

## Executive District Officers (Education) and Quality Assurance at Secondary Level in Punjab, Pakistan

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### Abstract

*Quality of education furnishes learners to develop intellectual capabilities, knowledge, skills and to contribute information of respectful, enlightened and peaceful democratic societies in order to uplift the sustainable well-being of individuals. The aim of secondary education is to build individual intellectual capabilities. There have been no serious and integrated efforts to develop an effective system of quality assurance for secondary education though, certain efforts have been made to improve certain aspects of school education. The aim of the article is to collect the opinion of Executive District Officers (EDOs) about quality assurance in education in the area of teachers and learners at secondary level. The research instrument was developed, validated through experts in the field of education, and reliability (internal consistency) was found through SPSS. Results of this study showed that teachers had mastery over the subject but did not have competency in pedagogical skills.*

### Key Words

Physical facilities, Quality education, Secondary Schools, Quality teachers, Quality learners

### Introduction

Quality is a word with different descriptions that occasionally complement and sometimes reject one another. The industrial description mentions that quality is a vital, quantifiable part of manufactured goods or service is attained when requirements are met. Moreover, quality is more prescribed to a distinctive feature defined by the customer, not the supplier. Several people observe that quality as “correctness for rationale”. Quality is an attribute or trait desired by the buyer, not the supplier. The 21<sup>st</sup>-century era will be remembered as the century of quality (Baird, 2006).

There are a number of ways to view this quality, i.e. quality as appropriateness or consistency, quality as a foundation, quality as a merit for resources, and quality as a realistic approach. Quality is also described in terms of objectives set for a particular plan or process in a particular position on a particular occasion. Quality is defined as the whole of features as well as the uniqueness of a product or service that to fulfill the desired needs (Arjomandi, 2009).

Anderson (2006) mentions that quality is the aspect to produce a product or to present service with no-fault or deficiency (Zero Defects).

After a common explanation of the term quality, it is essential to understand the concept of quality assurance. Quality assurance has come out as an important part of the administration in the western world since 1950s and its emphasis is on the suitable training of employees to improve performance. Quality assurance facilitates both process and product of the mechanism (Bayraktar, Tatoglu&Zaim, 2008).

Quality assurance is the system by which institutions fulfill their responsibilities by integrating the administrative viewpoint and the actions performed to ensure that every one of those engaged in the activity is accountable. Internal administration of quality is the structure within which quality assurance works and within which plans to encourage quality development.

Quality assurance is an approach to assess the efficiency of procedures and structures required to attain desired results. It is the system to avoid deficiencies occurring in an organization. Reid (2008) mentions that quality assurance refers to the procedures as well as actions to assess whether

the quality is being sustained or enhanced. Similarly, Maguad (2006) has argued that the effectiveness of goods and services is due to quality process.

Since the nature of quality is dynamic, therefore, its shape and nature vary from individual to individual (Aminuzzama, 2007).

The quality of education can be described in a contextual mode; keeping in view the changeable operational surroundings in which the institutions exist. The improvement background of the region in question gives the external surroundings. Haider (2008) has told that the environment in which the school functions provides the internal environment reveals:

1. Physical services were available.
2. The human resources particularly the administrators and the teachers.
3. The educational procedure to indicate the way the national curriculum is carried out.
4. The student attainment reflecting results of schooling.

### **Teachers' Quality**

There has been concern about the role of teachers and administrators to their capabilities skills for offering educational experiences to learners. Teachers' occupation characterizes a key aspect for making sure thus the processes of the institution are of quality (Rogers, 2006).

### **Teacher Qualification**

Teachers who have higher education degrees need to enhance their professional knowledge. Such are usually rewarded for having a higher degree as such qualification is now becoming a norm in Pakistan. Educational qualification is especially significant for a quality teacher. A teacher with higher qualification has deeper understanding of the related subject than the less educated one.

### **Professional Development**

Teaching is an occupation that needs professional abilities and skills. A teacher has to consider classroom activities, curriculum, teaching methodology and techniques and assessment methods and psychology of the learners at the same time in the classroom. Thus academic qualification is not adequate for an instructor. It is essential for a teacher to acquire training for the teaching career to attain the essential abilities and skills. The top-class teachers are competent for serving their pupils in learning and have profound mastery of pedagogy and subject matter. (Rogers, 2006).

### **Teacher Competence**

Competence is defined as a combination of skills, knowledge, understanding, standards, attitudes, and aspiration which guide to use embodied human action in the world in a particular domain. Therefore, competence is distinguished.

### **Teaching Strategies**

Methods of teaching that help the learner in learning relatively than encourage submissiveness, as well as rote memorization, present an innovative as well as a complicated example for a lot of instructors, though, one that necessities to be unspecified as well as put into performing if learner results are to recover. Life skills is a phrase which UNICEF utilize in two key ways, (i) to exceed on to a great group of interpersonal psychosocial skills as well as (ii) to pass on to the process of education along with learning regarding these skills. Consequently, it is important to discuss life skills in provision of compulsory content and events connected to live skill education (Arjomandi, 2009).

### **Teacher Feedback Mechanism**

Good quality teachers are an expert not merely in teaching methods, although also in assessment and evaluation practices that permit them to measure individual learning as well as settle in actions according to learner needs (Haider, 2008).

### **Attitude of Teachers**

Education quality places students in the center of the teaching-learning process. Learners' success has to be the school's primary concern. The behavior of teachers which cared for the emotional requirements of her learners,

showing respect, care, and physical closeness, helped to raise the learner's stage of educational approach and their development of more optimistic attitude toward school and self (Flessa, 2010).

### **Effective Use of Education Technology**

The huge variety of school services in the developing countries concerns might who consider that technology and learners' progress of skills related to technology would be critical aspects in the 21st era knowledge-based international financial system. The use of technology to decrease international dissimilarities throughout such transportation as Internet-based distance education, interactive video, and learning television. In area wherever telephone and electricity lines are obtainable, such approach to education might give appreciably to get better the quality of learning procedures. (Baird, 2006).

### **Student-Teacher Ratio**

(Baird, 2006) accomplished that learners' performance in Government prime schools of developing states enhanced the efficiency of learner-teacher percentage as well as absentees of teachers a little rating. The teacher absenteeism was an important unconstructive co-relation of students' performance. The worth of school services calculates enhanced performance regarding student-teacher ratio as well as learner's performance.

### **Salary Package**

Salary package is an important factor in job satisfaction and thus the effort put in to achieve goals. If an educator obtains a suitable pay, the most professionally he/she might educate his/her learners by using his/her ability, competencies as well as skills. As a result, teacher earnings might influence learners' achievement. There is no doubt that more than 90% of the regular budget of education in Pakistan is spending on salaries. In many developing countries, pay levels do not cover the essentials of reasonable livelihood while it is a major factor in the instructors' inspiration crisis (Jung, 2011; 2012).

### **Incentives**

Usually, teachers have paid only a salary schedule, in which the salary of a teacher is based on their level of education as well as years of experience. Financial incentives for teachers can have an optimistic impact on learning.

### **Quality of Learner**

Systems of school work for the learners who take admission in them. The nature of children's life before starting schooling deeply influences by type students they might be. Some basics describe quality student, including physical condition, early life incidents, and parents' assistance.

### **Health Status**

Physically healthy learners learn well. Strong development in early babyhood, particularly during the first three years of lives, plays an important role in providing the basis for a healthy life and a motivating experience in school (Adams&McCarthy, 2005). Proper diet is necessary for the healthy growth of the brain can provide learners the greatest probabilities for good physical growth.

Learners who are physically energetic have a tendency to achieve better in classroom behaviors, cognitive performance, class positions, and school attendance. Physical actions and strength level are related to better cognitive performance (e.g., concentration, memory). Missing out breakfast reduces cognitive performance (e.g., attentiveness, memory, processing of difficult visual images, problem-solving) along with learners. Non-consumption of a balanced diet is related to lower grades. Deficiency of particular nutrients (i.e., iron, calcium, vitamins A, B6, B12, C, zinc), starvation relate to low-grade achievements of learners (Taras, 2005).

### **Regularity of Learners**

Learning is a continuous activity; schools utilize discussions, lectures, experiments, demonstrations as part of the educational activities. Regular learners contribute to everyday classroom activities and these activities play an important role achievement (Reid, 2008).

Research of rural-based institution in Malawi concluded that learners with upper rates of attendance had better educational experiences and lower rates of reappearance. Learners with excellent attendance records usually attain high grades as well as take pleasure in school activities (Gottfried, 2009).

### **Self-Motivation**

Motivation is the desire of an individual to undertake activities to attain a preferred goal. Motivation is, in fact, the powerful force that helps to focus on the achievement of the determined goals. The other factor that can inspire the learners for learning is instructor's role as a facilitator/catalyst throughout class activities (Theobald, 2006).

The motivation for learning is the dedication of the learners to learn and attain good marks that can assist them in preparing for professional careers. Motivation is generally of two kinds that are associated with the educational achievement. These two kinds are described by intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is internal abilities of the learners to relate their surroundings to attain objectives. On the other hand extrinsic inspiration refers to the reality that people are forced towards the exterior resources during various kinds of grades and rewards (Tanveer, Shabbir, Ammar, Palla & Aslam, 2012).

### **Support of Family**

Parents might not forever have the facilities and environment to hold up their children's psychosocial and cognitive maturity throughout their school age. Parents' level of education has a comprehensive effect on a student's ability to be taught in school. Children depend on family support to fulfill their basic needs, which establishes strong relationship. Therefore, parents are role models for their children (Olivos, 2006).

### **Academic Background**

Several studies have confirmed the association between academic background of parents and the academic achievement are strongly correlated. Educated parents facilitate children towards development and growth, and support in relation to the developmental requirements of their children and accomplishment (Brookfield, 2006).

### **Socio-Economic Status**

Learners coming from different socio-economic family status join the school every year. Socioeconomic background refers to the level of income, profession, and education, of an individual or group. The influence of low socioeconomic background on learner achievement is hard to ignore. Learners of a low socioeconomic background often face extra challenges comprising a dearth of learning sources, complicated learning situations and low motivation that negatively influence their learning performance (Olivos, 2006).

The amount of money, parents pay for the education of their children is related to the quality of learning. Access to economic resources and services and human resources build up learning capabilities and qualifications affect the ways in which parents work with their children, the kind of actions they support and the aptitude, values, and standards they articulate towards learning and their concern about children's' growth and the abilities they desire to build up in their children (Gershoff, Aber, Raver & Lennon, 2007).

### **Relationship with Peers**

The relationships among peers reach its elevation of significance during years. Peers give a defensive group in which then set up autonomy from parents, build up social information, knowledge, and competence. This strong relation to peer grouping permits teenagers to start to increase their intellect of course for mature life. Peer grouping also powerfully influences both constructive manners, such social service and negative manners such as smoking, depending on the temperament of the peer group leaders and family assistance offered. Their dissimilarities and similarities assist them to find out who they are in relation to others, and what others believe about them. The rules for social communication become more flexible use extra time meeting collectively, chatting as well as watching others. In early teenage years is a significant time for developing companionships within similar sex. (Gottfried, 2009)

### **Statement of the Problem**

The purpose of secondary education is to build individual intellectual capabilities as well as the personality. The community now a day insists on quality education. There have been no serious and integrated efforts to develop an effective system of quality assurance for secondary education though, certain efforts have been made to improve certain aspects of school education. This has been mainly due to gaps in teachers' capability, the program of study, learning services, resources, and funding. There are very few researches that discussed the quality assurance in secondary education. Therefore, researcher planned to discuss the quality assurance at secondary school level.

## Objectives of the Study

- (i) To identify the perception of EDO's about the quality of teachers' at secondary level.
- (ii) To identify the perception of EDO's about the quality of learners' at secondary level.

## Research Questions

Following questions were made to find out the answers:

- (i) What are the characteristics of a quality teacher?
- (ii) What are the characteristics of a quality learner?

## Research Design

Non-experimental design is considered as an essential design for the research purpose, just like an experimental design. Since non-experimental design does not focus on a cause-effect relationship, yet not considered as inferior in general approach (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The non-experimental design was selected for the research. More specifically it was carried out as a descriptive study.

## The population of the study

Population is a compilation of every element the researcher is to study and regarding which is trying to draw conclusions (Haider, 2008). The population of this study comprised thirty-six Executive District Officers (education) of Punjab Pakistan.

## Sample and sampling techniques

A sample is a grouping of a small number from a specified population under study. It is a sub-set or part of the population. If the population is vast in that case the researcher might choose a sample from the entire population.

The sample might be a probability or non-probability sampling. Shah (2006) has described that random selection from sample is considered perfect because the population has the same probability to be chosen. The sample would be balanced and indiscriminately selected.

The sample therefore composed is neutral. The following samples were selected using a random sampling technique:

- (i) Out of 36 Executive District Officer (education) of Punjab 33 (95%), executive district officers of education were selected through random sampling technique (CEO's Erstwhile EDOs' at the time of data collection).The sampling frame is shown in table1.

**Table 1.** Sampling Frame

	Sample	Population	%
Executive District Officer (Education)	36	33	95

Source: *Statistical Booklet of Punjab, 2012*

Table 1 indicates that 95% of EDOs participated in the research.

## Development of Instrument

On the basis of review literature, a tool was developed for research purpose on five-point Likert scale. The focus of the questionnaire was quality teachers and learners, comprised of 19 closed-ended items in order to seek responses from EDOs' of Punjab province in Pakistan.

## Validity and reliability

Rubin & Rubin (2005) have stated that a questionnaire must be validated and pretested as these procedures assist in recognizing insufficiencies of the research tool. Expert opinion is necessary to validate the tool. After pretesting the questionnaire was field-tested using members of the population along with objective but not included in the sample.

After the primary sketch of the questionnaire was sent to ten professors of education in different universities and ten quality enhancement cells to evaluate the questions and to get feedback. After receiving feedback from experts, the questionnaire was amended where necessary. Moosa(2006) has stated that validity enhances the

strengths of tool and provide opportunities to overcome weaknesses. Reliability is extremely significant for any facts gathering process.

The questionnaire was validated with the help of experts in the field of education.

### Analysis

**Table 2.** Quality of Teachers

S.No	Statements	SA	Agree	UNC	DA	SDA
1	Teachers have mastery over the subject.	06 18.1	08 24.2%	04 12.1%	08 18%	09 27%
2	Teachers are professionally qualified.	12 36%	12 36%	00 0%	06 18%	03 9%
3	Schools have definite policies to promote the professional development of teachers.	04 12%	04 12%	04 12%	11 33%	10 30%
4	Teachers have competency in pedagogical skills.	03 9%	03 9%	03 9%	14 42%	10 30%
5	Teachers adopt different strategies for quality learning.	04 12%	04 12%	03 9%	11 33%	11 33%
6	Teachers have developed a mechanism for providing feedback to learners.	08 24%	12 36%	03 9%	06 18%	04 12%
7	Teachers have a positive attitude towards learners.	06 18%	07 21%	02 6%	10 30%	08 24%
8	Appropriate use of instructional technology is made for quality learning.	06 18%	07 21%	05 15%	08 24%	07 21%
9	The student-teacher ratio is manageable in secondary schools.	09 27%	08 24%	03 9%	07 21%	06 18%
10	Teachers receive their salary according to their qualification.	09 27%	09 27%	02 6%	07 21%	06 18%
11	Incentives are provided to outstanding teachers.	04 12%	04 12%	03 9%	11 33%	11 33%

- The first statement indicates that 45.3% (18.1%SA+27.2%A) respondents agreed that teachers had mastery over the subject.
- The second statement depicts that 72.6% (36.3%SA+36.3%A) respondents agreed that teachers were professionally qualified.
- The third statement reflects that 63.6% (33.3% DA + 30.3% SDA) respondents disagreed that schools had definite policies to promote the professional development of teachers.
- The fourth statement declares that 72.7% (42.4%DA+30.3%SDA) respondents disagreed that teachers had competency in pedagogical skills.
- The fifth statement shows that 66.6% (33.3%DA+33.3%SDA) respondents disagreed that teachers adopted different strategies for quality learning.
- The sixth statement portrays that 60.5% (24.2%SA+36.3%A) respondents agreed that teachers had developed a mechanism for providing feedback to learners.
- The seventh statement indicates that 54.5% (30.3%DA+24.2%SDA) respondents disagreed that teachers were a positive attitude towards learners.
- The eighth statement represents that 45.4% (24.2% DA +21.2% SDA) respondents disagreed that the appropriate use of instructional technology was made for quality learning.
- The ninth statement reflects that 51.4% (27.2% SA +24.2% A) respondents agreed that the student-teacher ratio was manageable in secondary schools.
- The tenth statement depicts that 54.4% (27.2% SA +27.2% A) respondents agreed that teachers received their salary according to their qualification.
- The eleventh statement portrays that 66.6% (33.3% DA +33.3% SDA) respondents disagreed that incentives were provided to outstanding teachers.

**Table 3.** Quality of Learners

S.No	Statements	S	A	UNC	DA	SDA
1	Health services are available in the institution.	05	08	02	10	08
		15%	24%	6%	30%	24%
2	Students attend the school regularly.	10	11	02	06	04
		30%	33%	6%	18%	12%
3	Learners are self-motivated for learning.	09	09	03	07	05
		27%	27%	9%	21%	15%
4	Family support for their children is necessary for learning.	12	10	03	06	02
		36%	30%	9%	18%	6%
5	Learners come with good academic background.	06	06	05	12	04
		18%	18%	15%	36%	12%
6	Socio-economic status of parents is considered in designing teaching-learning strategies	10	14	02	04	03
		30%	42%	6%	12%	9%
7	Peer groups build-up for quality learning.	09	08	03	07	06
		27%	24%	9%	21%	18%
8	Parents' teacher association is working for parent-school contact	02	04	04	13	10
		6%	12%	12%	39%	30%

- The first statement indicates that 54.5% (30.3%DA+24.2%SDA) respondents disagreed that health services were available in the institution.
- The second statement depicts that 63.6% (30.3%SA+33.3%A) respondents agreed that students attended the school regularly.
- The third statement reflects that 54.4% (27.2% SA +27.2% A) respondents agreed that learners were self-motivated for learning.
- The fourth statement shows that 66.5% (36.2%SA+30.3%A) respondents agreed that family support for their children was necessary for learning.
- The fifth statement illustrates that 48.4% (36.3%DA+12.1%SDA) respondents disagreed that learners came with good academic background.
- The sixth statement represents that 72.7% (30.3%SA+42.4%A) respondents agreed that the socio-economic status of parents was considered in designing teaching-learning strategies.
- The seventh statement indicates that 51.4% (27.2%SA+24.2%A) respondents agreed that peer groups build-up for quality learning.
- The eighth statement portrays that 69.6% (39.3% DA +30.3% SDA) respondents disagreed that parents' teacher association was working for parent-school contact.

## Findings

The followings were the findings of the study:

### Teachers' Quality

- Responses of 45.3% EDOs (Education) showed that teachers had mastery over the subject.
- In the view of 72.6%, EDOs (Education) reflected that teachers were professionally qualified.
- The opinion of 63.6% EDOs (Education) presented that schools had no definite policies to promote the professional development of teachers.
- In view of 72.7%, EDOs (Education) portrayed that teachers had not competency in pedagogical skills.
- 66.6% of respondents disagreed that teachers adopted different strategies for quality learning.
- The opinion of 60.5% EDOs (Education) depicted that teachers had developed a mechanism for providing feedback to learners.
- In the view of 54.5% EDOs (Education) that teachers were a positive attitude towards learners.
- The opinion of 45.4% EDOs (Education) showed that appropriate use of instructional technology was not made for quality learning.
- The views of 51.4% EDOs (Education) presented that the student-teacher ratio was manageable in secondary schools.
- Opinion of 54.4% EDOs (Education) that teachers' received their salary according to their qualification.
- 66.6% EDOs (Education) viewed that incentives were provided for outstanding teachers.

### **Quality of Learners**

- a. Responses of 54.5% EDOs (education) indicated health services were not available in the institutions.
- b. 63.6% EDOs (Education) reported that students attend the school regularly.
- c. In the view of 54.4% EDOs (Education) that learners were self-motivated for learning.
- d. Opinion of 66.5% EDOs (Education) that family support for their children was necessary for learning.
- e. In the opinion of 48.4% EDOs (Education) that learners were with good academic background.
- f. 72.7% EDOs (Education) opinioned that socioeconomic status of parents was considered in designing teaching-learning strategies.
- g. As per view of 51.4%, EDOs (Education) presented that peer groups build-up for quality learning.
- h. The opinion of 69.6% EDOs (Education) that parents' teacher association was working for parent-school contact.

### **Conclusions**

Following are the conclusions of the study:

- a. Health services did not exist in institutions. Learners were neither self-motivated nor had a good academic background.
- b. Socio-economic status of parents was considered in designing teaching-learning strategies. Peer groups were framed for quality learning. Parents' teacher associations were not effectively working for parent-school contact.
- c. Results of this study showed that teachers had mastery over the subject but did not have competency in pedagogical skills. Secondary schools did not have definite policies to promote the professional development of teachers.
- d. According to this study, teachers did not have positive attitude towards learners. Appropriate use of instructional technology was not made for quality learning. Incentives were not provided for outstanding teachers.



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