

ROLE OF PEER ACCOUNTABILITY IN QUALITY EDUCATION AT SECONDARY LEVEL

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find out role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level. Major purpose of the study was to investigate the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level. This study was descriptive and quantitative in nature. All the male and female secondary school teachers of district Okara, 1683 (855 male and 828 female) were considered as population of the study at hand. As the population of secondary schools teachers in Okara district was large, therefore, the researcher used stratified random sampling technique to select the sample. Finally, 881 teachers (454 male and 427 female) were selected from the 3 Tehsils (Okara, RenalaKhurad and Depalpur). Self-structured and self validated was used Questionnaire to collect the data for investigate the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level with $\alpha=0.73$. Nine hundred (900) questionnaires were distributed among the participants and 881 finally were returned. Researcher used both the descriptive statistics and inferential statistical techniques to analyze the collected data of 881 participants by using SPSS. ANOVA was used to infer the results. The result of the study revealed that peer accountability has significant role in quality education at secondary level.

Keywords: Peer Accountability, Quality education

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of quality is elusive. According to Yilmaz (2013), the term quality is difficult to define due to the distinctive qualities of the phenomenon it aims to capture. Quality is typically defined as the capacity of a product, service, or programme to meet its specified requirements (Fernandes, 2018). Authors like Lin & Chen, (2018) have defined quality as purpose-fitness, while others have linked it to products, processes, and services that meet or exceed consumer expectations.

In the context of education, quality is defined as the capacity of an educational system or programme to meet the requirements and ambitions of the society it serves. According to Jensen (2012), excellent education is the degree to which schools attain the goals to which they are meant to aspire. Therefore, quality education can be viewed as education that satisfies the expectations and aspirations of the society in terms of its aims. In order for schools to remain relevant to society, it is expected that they will adhere to particular quality education standards.

Wang et al. (2017) comments that conceptualizing quality in terms of a specific facet of education is problematic since elements connected with educational quality are interrelated, thus a lack in one element is likely to have enormous ramifications for quality in other elements. Adedeji (2019) noted that defining quality in terms of educational achievements is particularly problematic due to the value-laden and culturally restricted nature of educational goals. This is due to the fact that different individuals and communities have diverse ideas regarding the goals of education.

Learning acquisition and outcome were emphasised during the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All (Saito and Capelle, 2010). The Dakar World Education Forum in 2000 agreed that quality education is crucial, and it laid out the conditions necessary for effective educational programmes to flourish: qualified educators, sufficient resources, an engaging and effective curriculum, a conducive learning environment, and precise methods for measuring student growth (UNESCO, 2005).

Although it is challenging to pin down the concept of educational quality in absolute terms, UNESCO (2005) emphasizes the importance of what goes on in classrooms and other learning environments for the long-term success of today's youth and tomorrow's adults. A good education is one that goes beyond meeting students' basic requirements and improves their quality of life. It is important to emphasise that the values and skills students acquire that allow them play a meaningful role in their societies are directly influenced by the level of education they get.

According to Levitt et al. (2008), accountability has emerged as a central tenet of reform efforts across the public sector in many nations. Acceptance of responsibility and being able to provide an explanation for one's actions are both components of what we mean when we talk about accountability. Additional interpretations of accountability in the context of school management include (i) adherence to governance rules and regulations, (ii) reporting to people with control over the school, and (iii) tying incentives and punishments to performance (Rechebei, 2010).

Producers, according to Arneson (2018), ought to take responsibility for the effects they have on the world. Thus, teachers and schools, who are entrusted with the crucial task of teaching and instructing children, should be held accountable for students' outcomes. The goal of this accountability is to raise standards of performance and to help pinpoint "underperforming" schools so they can be improved (Booher-Jennings, 2007). The findings of students' standardised tests can be utilised to improve education without holding teachers or institutions accountable. The findings of standardised tests can be used by educators to better tailor their lessons to their students' individual needs.

Responsibility, as suggested by Koerner (2020), is at the heart of accountability, as is the public demonstration of success or the public acknowledgement of failure. Therefore, accountability is a requirement for efficacy and the acceptance of responsibility for falling short of the standards set by people who placed trust in you. The purpose of a school is to provide its students with an education that will equip them with the knowledge, skills, potentials, and attitudes necessary to contribute to society in positive ways (Ndawi and Peasuh, 2003). Therefore, the community has a right to hold the school accountable for not fulfilling its responsibilities.

It's not just the 'quality' of the teachers that makes a difference in the classroom, though that's obviously important too. Ineffective educational institutions may not be the best place for even the most talented educators to realize their full potential. National and international governments, transnational agencies, and intergovernmental bodies have all made improvements to the quality of education for teachers a top priority (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005;

Cochran-Smith, 2006). How to best respond to the challenges of globalization, sustainable development, and the knowledge society, as well as how to attract and retain quality educators who will raise the bar for their students and help them learn from and appreciate the world's increasing diversity, is a major topic of conversation among these stakeholders (Conway et al., 2009). Schools are under fire for providing few benefits to the public and failing to deliver on expected performance despite receiving substantial funding. As a result, educators are being called on to demonstrate greater accountability and efficiency (Kuchapski, 2001).

Accountability has become a key 'watch-word' in the field of education, which should aim for both academic excellence and the advancement of society and the nation. Teachers, as members of professional learning communities, are dedicated to fostering their students' personal growth and flourishing. Teachers have lofty goals for their work, and they strive to achieve those goals in every facet of their lives and careers (Mondal & Roy 2013).

The National Educational Policy (2020) calls for an education system that is adaptive, multidisciplinary, technologically advanced, and skill-focused in order to foster the development of students who are both innovative and ethical. The term "teacher" connotes a key component in the evolution of such a schooling structure. When it comes to shaping the educational system, nothing is more important than the calibre, expertise, and character of the educators in charge. Teachers play a crucial role in nation-building by producing high-quality human resource in their classrooms, as suggested by the NEP 2020's admonition that "Teachers truly shape the future of our children - and, therefore, the future of our nation."

Policymakers, teachers, parents, members of the community, and even students themselves have long debated the best ways to ensure that all students are held accountable for their actions in the classroom. Responsibility; having to answer for one's actions; being held to account are all definitions of accountability offered by the Oxford English Dictionary and Thesaurus (Gishey, 2013). Accountability, as defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), entails "acting in accordance with agreed rules and standards and reporting roles or plans and performance results fairly and accurately" (UNDP, 2018).

In light of widespread changes in the field worldwide, the Pakistani educational system has come under heavy fire for its lackluster results in the classroom and its inefficient administration. At first, Pakistani educational institutions come under fire for their low scores on standardized tests administered at both the national and international levels. These tests show that Pakistani students are significantly behind their peers in both developed and developing countries in terms of their proficiency in English, science, and mathematics, as well as their ability to think critically and solve problems.

To improve and fortify the educational system, teacher preparation is essential. The term "teacher education" is used to describe the formal training that would-be educators undergo before they enter the profession. She argued that the theoretical and practical requirements of the classroom were met by the training teachers receive. Ahmad, (2012), argued that a teacher's worth is determined by the breadth and depth of his or her professional competencies, which include their knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes (Ali, 2011). The failure of the current teacher education system is widely blamed for teachers' lack of professional competence

in the classroom. Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping a society that values innovation because of the ways in which their expertise improves not only the educational system as a whole but also the infrastructure necessary to foster experimentation and new ideas. A teacher's education is among the most important aspects of their profession because of the profound impact teachers have on students' personal, social, and professional development (Khan, 2011).

Responsibility in school leadership is a fascinating and vital concept. It fosters honesty and cooperation, qualities that are valued by all levels of administration, from classrooms to provincial departments. The term "accountability" is used frequently but can be confusing due to its loose definition (Yan, 2019). Accountability is simply taking on the duty of responsibility. Responsibility in education can refer either to the duty of a teacher toward their students or to the duty of school administrators toward their staff in terms of providing professional development opportunities. We can examine the roles of the government, the administrators, and the teachers when thinking about the significance of accountability in teacher education. Government officials, administrators, and teachers are all held accountable at different levels of the "pyramidal accountability of performance" (Chitpin& Jones, 2015). When things aren't going as planned and expected results aren't being produced, however, the pyramid can become inverted, leading to an atmosphere of blame. This mentality prevails when everyone constantly points fingers at everyone else instead of taking responsibility for their own actions. As a result, there are two ways in which the system can function, with each level expecting and rewarding trustworthiness from the others.

2. Objectives of the Study

Following objectives were addressed in this study:

1. To investigate teachers' opinion regarding the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level.
2. To assess the difference between the opinions of the teachers about the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level on the base of demographics.

3. Research Questions

The Research questions are given below:

1. What is the teachers' opinion regarding the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level.
2. Is there any significant difference between the opinions of the teachers about the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level on the base of demographics.

4. Research Design

In the present study, the researcher aimed to explore the role of peer accountability in quality education at secondary level in Punjab. The study was narrative in nature and survey technique was adopted. The attempt to conduct the survey in the present research was an effort aimed to obtain the data from the selected sample to highlight the current condition of the selected population. Survey technique is opted by any researcher by keeping in view the available resources and interest of the researcher to get data from large group of people taken as population. (Fraenkel&Wallen, 2003; Gay & Airasian 2006).

There was some research done that was descriptive. As a result of this, a method based on quantitative surveying was chosen to be utilized in the inquiry. Because it was the most effective method to collect data from many participants, this study strategy was chosen. Because every piece of information was obtained through the use of a questionnaire, the process was completely devoid of subjectivity and error. In order to carry out this particular study, a sample that is representative of the entire population was chosen to be picked from it. The data were processed so that useful findings and evaluations could be drawn from them. **5. Population**

A population, as defined by Sauvignon (2008), is a broader area where objects and subjects have the same, predetermined attributes and characteristics from which researchers can collect data. Simply put, researchers collect data from large groups of people, called populations. The following table provides a breakdown of the population by gender and education level.

6. Sample

An appropriate representation of the entire population can be obtained via selecting a representative sample from that population. In this particular study, the method of stratified random sampling was the method that is utilized. This methodology proved to be the most appropriate choice for the selection of the sample for the current investigation because of the diversity that exists among the demographic strata. The entire population was segmented into several groups, or strata, using the stratified random sampling method. When the total population was looked at, it was found that the size of each stratum was proportionate to the amount of the population in that particular stratum. 881 secondary school teachers (454 male and 427 female) from the district Okara.

7. Data Collection

The use of a questionnaire to gather data was a more appropriate method of accumulating data. It takes less time and much less steeply-price for data collection from large sample. after permission was obtained from the administration of school, the researcher turned to the teachers, briefly introduced the tools and asked them to mark their responses on the optical answer sheet. When the filled instruments were collected, the optical solution sheet is processed and then the statistics is used when you want to view the records. The participants' response size was calculated to get a general rating from them. The frequency of each item was then tested to see in which areas people responded

8. Data Analysis

8.1. Difference between Male and Female Teachers' Perceptions

Variables	Category	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	Sig.
Gender	Male	454	114.38	13.07	879	.798	.42
	Female	427	113.66	13.36			

Table 4.4.1 shows the difference between male and female teachers' opinion. The mean score of male teachers (114.38) is slightly greater than the mean score of female teachers

(113.66). However, the calculated significance value (.42) is greater than significance level (0.05), which indicates that there is no significant difference between teachers' opinion by gender. Thus it is concluded that male and female teachers have almost same opinion regarding peer accountability.

8.2.Difference between Teachers' Perceptions by Locality

Variables	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Locality	Urban	590	113.3203	13.58807	879	2.295	.02
	Rural	291	115.4880	12.32277			

Table 4.4.2 shows the difference between teachers' perception by locality. The mean score of rural teachers (115.48) is slightly greater than the mean score of urban teachers (113.32). The calculated significance value (.02) is less than significance level (0.05), which indicates that there is statistically significant difference between urban and rural teachers' perception.

8.3.Difference of opinion among Teachers w.r.t. Academic Qualification

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3200.72	3	1066.90	6.21	.00
Within Groups	150502.11	877	171.61		
Total	153702.83	880			

Table 4.4.3 indicates the difference between teachers' perception by academic qualification. The calculated significance value is (.00) less than significance level 0.05. This shows that there is statistically significant difference among teachers' perception because of highest academic qualification. F value (6.21) also supports the claim.

8.4.Difference of opinion among Teachers about Professional Qualification

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	374.17	1	374.17	2.14	.14
Within Groups	153328.65	879	174.43		
Total	153702.83	880			

Table 4.4.4 indicates the difference between teachers' perception by professional qualification. The calculated significance value (.14) is greater than significance level 0.05. This shows that there is statistically no significant difference among teachers' perception regarding professional qualification. F value (2.14) also supports the claim.

8.5. Difference of opinion among Teachers about Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1232.41	3	410.80	2.363	.07
Within Groups	152470.42	877	173.85		
Total	153702.83	880			

Table 4.4.5 indicates the difference between teachers' perception by teaching experience. The calculated significance value (.07) is greater than significance level (0.05). This shows that there is statistically no significant difference between teachers' perception w.r.t. different work experience. F value (2.36) also supports the claim.

9. Conclusions

The teachers' attitude to accountability showed they understand its importance in education and classroom management. They attended staff meetings to discuss the school's vision and objectives. Teachers in this school share teaching materials, teach as a team, and have teaching credentials. They are making a significant educational difference in their students' lives, are well-respected in their communities, and regularly exchange teaching materials with colleagues. They assess students, including providing feedback to students. They observe other teachers' classes and provide feedback related to management or their responsibility. The results showed that in this school, teachers and students have positive relationships, that teachers care about their pupils and that they are really interested in their feedback. A student's academic success is a direct reflection of the school's teaching staff, the importance placed on peer accountability, and the quality of the education pupils get.

The principal is seen to talk about the school's aims with the teachers in meetings, the instructor plans lessons with the class dynamic in mind and higher academic achievement is typically seen in classes taught by teachers with more years of expertise. The instructor is well-versed in the material, provides enough individual attention to each student, and If a teacher raises concerns about issues in the classroom, the principal will approach the matter. Evidence from this study demonstrates that lecturers frequently use teachers and the principal talk about school objectives during meetings. The instructor plans lessons with the class dynamic in mind, Students taught by

more experienced teachers perform academically better, teacher has solid knowledge of the course, teacher sufficiently meets educational requirements of learner and If a teacher raises concerns about issues in the classroom, the principal will approach the matter.

10. Discussion

The findings make it abundantly clear that the majority of teachers concurred with the statement that they encouraged students to engage in peer discussion, that online discussion assisted students in developing their confidence, and that teachers supervised the participation of each and every student in the classroom. The study of Greenhow and Galvin (2020) rectifies the result of the study at hand that the instructor assisted students who were unable to participate in the class owing to technical difficulties with the internet, and they talked about students working together virtually. The results of the study at hand also revealed that majority of instructors concurred that they manage their time effectively and efficiently, that they engage students in interactive activities. The study of Idris et al., (2021) also concluded that use project assignment strategy in their instruction, that they provide written instant feedback to students in an online classroom, and that they do all of these things. The study conducted by Prasetya et al., (2020) come to the same conclusions that students engage in a form of education known as asynchronous learning when they have the freedom to determine when they will participate in educational activities using a variety of media platforms, such as e-mail or online discussion boards. Students have the ability to learn at their own pace, communicate and complete exercises at times of their choosing, and log into the platform whenever they choose. Synchronous learning activities, on the other hand, involve live audio and/or video conferencing with immediate feedback.

This study came to the conclusion that there is a statistically significant difference in teachers' opinions based on gender and years of teaching experience, but that there is no significant difference in teachers' opinions based on location, either urban or rural. The studies of Moore et al. (2011), Singh and Thurman (2019), (Watts 2016), and Yilmaz(2019) all come to the same conclusion, which is that teachers in distance education were not familiar with the new method of teaching that involved the use of online social media applications. But the study of Green et al., (2020) negate the result of current study in which the researchers concluded that distance learning or online learning is more effective and teachers were more familiar with modern teachings methods. This was the first obstacle that stood in the way of teaching and delivering courses to students. The data make it abundantly evident that there is a statistically significant difference between the methods of instruction utilized by male and female educators. According to the findings, there is not a significant association can be seen between the teaching tactics employed by male teachers and those employed by female teachers.

11. Recommendations

1. Teachers may work on students' learning problems to make their teaching more effective.
2. Online learning phenomenon may be updated according to need of time.

3. Teachers may make sure Students' feasibility of working should be according to their capacity.
4. Teaching strategies should be shifted to technology from traditional way of teaching.
5. Teachers may develop the better and facilitated criteria for those students who are learning at distance.

12. Suggestions for the Future Research

1. Qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, can supplement the quantitative analysis of a study.
2. The upcoming researches can be conducted by the perception of head teachers and students.
3. The further research can be on broad divisional level.
4. The future researches can be on secondary or higher secondary level or college level.

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