape his personality in a more desirable form (Khalid, 1998).

There has been an increasing demand for greater public involvement in education. In the current era, parents' voices of dissatisfaction regarding the public education system are loud and frequent (Khan, 1996) whereas, the public schools welcome the community members including parents for policy making and betterment of education system in the developed countries of the world (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001; Quigley, 2000; Dhingra, & Manhas, 2009).

In the Pakistani perspective, schools have been blamed for being closed institutions and for not involving the community in decision making regarding school policies and programs (Khan, 1996). According to Khan (2001), parents' visits to school in order to find out progress of children from teachers can contribute to monitoring function.

Methodology

The questions about the management of schools, monitoring system for schools, performance of schools, and transparency in the delivery of education were asked from the parents to find out their satisfaction towards education delivery.

The management of schools is examined on the basis of discipline (good or poor), teachers' absenteeism, students' absenteeism, and management training provided to teachers. Similarly, performance of the education system is examined on the basis of examination results (good/poor), students' drop outs (high/low). The monitoring aspect is evaluated on the basis of regular visits by the education officers, regular visits by parents, regular visits by Parents Teacher Committee (PTC) members, regular visits by elected representatives. Lastly, the transparency is examined on the basis of regulations in the staff appointments and misuse of funds.

A manageable sample of 72 parents (mothers, fathers), three from each sample schools were planned to be selected for eliciting their views and perceptions about the schools through questionnaires. Parents included both fathers and mothers of students. Male Research Investigator surveyed fathers of students of boys' schools and not their mothers because of social problems. Female Research Investigator visited girls' schools and filled questionnaires from mothers of girl students. Besides, meetings were held with groups of parents in the sample schools. The first preference was to survey a sample of them through questionnaire in the catchments area of each of the sample schools selected for this study.

Results

The results for the first question asked are as follows. The question asked to the parents relates to the satisfaction level with the efficient management of schools. The number of respondents (parents) and their percentage is given in table 1.

Table-1: Parents' satisfaction level about management of schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage	
1	Parents saying "yes"	16
	Percentage (%)	22
2	Parents saying "No"	56
	Percentage (%)	78
Total		72
Percentage		100

The abovementioned table shows that in all 72 parents took part in the study and it is evident that percentage of dissatisfied parents is more the satisfied ones.

The second question asked from the parents was about the inefficient management of schools. Table 2 shows the opinion of parents for the above mentioned question.

Table-2: Reasons for parent's satisfaction/dissatisfaction w.r.t management of schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage	
1	Poor school discipline	39
	Percentage (%)	34
2	Teacher's absenteeism	17
	Percentage (%)	24
3	Student's absenteeism	07
	Percentage (%)	10
4	No management training	09
	Percentage (%)	12
Total		72
percentage		100

The results of table 2 show that poor school discipline is the main cause of inefficient management of schools and secondly the teachers' absenteeism contributes towards inefficient management of the government schools in the light of parents' views. Additionally, no

management training provided to the teachers is also a reason for inefficient management of schools.

The next query made to the parents was about their satisfaction regarding the performance of schools. Table 3 shows the results for the responses of parents.

Table-3: Parents' satisfaction level about performance of schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage	
1	Parents saying "yes"	15
	Percentage (%)	21
2	Parents saying "No"	57
	Percentage (%)	79
Total		72
Percentage		100

This table shows that the parents are least satisfied by the performance of schools as this is having the higher percentage.

The reasons for weak performance of schools asked from the parents and they responded in the given below manner. Table 4 shows the results for the reasons.

Table-4: Reasons for parents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction w.r.t performance of schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage	
1	Poor exam results	36
	Percentage (%)	65
2	High school drop out	19
	Percentage (%)	35
Total		55
percentage		100

Out of 72 parents only 55 responded to this question and out of those 55 maximum were of the view that the reason for poor performance of the schools is poor examinations results.

Another query made to the parents was about their satisfaction regarding monitoring of schools. Table 5 depicts the results for the same.

Table-5: Parents' satisfaction level about monitoring of schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage	
1	Parents saying "yes"	08
	Percentage (%)	11

2	Parents saying "No"	64
	Percentage (%)	89
Total		72
Percentage		100

It is evident from the results available in table 5 that maximum parents were not satisfied from the monitoring system of the government schools. The reasons were asked from the parents that resulted in the following. Table 6 shows the results for the reasons for dissatisfaction from the monitoring system. Table 6 contains the results.

Table-6: Reasons for parents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction w.r.t. monitoring of schools

S. No.		No. of parents/percentage
1	No visits by the education officers	35
	Percentage (%)	47
2	No visits by parents	21
	Percentage (%)	30
3	No visits by PTC*	05
	Percentage (%)	07
4	No visits by elected representatives	11
	Percentage (%)	16
Total		72
percentage		100

Further investigation was made from the parents about their satisfaction regarding transparency of schools. The results are shown in table 7.

Table-7: Parents' satisfaction level about transparency of schools

S. No.		No. of parents/percentage
1	Parents saying "yes"	13
	Percentage (%)	18
2	Parents saying "No"	59
	Percentage (%)	82
Total		72
Percentage		100

The results clearly show that the majority of parents are dissatisfied from the transparency of educational system followed at government schools.

Further this question was investigated by the help of following table. Table 8 shows the reasons for the same.

Table-8: Reasons for parents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction w.r.t. transparency of schools

S. No.		No. of parents/percentage
1	Irregularities in staff appointments	30
	Percentage (%)	42
2	Misuse of funds	42
	Percentage (%)	58
Total		72
percentage		100

The table clearly depicts that the majority of parents are of the view that misuse of financial resources is the main reason for the less transparency of the educational system followed by the government schools.

Further investigation was made about satisfaction with the delivery of educational services by the district government. Table 9 shows the results about the same.

Table-9: Parents' satisfaction level about fair delivery of educational services

S. No.		No. of parents/percentage
1	Parents saying "yes"	16
	Percentage (%)	22
2	Parents saying "No"	56
	Percentage (%)	78
Total		72
Percentage		100

It is evident that majority of the parents are least satisfied with the delivery of educational services by the district government Peshawar to their children. The reasons for the same are discussed in the table 10 given below.

Table-10: Reasons for parents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction w.r.t. delivery of educational services

S. No.		No. of parents/percentage
1	District government not performing well	11

	Percentage (%)	15
2	District government system is new	09
	Percentage (%)	12
3	Political interference is more	31
	Percentage (%)	43
4	Elected representatives are not trained in the delivery of educational services	21
	Percentage (%)	30
Total		72
Percentage		100

This was also investigated from the parents whether they are satisfied from the performance of government schools as compared to the non-government schools. Table 11 shows the results for the said question.

Table-11: Parents' satisfaction level about performance of government schools as compared to non-government schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage
1	Parents saying "yes"
	Percentage (%)
2	Parents saying "No"
	Percentage (%)
Total	
Percentage	

Majority of the parents were found to have least satisfaction level regarding public schools as compared to the non-government schools. The reasons for the same are discussed in table 12.

Table-12: Reasons for parents' satisfaction/dissatisfaction w.r.t. performance of government schools as compared to non-government schools

S. No.	No. of parents/percentage
1	Teacher's job security
	Percentage (%)
2	No punishment or reward system
	Percentage (%)

3	Teacher's union protect their members	11
	Percentage (%)	15
Total		72
Percentage		100

The results for the current investigation are summarized below.

Conclusion and discussion

After gathering responses from 72 parents, the results indicated dissatisfaction of parents from management of schools, performance of schools, monitoring of schools, transparency of systems followed at schools, fair delivery of educational services, performance of governmental schools as compared to the non – governmental schools. The reasons for the dissatisfaction from the above mentioned factors are also discussed in this study.

Major reasons for each dissatisfaction factor are discussed as follows. At first instance, the major reason identified by the parents for poor management of schools is poor school discipline maintained in the schools and secondly teachers absenteeism contributed towards poor management of schools.

The poor performance of schools is indicated by the poor exam results produced by the students and high drop-out rate of students. For poor monitoring of schools, the reasons identified by the parents included no visits by the education officers, less visits by parents, and no visits to government schools by elected representatives of the local/district government.

On the other hand, the major reason identified by the parents for less transparency was the misuse of the funds that were allocated to the schools for maintenance of the educational system.

Recommendations

In the light of the results produced by this study the authors have few recommendations for the government and government schools management.

At first, parents are advised to participate actively towards the betterment of schools. There should be a forum developed for recording parent's suggestions and observations at each government school. The government schools can be improved in the light of suggestions provided by the parents who are the direct effectees of the poor education system of the government schools.

As identified by the parents the major reason for poor school management is the high absenteeism of the school teachers. The government schools' teachers are advised to be regular at their duty as this is their prime responsibility towards the nation and they have been paid for the same by the government. With the betterment in the absenteeism rate, the school discipline will automatically get maintained.

It is said that nip the evil in the bud. When absenteeism situation is managed, the performance of schools will get better and the failure rate of students will be minimized. It is also advised to the government officials to visit the government chain of schools at regular basis for minimizing the irregularities at the district schools level.

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