

AN INVESTIGATION OF SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN PRIVATIZED-PUBLIC SCHOOLS UNDER THE PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH LOW-PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT GUJRANWALA

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Abstract

The study was designed to compare the performance of public schools converted into public-private partnerships with the performance of low performing (LP) public schools in Gujranwala district of Punjab-Pakistan. A sequential exploratory mixed-methods design was used. The population included privatized public schools and low performing primary schools and the sample included 19 privatized public schools under Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) program and 19 low performing public schools. Deliberate purposeful sampling was used to choose schools. Four schools were chosen from Tehsil Wazirabad and four schools from Tehsil Gujranwala (City and Saddar). Data were collected using three instruments: "Scale for Evaluation of School Performance" (SESP) and a checklist to quantitatively assess the physical facilities of basic schools, in addition to interview protocols to qualitatively assess the schools. The validity of the instruments was confirmed by experts, and the content validity ratio (CVR) was calculated for the items of the questionnaire. Forty-one questionnaire items were identified initially and later reduced to 38, with wording adjustments for clarity where necessary. The checklist was adapted from binary options (available, not available) to a three-point scale (not available, insufficient, sufficient). The Content Validity Index (CVI) of the questionnaire was found to be 0.82. Expert feedback process also used to validation qualitative instruments. Alongside the intervention a data collection was undertaken to provide a complete evaluation. This research is therefore crucial for understanding the relative performance of privatized and under-performing public schools, and the role of public-private partnerships in delivering better educational outcomes

Keywords: Social Accountability, Public Private Partnership

Introduction

Quality education and universal primary education are fundamental for reaching globally established standards, and as such, education is one of the cornerstones of development. In fact, governments across the globe are seeking out new and creative solutions to educational challenges in low resourced, low performing areas. Well there was system in Pakistan that is PPP system by Punjab government. To improve access to quality education in Pakistan Public-Private Partnership Approach. Under this initiative, that the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) Public School Support Program (PSSP) was established to partner with the private sector for improved educational performance.

Social accountability in educational institutions defined as the tools through which stakeholders can ensure schools are delivering on their promise of quality education is an underappreciated and yet critically important driver of achieving better educational outcomes.

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This paper will focus on how to design accountability frameworks for privatized-public schools willing to join in Public-Private Partnership (PPP) programs. Yet little empirical evidence exists on whether PPP models are more effective in meeting social accountability concerns compared to traditional low-quality public schools. The study aims to fill this gap by exploring the state of social accountability in these two kinds of institutions in the district Gujranwala, Pakistan.

By focusing on accountability as a key factor for sustainable improvement of quality in education, the study adds to the growing literature on education reform, particularly regarding the impact of PPP programs. Overall, this research should provide policy-makers with insight into the various strengths and weaknesses of the PPP model and practical guidelines for refining and implementing such programs in the future. This research critically examines the social accountability of schools operating under the Public-Private Partnership Program in district Gujranwala, Pakistan, and compares them to low-cadenced open schools to survey the general adequateness of this PPP model in tackling education challenges.

Previous studies have highlighted positive aspects of PPPs related to education, such as resource optimization, improved efficiency and education outcomes (Saeed et al., 2022; Khan & Ahmed, 2023). However, apprehension still exists pertaining to equitable distribution of resources, transparency, and efficiency of accountability mechanisms (Ali & Bashir, 2022). In this paper, we aim to fill this research gap by providing a comparative analysis of social accountability in privatized-public and traditional public schools, thus providing empirical evidence with which to evaluate the productivity of the policy.

The justification behind selecting this theme for this research is the immediate requirement for assessing the effectiveness of PPP model in terms of coping with focus areas in education sector of Pakistan. Due to its focus on the primary-level schools of the tehsil regions of Gujranwala, the study provides localized insights into the policy domain that can impact and support policy decisions at higher levels. In the end, we hope this work can help inform evidence-based efforts to improve accountability and quality in education.

1.1: Statement of the Problem

The Government of Punjab initiated a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program to address the global quality education demand and subsequently bring about universal primary education. The goal of this effort is to utilize both sectors' strengths and accelerate their performance in terms of education. This study becomes increasingly relevant given the interest in assessing whether this program accomplishes what it is intended to do. Using relevant statistical data, the main aim of the research is to study if the PPP policy implementation gives productive results. The study's usefulness stems from its insights that can help to decide whether to replicate, modify, or abandon the current policy moving forward. These findings could inform upon future implementation and impact of the program to ensure that it continues to contribute to the broader goals of improving educational opportunity in the region. It aims to answer two general research questions: (a) What is the level of social accountability of privatized-public schools operating under the PPP framework? and (b) How does the social accountability of privatized-public schools operating under the PPP framework compare to that of low-performing public

schools not operating under the PPP framework? This is to conduct a comparative analysis which leads us to the clear image for the effectiveness of the program, Identify gaps and use upshots of the study in the provincial education policy development in Punjab Pakistan.

1.2: Research Objectives of the Study

The study was carried out under the following objectives:

- 1) To investigate the social accountability in privatized-public schools under Public Private Partnership Program.
- 2) To compare the status of social accountability of privatized-public schools under Public Private Partnership program against low performing public schools.

1.3: Research Questions of the Study

The study will tackle the following research questions:

- 1) What is the status of social accountability at privatized-public schools?
- 2) What is the status of social accountability at low performing public schools?

1.4: Research Hypothesis

H1₀: There is no significant difference in the status of social accountability at privatized-public schools and low performing public schools?

1.5: Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to the primary level Privatized-Public Schools following the model of Public School Support Program (PSSP) under Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) and parallel low performing public schools of tehsil Gujranwala and tehsil Wazirabad, District Gujranwala Punjab, Pakistan.

2. Review of Related Literature

Social accountability within the scope of public-private partnerships (PPP) is an emerging idea that centers on the transparency, responsiveness, and accountability of each the private and public institutions in providing educational services. In that regard, it has become more prevalent in the field of education, especially in nations such as Pakistan where the government has joined hands with the private sector to enhance education in government schools (Imran & Aslam, 2021). With the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in education, it is expected that educational inequality, deficiency in resources, and mismanagement in government schools will be resolved. This literature is about the social accountability in privatize-public schools under PPP program and compares it with low performing public schools in District Gujranwala, Pakistan.

2.1 Social Accountability Mechanisms in Public-Private Partnerships

The social accountability mechanisms in PPP education models are being devised to promote and ensure transparency to resolve governance issues while making sure that service providers

respond to the needs of stakeholders, most prominently the students, teachers, and parents (Bano & Khan, 2020). It also focuses on citizen engagement and civic movements as a means of gradual (or sudden) change, echoing the paradigm that emerged during EFA debates in the 1990s, focusing on social accountability—the extent to which citizens, communities and other stakeholders in the education process are actively involved in monitoring and evaluating the delivery of services, emphasizing improvements in learning outcomes and greater equity (Verger et al., 2021). Privatized-public schools are evaluated for accountability in terms of local involvement, education quality, and responsiveness to public demands (Perry et al. 2009; Turner 2008).

Khanna and Kumar (2022) further elucidate that when the private organization delivers education under the PPP model, it is important to create an accountability framework to ensure compliance without creating an impediment to PPP by making them as accountable as their public counterparts. Example(s) of how to evaluate accountability words from scratch: Audit, citizen feedback, and public reporting of outcomes punish educational providers for good education. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these mechanisms is often contingent on the ability of local stakeholders to participate in the process (Ali & Shah, 2022).

2.2 Privatization and the Public-Private Partnership Program

One of the major policy interventions used to overcome the systemic challenges facing education systems worldwide has been the privatization of public education through PPPs (Sayed et al., 2020). The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) introduced the program in education sector in Pakistan to enhance school infrastructure, quality of teacher and performance of students in public schools (Nadeem & Raza, 2019). Under this program government contracts with private entities to run and manage public schools. This method seeks to improve efficiency, escalate accountability and ease access to quality education for underprivileged communities (Bano, 2021).

The effectiveness of PPP models in education, however, remains a contentious topic. Although privatized-public schools appear to show better academic performance than their public counterparts in the context of better management and resource allocation (Zaman & Rehman, 2020), others warn that these models can also increase social disparity due to profit-oriented practices, achieving low-return services in the search for more significant economic outcomes (Ali et al., 2021). Additionally, it is essential to rationalize how effective private actors can be in providing education given the type of partnerships formed, existing regulations, and governmental monitoring (Khan et al., 2021).

Comparative studies about the performance of privatized-public and low-performing public: Comparative studies between privatized-public schools and low-performing public schools can provide insights into the impact of PPP programs on educational outcomes. According to research conducted by Imran and Aslam (2021), low-fee private schools in Pakistan have been found to outperform low-fee public schools in terms of student achievement, school facilities, as well as teacher performance. This leads to better management practices,

better resources, and academic outcomes which in turn conveys to better performing schools (Javed & Tariq, 2020).

On the other hand, low-performing public schools suffer from insufficient teacher training, poor infrastructure, and scarce resources, making it difficult for them to provide quality education (Khan & Akhtar, 2021). This lack of effective accountability mechanisms means that schools may not be measuring up to expected educational standards, thus having adverse consequences on students (Raza & Iqbal, 2021). The contrast between these forms of education serves to paint a picture of the privatized-public school schemes that are touted under the PPP model as being potentially beneficial to students, but also points out the ways in which this line of thinking fails to address equity and access issues for disadvantaged communities.

2.3 Challenges to Social Accountability in Privatized-Public Schools

Although the PPP program has potential, it suffers from a number of social accountability related issues. A key problem includes the inadequate oversight and regulation of private entities that engage in public school management (Siddique & Hassan, 2022). Abundant monitoring frameworks must exist or else there is a danger that private operators will act more like vehicle operators, where service delivery is secondary to profit.

Additionally, local communities and other stakeholders are barely involved in the monitoring system, so it is often less responsive to students and parent's needs (Tariq & Shah, 2021), Privatized-public schools are often top-down, with little community input into decisions made by private entities (Bano, 2021). The result can be to erode the social accountability of these institutions and hinder their ability to serve local educational needs.

Concerning the above mentioned points, some conclusions can be drawn: social accountability in privatized-public schools under the PPP program is indispensable to promoting equitable and quality education. Although privatized-public schools enjoy greater academic outcomes than low-performing public schools, issues of governance, stakeholder engagement, and regulatory oversight continue to arise. research in the future needs to develop stronger accountability mechanisms between a service provider and the public, investigate how managers of privatized-public schools can work with communities to ensure public standards are being met. Through mitigating these hurdles PPP model can ask a more just and efficient education system in Pakistan.

3. Research Methodology

In this chapter, the researcher illustrated the methods utilized by her to investigate the research problem. In other words, the researcher tried to measure how privatized-public schools performed in comparison to very low performing public schools. From a methodological perspective, the study will be a mixed methods study. The study was conducted using mixed methods research with an embedded research design. Educational equity and quality as well as social accountability are the three factors of school evaluation. To this end three instruments were developed and administered by the researcher herself. : these tools for performance evaluation include scale for assessment of school performance, checklist of availability and

status of physical facilities provided to the students by the school, and interview protocol as a qualitative part to get the opinion from school council members, parents about performance of concerned school as representative of community. This chapter consisted of research design, population of the study, research sample, sampling technique, instrumentation and instrument validation and reliability of the scale, data collection and data analysis.

3.1: Research Design

The study paradigm is mixed methods research and applied mixed methods approach. Embedded design was used to follow the quan-qual model. The study was based on the factors relevant to equity, quality and social accountability in education. These factors were divided into sub-factors. Gender equity in terms of students and teachers and inclusiveness to stakeholders are also inherent components of educational equity. Provision of the physical facilities, qualification of the teachers, volume of the assessment and teachers' training workshops are amongst the other components of educational quality. School council and monitoring mechanism are included in social accountability. The perspective of sub factor of physical facilities was designed qualitatively so pride could be eliminated at the part of respondents and transparency could be assured through observation.

3.2: Population

Population of the study was all privatized public schools and low performing public schools of tehsil Wazirabad, tehsil city and tehsil saddar of Gujranwala district. Note: Here privatized-public schools means those schools working under Public school Support program (PSSP) which was launched by Punjab Education Foundation (PEF). In 2018, Punjab Education Initiative and Management Authority (PEIMA) rolled out a PSSP evolved model. Total 78 privatized-public schools are there in above mentioned tehsiles. So the population is also 78 % falls under the privatized-public schools category. Low performing public schools are defined the schools which on the basis of 5th grade PEC result of 2014 are categorized as poor performers. Here poor result means schools that have at least one fail student or at least one student with * in the exam. There are 34 schools falling under the category of low performing public schools. Both categories breed a total of 112 faculties in every area. For a comparison of some of the different categories, please refer table below for the No. of schools in each category.

Table-3.1: Population of the Study

| | |
|--|----|
| 1.No. of Privatized-public schools | 78 |
| 2. No. of low performing primary schools | 34 |
| Source: school education department, Gujranwala district | |

3.3: Research Sample

The study sample was 19 privatized: public schools within the Pakistani context from the level of a public- private partnership program by the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) in Gujranwala district, Punjab Pakistan and 19 low-performing public schools. Nineteen schools were chosen out of 38 and the purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample of 19

schools which has equal number of 19 against each category for comparison purpose. Respondents were the head teacher of each school. The table below lists the number of schools under each category:

| Table-3.2: Sample of the Study | |
|---|----|
| 1.No. of Privatized-public schools | 19 |
| 2.No. of low performing primary schools | 19 |

3.4: Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted purposive sampling technique to choose the sample. Out of 34 lowest performing public schools, 19 schools were selected. This number is chosen using a certain criteria by research. This criterion covers schools having 5 or greater than 5 students who have, in the 5th grade result of PEC for the year 2014. The researcher has identified 19 schools from the other category of privatized-public schools using purposive sampling to have equal number of schools for comparison purpose.

3.5: Instrumentation

Through two types of instruments, the researcher has tried to know the information related to the topic. The instruments are the “Scale for Evaluation of School Performance” (SESP), and a checklist to assess physical facilities availability & status in the relevant schools. The researcher herself developed both of the instruments based on review of literature under the guidance of supervisor. Both tools are in English. Statements were made precise, simple and easy to understand for the respondents. The instruments were validated by taking expert opinion.

A. School Performance Evaluation Scale

A questionnaire with an initial set of 41 statements was designed by the researcher. This was then merged into 38 statements with demographic data after due expert opinion. School performance was evaluated on questionnaire based scale. Responses to the statements followed were rated on 4-point Likert type scale with options ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). It consisted 3 factors and 8 sub-factors in total; two of which as demographic Information to finally measure the gender parity for students and teachers using the formula of gender parity index defined by UNESCO. We created the statements that followed these 6 factors. The following table provides details of the instrument:

| Table-3.3: Details of Scale for Evaluation of School Performance | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| Factors | Sub-factors | No of items | Sample Items |
| Social accountability | School council | 10 | Community members of school council co-operate in council meetings. |
| | Monitoring | 8 | Monitoring teams pay visit to your |

mechanism

school monthly.

A. Checklist for Physical Facilities

Inter-observer agreement on checklist was achieved prior to data collection (28) and the checklist included a number of questions to ascertain the availability and the state of the physical facilities (29). Carl Robichaud, If education quality of schools is considered, Availability of physical facilities is one of the sub factor. The checklist was classified into two parts including; infrastructure facilities and support facilities. Each category has listing of items and their status against it ranging from 1 to 3; Where 1 for not available, 2 for insufficient and 3 for Sufficient. The checklist is in the format you can find below;

Table-3.4: Checklist for Physical Facilities

| Types of Facilities | No. of items |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| Infrastructure facilities | 13 |
| Support facilities | 13 |

3.6: Instrument validation

The expert panel was approached for their valuable opinion to check the validity of both the instruments. The respected experts were taken into confidence. Content validity ratio (CVR) was calculated for each item of questionnaire to determine whether that item should be retained or not. Researcher made required changes as per comments of experts. It started with 41 items which were combined into 38 and then reworded. Originally, the checklist consists of two status against each item (not available, available) while there were later expanded into three (not available, insufficient and sufficient).

According to the criterion of it provided by Lawshe in 1975, the researcher accepted the statements definitely having $CVR \geq 0.75$. For the statements having CVR value less than 0.75 the researcher move toward mean value. Thus statement no 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 38. The statements, a doubtlessly, approved as per their corresponding CVR value. For statement number 4, 5, 9, 15, 26, 36 and 37 researcher moved toward mean value equal or greater to 1.5. Hence overall count of statements kept is 38.

$$CVI = 31.25/38 = 0.82$$

Based on Lynn the content validity index of the questionnaire is 0.82 which indicates excellent quality (Lynn).

3.7 Instrument Piloting

The questionnaire has been piloted by the researcher on ten schools, five of them are selected from privatized-public schools and other five from low performing public schools. The respondents were head teachers of the respective schools. To check the instrument reliability, the researcher has calculated mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach alpha coefficient for each factor and overall instrument. The reliability of SESP was measured by Cronbach alpha

coefficient, which was found to be .85 which guarantees the instrument reliability where a value of reliability coefficient equal to 0.50 is considered satisfactory (De Vellis, 1991).

3.8: Data Collection

Data were gathered from 19 privatized-public schools and 19 low performing public schools of tehsil Wazirabad, tehsil city and tehsil saddar of Gujranwala district. The two instruments used for data collection include; a questionnaire to be filled by the head teachers of the respective schools and a checklist to be filled by the researcher herself through observation. The researcher ensured that research ethics are adhered to. Their head locals were consented. Privacy was maintained. Respondents were provided sufficient information. The researcher visited all the sampled schools herself. Due to the adverse conditions prevailing in the country and frequent closure of Government schools by government of Punjab owing to covid-19 scenario, this data collection process continued for a period of five months.

3.9: Scoring Procedure

Since, researcher has developed two instruments, therefore, both instruments have different scoring criteria, which is explained below:

a. SESP scoring procedure

Results Likert scale of four points ranging from strongly disagree to strongly include scales for evaluation of school performance was developed. Here,

There are 4 options to select:

- (i) Strongly disagree (SD), 1 point.
- (ii) Disagree (D) — 2 points
- (iii) 3 points Scale: Agree (A)
- (iii) And agreed (A) for 3 points

b. Scoring procedure checklist

The Checklist developed by researcher was categorized into two categories consisting of infrastructure facilities and support facilities. The instrument consisted of 13 items per category, and each item was followed by three alternative responses to assess the status of physical facilities. For rating item availability status, rating is as follows;

- (i) Not available: = 1
- (ii) Incomplete = 2
- (iii) Enough = 3

3.10: Data Analysis

Data collected through both aforementioned instruments were analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to discover

the answers of research questions. For measuring whether the performance of the schools in achieving educational equity, educational quality and social accountability, mean and standard deviation was computed at the schools to both categories. Additionally, independent sample t-test was conducted to compare performance of schools with respect to factors & sub-factors.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The current chapter is dedicated to the explanation of the data collection process and the interpretation developed on the ground of collected data by researcher. This research aimed to assess the school performance of privatized-public schools and its benchmarking with low performing public schools. As part of the purpose of the research two self-developed tools were used by the researcher to process data collection process. Instrument: these are Scale if Evaluation of school Performance (SESP) and checklist for availability of physical facilities

4.1 Statistical Tests for Research Questions

SPSS software was used to analyze data collected through two instruments [29]. Below are the statistical tests implemented with respective research questions and research objectives.

Table-4.1: Research questions and their relevant statistical tests

| Research Objectives | Research Questions | Statistical Tests |
|---|--|--|
| 5-To investigate the social accountability in privatized-public schools under Public Private Partnership Program and low performing public schools. | 1. What is the status of social accountability at privatized-public schools? | Mean and standard deviation along with thematic analysis of qualitative data. |
| | 2. What is the status of social accountability at low performing public schools? | Mean and standard deviation along with thematic analysis for qualitative data. |

6-To compare the status of social accountability of privatized-public schools under Public Private Partnership program against low performing public schools.

H3o: There is no significant difference in the status of social accountability at privatized-public schools and low performing public schools?

Independent sample t-test.

4.2: Quantitative Data Analysis: Data analysis according to research questions is given below;

Research objective-05: To investigate the social accountability in privatized-public schools under Public Private Partnership Program and low performing public schools.

Research question no. 05: What is the status of social accountability at privatized-public schools?

Table-4.7: Social Accountability at Privatized-Public Schools

| Social Accountability | N | Mean | S.D. |
|---------------------------------|----|------|------|
| Effectiveness of school council | 19 | 2.43 | 0.85 |
| Monitoring mechanism | 19 | 3.39 | 0.49 |

Table 4.7 demonstrated the descriptive statistics of social accountability at privatized-public schools. Showed the number of respondents was 19 and the factors of social accountability were 2. The minimum value was 2.43 and the maximum value was 3.39. Mean of effectiveness of school council (M = 2.43, S.D = 0.85), monitoring mechanism (M = 3.39, S.D = 0.49). So, it was concluded that the social accountability was average in privatized-public schools.

Research question no. 06: What is the status of social accountability at low performing public schools?

TABLE-4.8: SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY at LOW PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

| Social Accountability | N | Mean | S.D. |
|---------------------------------|----|------|------|
| Effectiveness of school council | 19 | 2.80 | 0.34 |
| Monitoring mechanism | 19 | 3.45 | 0.36 |

Table 4.8 demonstrated the descriptive statistics of social accountability at low performing public schools. Showed the number of respondents was 19 and the factors of social accountability were 2. The minimum value was 2.80 and the maximum value was 3.45. Mean of

effectiveness of school council ($M = 2.80$, $S.D = 0.34$), monitoring mechanism ($M = 3.45$, $S.D = 0.36$). So, it was concluded that the social accountability was average in low performing public schools.

Research objective-06: To compare the status of social accountability of privatized-public schools under Public Private Partnership program against low performing public schools.

Research hypothesis 03: H3o: There is no significant difference in the status of social accountability at privatized-public schools and low performing public schools?

Table-4.9: Comparison Of Social Accountability In Privatized-Public Schools And Low Performing Public Schools

| Social Accountability | N | | Mean | | S.D. | | M.D. | Df | T-Value | Sig (2 Tailed) | Eta2 |
|--|-----|------|------|------|------|------|-------|----|---------|----------------|-------|
| | PPS | LPPS | PPS | LPPS | PPS | LPPS | | | | | |
| Effectiveness of school council | 19 | 19 | 2.43 | 2.80 | .852 | .343 | -0.37 | 36 | -1.748 | .094 | 0.07 |
| Monitoring mechanism | 19 | 19 | 3.39 | 3.45 | .491 | .361 | -0.06 | 36 | -.423 | .675 | -0.02 |

Table-4.9 shows that an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the social accountability in privatized-public schools and low performing public schools. There was no significant difference in effectiveness of school council scores from privatized-public schools ($M = 2.43$, $SD = .852$) and low performing public schools ($M = 2.80$, $SD = .343$) $t = -1.748$, $p < .001$, (two tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means of privatized public schools and low performing public schools was -0.37 . The eta squared static (0.07) indicated a large effect size. There was no significant difference in monitoring mechanism scores from privatized-public schools ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .491$) and low performing public schools ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .261$) $t = -.423$, $p < .001$, (two tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means of privatized public schools and low performing public schools was -0.06 . The eta squared static (-0.02) indicated a large effect size.

4.3: Qualitative Data Analysis

(a) Interview protocol Social Accountability “A”: For Parents of those studying at Privatized-Public schools.

Question 1: What was your experience with your child at Privatized Public School?

Without getting into too much detail, the responses for interview question 1 mostly revolved around how parents were very much concerned about their children; there was previously no

educational institution in the area where they could send their child; the one available was demolished without any teaching staff or proper academics; however, they are now free to talk to staff members at privatized-public school. These schools all relieve their financial pressure.

As another of the parents said

“We were very worried to drop our children at a school, which was far away from home, as our livelihood gets disturbed and we cannot afford these expenses, so we prefer to take our child along with us to Bricks Company for work but now we can easily send our child to school, where he will get free education and facilities like free books and stationary etc. We are debt-free now”

Another mom replied that:

“Previously, this the old school have only one teacher so children not getting proper attention. This blue card forces me to transfer my elder daughter to another school, but both of my daughters are currently admitted to a public (privatized) school in our village, where they do have a proper teaching staff. Like I always say, I’m easy, and feel free to come up to staff at any time, for any reason.”

A few parents responded:

“We are happy to have such opportunity at our door step .Its make easy and safe for our children to attend school safely and economically”

Experience of parents regarding their child at privatized-public schools

Table-4.10: Experience of parents regarding their child at privatized-public schools

| Themes | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Free education and educational facilities | 3 |
| Relaxation of financial burden | 4 |
| Proper teaching staff | 3 |
| Parent-teacher interaction | 3 |
| Safe and economical | 2 |

Table 4.10 shows that highest frequency was of the parents how report that privatized-public schools ease their financial burden. Majority reports their experience of proper staff and interaction with stakeholders and a few reports it as safe and economic opportunity.

Question 2: Does privatizing public school impact your child performance? How performance is affected?

The emerging themes for interview question 2 were that the parents were saying privatized-public schools have frequent parents-teachers meeting so they are satisfied and aware of their child activities and schools performance. These help child physical development due to the co-curricular activities organized by their schools. Although the school administration invites the parents at different ceremonial which cultivates their interest regarding this school and the child as well. Celebration of traditional events is held by the School and we are glad to see this type of efforts this also helpful in gaining good marks. Very few parents were illiterate and unresponsive to their child worker. As one of those parents replied:

“I know nothing; I can’t read and write. I simply puts my child in school at morning and went for earning. All is known by the teacher and the child.”

Another parent responded:

“I visit school every month myself, and I appreciate that the staff is reporting the performance of my child correctly.” Games and school events organized help my child in physical development.”

A few parents responded:

“School calls proper meetings for parent-teacher and reports grades of my child.”

Effects On Child Performance At Privatized-Public Schools

Table-4.11: Effects On Child Performance At Privatized Public Schools

| Themes | Frequency |
|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Awareness of children activities | 4 |
| Physical development | 2 |
| Parents interest | 3 |
| Knowledge of traditions | 2 |
| Good grades | 2 |
| Unaware | 2 |

Table 4.11 shows that highest frequency was of the parents who were aware of their child performance at schools. Most of the parents reported increased interaction of parents and teachers this enhances good grades. Majority reported physical and cognitive development due to curricular and co-curricular activities. Whereas, just two parents reports that they are unaware being illiterate.

a) Interview protocol Social Accountability “B”: For Parents of Children Enrolled in Low Performing Public schools.

Inter rogative #1: What was the Public School like for your Child?

Thematic analysis corresponding to interview question 1: parents stated that there is no fee in the school however only one to two teachers are available Education in public schools is cheap but unshaped.

Few parents responded:

“There is no fee. We have no expenses; the school is right at our door step.”

One of the father responded:

“They are not interacting between parents and teachers. This adds to unawareness.”

One of the mother responded:

“There are a global four teachers, who engage college students for his or her households”

Experience of parents regarding their child at low performing public schools

Table-4.12: Experience of parents regarding their child at low performing public schools

| Themes | Frequency |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Free education | 4 |
| Relaxation of financial burden | 4 |
| Less teaching staff | 3 |
| Low parent-teacher interaction | 3 |
| Economical | 2 |

Table 4.12 above shows free and affair education is available at low performing public schools but teaching staff is low in number and most of the parents reported low interaction between parents and teachers.

Does public School impacts your child performance? How performance is affected?

The common theme emerging from Q.no. 2 is parents unaware about activities of their child. As formative assessment is not reported so parents become indifferent towards the assessment process. There is no accountability and responsibility.

A few reported:

“We simply send our children to school where their teachers are well aware of their academics.”

One of the parents reported:

“No accountability and responsibility; teachers and students are free to abscond from school whenever they wish. No parent-teacher interaction how to know about our child performance unless the school is such school.”

A mother responded:

“Results is announced only once in a year and we didn't know our child is promoted to next grade or not.

Effects on child performance at low performing public schools

Table-4.13: Effects on child performance at low performing public schools

| Themes | Frequency |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Unawareness of children activities | 4 |
| Annual reporting | 4 |
| Lack of parents interest | 2 |
| Teachers' dependency | 2 |
| Lack of Physical Activities | 2 |
| Low attendance | 1 |

It is evident from table 4.13 that maximum frequency was recorded regarding unaware nature of formative assessment by the parents which leads ignorance of parents. The majority of parents reported total dependence on teacher. A very few parents issue Low attendance.

(a) Interview protocol comparison Social Accountability “A” and “B”

As per the analysis of our interview protocol depicting experience of parents with their child at both privatized-public schools and low performing public schools it is been observed that privatized-public schools are performing better in terms of parent-teacher interaction, formative assessment and co-curricular activities which affects students development and parents' interest towards the schools.

4.4: Findings

4.4.1: Quantitative Findings

- The mean level of status of social accountability at low performing public schools is statistically significant. Mean of effectiveness of school council (M = 2.80, S.D = 0.34), monitoring mechanism (M = 3.45, S.D = 0.36).
- There was no significant difference in effectiveness of school council scores from privatized-public schools (M = 2.43, SD = .852) and low performing public schools (M = 2.80, SD = .343) $t = -1.748$, $p < .001$, (two tailed). There was no significant

difference in monitoring mechanism scores from privatized-public schools ($M = 3.39$, $SD = .491$) and low performing public schools ($M = 3.45$, $SD = .261$) $t = -.423$, $p < .001$, (two tailed).

4.4.2: Qualitative Findings

- 1) Parents report their privatized-public schools ease financial burdens the most. Most report their experience of appropriate personnel and interaction with stakeholders and few it as secure and financial opportunity. The majority number is of the parents those are well informed about their child progress in the schools. Behavior of their students also got improved greatly. Most said their physical and cognitive growth was due to curricular and co-curricular activities. However, only two parents say that they do not know that they are illiterate.
- 2) Learning is free and easily accessible in the poorly administered public schools yet teaching staff is minimal and parents however, state low level of interaction between them and the teachers.
- 3) The highest frequency was from the parents who were ignorant of formative assessment; this explains the lack of interest of parents. Most of the parents declared dependence on total teachers. The number of parents saying, "Low attendance" is very few.
- 4) Our similar pattern emerged when we compared parental experiences from interview protocol of privatized-public schools with low performing public schools that privatized-public schools are performing better on parent-teacher interaction, formative assessment and co-curricular activities which enhances students' development and parents' interest.

4.5: Discussion

This chapter has give some information regarding social accountability status of privatized-public schools under the PPP program as compared to low-performing public schools. The study aimed to compare and contrast the performance of these two set of schools based on the social accountability indicators to measure school council effectiveness and school monitoring mechanism. For this, quantitative and qualitative data were collected using self developed instruments including Scale for Evaluation of School Performance (SESP) and check list of availability of physical facilities. SPSS software was used to analyze the collected data and the obtained results were interpreted.

The researchers wanted to know the state of social accountability in privatized-public schools under the PPP program and low-performing public schools. The descriptive statistics of all the social accountability factors showed that both types of schools showed average levels of social accountability. The ratings on the school council ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 0.85$) and the monitoring mechanism ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.49$) for the privatized-public schools were moderate, indicating a potential for improvement. Likewise, slightly higher (yet still within average range) were the school council ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 0.34$) and the monitoring mechanism ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.36$) for low-performing public schools. These results indicate the need for improved social accountability mechanisms across both school types, consistent with earlier studies that

highlighted the role of accountability in enhancing education (Barrett & McMillan, 2022; Cairney & St. Pierre, 2023).

The second research objective was to compare social accountability of privatized-public schools and low-performing public schools. An independent samples t-test showed no significant difference between groups on the effectiveness of the school council ($p = 0.094$) and monitoring mechanisms ($p = 0.675$). Despite a moderate mean difference for school council effectiveness ($M = -0.37$), the lack of statistical significance indicates that both types of schools perform comparably regarding those dimensions of social accountability. This finding agrees with those of Smith and Jones (2021), who pointed out that both types of education systems, privatized and public, frequently struggle with ensuring strong accountability mechanisms are in place.

Qualitative findings from the surveys, as well as interviews with parents of students in both privatized-public schools and low-performing public schools provided much-needed detail to illuminate the experiences of the stakeholders. The parents of children studying at privatized-public school reported an overall positive experience in terms of adequate teacher availability, constant interaction with teachers on progress and activity based learning leading to holistic development of their children (both physically and cognitively). Several parents also talked about the financial respite these schools provided, as they provided free education, free books and free stationery. This highlights the need to ensure broader community involvement and parental satisfaction in order to contribute towards improved educational outcome as seen in the studies of Tan & Tan (2020) and close to the studies of Tan & Tan (2020), with partnership developer perspective.

For parents of children in low-performing public schools it was the lack of teaching staff in sufficient numbers, limited information provided by impressively-presented parent-teacher meetings, and inadequate formative assessments that made them feel disconnected from their kid's academic development. Interaction between parents and teachers was a recurrent theme across all texts, and highlights a necessary aspect of communication that is impacting students and students' success (Henderson & Mapp, 2020). Additionally, several parents pointed out how much teachers relied on them to monitor students' progress with little oversight. This supports the work of Darling-Hammond (2021) indicating how important teacher accountability and communication is in order to support student success.

Analysis comparing parents from both school types, used in the study to understand the research question, shows that privatized-public schools rank higher when it comes to social accountability measures, including greater interrelatedness between parents and teachers, formative assessment of students and the arrangement of extra-curricular activities. Eleven such elements were perceived to positively apply to the emotional, academic, and social growth of students. These findings align with recent research conducted by Lee and Kim (2022), which explored how co-curricular activities facilitate holistic development and nurture positive school context.

At failing public schools, by contrast, there was little communication between parents and teachers and few formative assessments; as a result, parent engagement was lower and accountability was weaker. These results support earlier research conducted by Ladd (2021) indicating that a lack of parental involvement in low-quality educational institutions is a substantial contributing factor of poor educational outcomes.

The results of this research show that the average level of social accountability is the same in both types of schools, but the level of social accountability of privatized-public schools that received the PPP program was even better than that of low-performing public school. These positive experiences reported by parents, particularly access to teaching staff and consistent communication with parents, as well as organizing co-curricular activities, indicate that privatized-public schools are better suited to develop positive educational impacts. For example, low-performing public schools don't just manage poorly: they are characterized by weak teachers and little pedagogical bonding between teachers and parents, which deprives them of the conditions for basic social accountability.

The results also carry important implications for policymakers and educators, emphasizing the importance of better accountability structures in low-performing public schools and the potential advantages of privatization models that incorporate robust accountability practices. Further research may look into the sustainability of these accountability practices and their impact on student as well as broader educational outcomes.

5.1: Conclusion

As part of this, the research was intended to examine social accountability in privatized-public schools and government schools with poor performance, including the levels of efficiency of school councils, the monitoring mechanisms, and parent experiences of their children's education. The research showed, among other things, how these schools operate and are held accountable. The results of the study showed that social accountability in privatized-public schools was significant, considering two main aspects, namely; the monitoring mechanism and the effectiveness of the school council. It was said to be monitoring the mechanism at a higher level, the privatized-public schools adapted, where any quality log, reporting date analysis, and ranking system were developed. However, the impact of this participation in the school council was shown to be small or moderate and it is worthwhile to note that the involvement in decision making was active.

The final result showed that low-performing public schools had a high degree of social accountability in the same two aspects. Once again, whether a monitoring mechanism was present was at a relatively high level, whereas the efficiency of the school council established was average. This was indicative that the problems and positive attributes of schools are similar regardless of type when it came to social accountability. These similar findings across the two school types may suggest that monitoring mechanisms are essential for taking action on accountability, and that there is at least a minimal level of accountability being enforced in all

schools, even if the presence of school councils in more recent years has generated skepticism around their effectiveness.

One of the main conclusions from the study was that there were no statistically significant differences in the effectiveness of the school council and the monitoring mechanism in either privatized-public schools or low-performing public schools. Consequently, it can be argued that despite the differences in the operational models of such schools, their social accountability mechanisms serve their purpose equally. This calls into question assumptions that privatized-public schools might actually socially outperform low-performing public schools.

Parents interview qualitative results helped us understand how the experiences of privatized-public schools and low-performing public schools differ for parents. On the other hand, parents of children enrolled in privatized-public schools expressed greater satisfaction with their child's education compared to parents of children attending other types of schools, especially in relation to the economic relief, human resource quality and interactive quality of stakeholders. There was a higher parental involvement with teachers, and as a result, there was better academic performance and better development in cognitive and physical aspects because of co-curricular activities, end the article. Parents with children in low-performing public schools reported less engagement with teachers, less two-way interaction between parents and teachers, and little awareness of formative assessments. Parents play a vital role in the educational process, and their lack of engagement in it can lead to disengagement from the school and its activities. Additionally, poorly performing public schools were considered to provide free education, yet parents reported that there were not enough teachers and staff for students to get any real assistance that would help them in their studies.

The comparison of parents' experiences showed that privatized-public schools have a much better performance in the areas which are fundamental in improving students' development and development of parental interest- Parent-teacher interaction, Formative assessment and participation in co-curricular activities. These are key factors in motivating students and improving academic performance. Then again, even though public schools are more accessible, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to engage parents and ensure that students receive well-rounded education with the right resources (Torres, 2007).

Recommendations

Recommendations for the first of these derived from the study's findings concerning the social accountability and performance of privatized-public and low performing-public school. For privatized-public schools, parents and community stakeholders must be given a greater voice in school councils to increase school improvement effectiveness. Furthermore, enhancing parent-teacher interaction for bridging the gap would also help foster the lifelong impact of these formative assessments on their child, and encourage them to stay involved as active partners in their learning journey.

For the downward performance department public schools, the government and relevant educational institutions can be considered for improvement of teacher training quality, increase

the number of teaching staff, strengthen parent-teacher communication. This can help schools engage parents, enhance awareness around student performance, and inform students' progress and development.

If adopted, these recommendations could improve social accountability, improve educational outcomes, and enable a more collaborative partnership between schools and parents that would ultimately benefit students in both privatized-public and low-performing public schools.

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