



Case Study on Identifying the Reasons for Inferior Quality of Education at the Primary Level, Village Hameed District Attock, Pakistan

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify the reasons explaining the low quality of education in the public primary schools in UC-21 village Hameed, District Attock, Pakistan. The study is based on primary data which was collected through questionnaires. A total of 76 respondents were included in the sample comprising 40 students, 20 teachers, 10 parents, 4 head teachers and 2 education officers. The findings reveal that lack of human and material resources were the major reasons for the low quality of education. Based on the findings, key recommendations are suggested to improve the quality of education at the primary level, such as construction of new rooms and recruitment of new teachers. Further research is required to confirm if similar problems are pervasive in other rural schools of Pakistan.

Introduction

Education is the fundamental right of every citizen. Education should be free and compulsory at least up to the elementary level. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) 1948 under article 26 (1) A. Education facilitates people to realize their potential and their capabilities, indeed education plays a vital role in economic development (Bloom, 2006). Education plays a vital role in economic development. A well-educated society has the potential of transforming into higher rates of innovation. Consequently, higher rates of innovation accompanied with new technology and improved production methods could enhance the overall productivity of firms [1]. Education is crucial in helping people break the cycles of poverty and consequently leads to inequality reduction within a society. Education promotes healthy lifestyle and enhances tolerance between people, thus contributing to a more peaceful society [2].

In spite of missing the target of MDG 21 (upe) that was due by 2015, developing regions have achieved some positive results. Primary net enrolment rates² have increased considerably from 83% to 91% in 2015. Similarly developing countries have seen the number of primary aged out- of-school children fall from 100 million in 2000 to an estimated 57 million in 2015 [3].

Sub-Saharan Africa has shown tremendous achievements. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, the number of enrolled children in primary schools has increased at an exponential rate from 62 million to 149 million during the span of just 22 years (1990-2012). As a result, the worldwide youth literacy rate has also increased to 91 percent in 2015 (ibid).

However, the issue of low quality of education is a big concern for developing countries. Especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, a large proportion of enrolled children are unable to

acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills (World bank 2006 p.13). For instance, in Nigeria, 40 percent students of grade 4 are not able to replicate a single word from a passage. In India, 50 percent students of grade II and grade V were unable to do a two-digit subtraction.

According to the Annual status of education report Pakistan (2013), only 43 percent students of grade V can perform grade II level mathematical operations, while 51 percent students of the same grade can read grade II level Urdu language sentences [4]. Moreover, Pakistan was ranked at 118 out of 129 countries in the Education for all Development Index (Unesco 2012, p. 289).

This Paper attempts to find out the causes of the low quality of education in rural Attock District, in village Hameed, Pakistan. The researcher adopted an analytical approach to identify the reasons for the low quality of education. In depth interviews with students, teachers, and head- teachers and educational officials were conducted for the collection of empirical data.

The State of the Education Sector in Pakistan

The education sector of Pakistan has gone through some drastic changes since its independence in 1947. The government of Pakistan is committed to ensure free primary education to all its citizens. In doing so, Pakistan has made international commitments like “Millennium Development Goals” and “Dakar framework of action Education for all” (EFA) signed by world leaders in the year 2000 (Education for all review report in Pakistan, 2015, p. 7- 11). In the last few decades, the government of Pakistan has taken various policy initiatives to increase the literacy rate and to improve the access of primary education; for instance, the “Nationwide Literacy Program” (1986-1990), “National Education Policy” (1992) and “National Education Policy” (1998-2010). The main aim of these policies was to increase enrolment rates at the primary level [5]. As a result, the primary net enrolment rate has steadily increased from

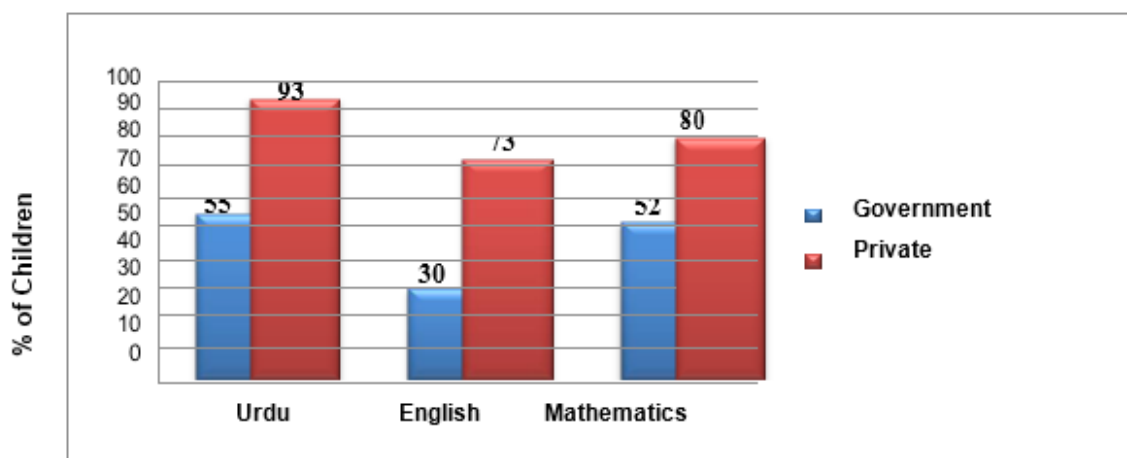
59% to 77% between the years 2000 to 2016. The gross primary enrolment rate³ has also increased from 71.2% to 97% during 2000 to 2016 (Pakistan education statistics,

Retention rates⁴ at the primary level have also shown some improvement. An increment of almost 8% percentage points has been witnessed from 59% to 66.8% between 2000 to 2012-13. In the context of gender inequalities, the Gender parity index⁵ stood at 0.86 for the year 2013 (Education for all review report, 2015 pp.19-28). However, in spite of these improvements at the primary level, the country still faces some serious challenges. An estimated 5 million children of primary age schooling are out of school. There are severe gender disparities between poor and richer families regarding education. Girls from poor families only receive 1.01 years of education as compared to girls belonging to rich families which receive 9.39 years of schooling throughout their whole lives [6].

Another concerning issue for the government of Pakistan is the low quality of education at the primary level. A first major assessment was conducted by World bank in 1984 to measure the learning achievements of primary level students under the project named “Primary Education Project”. This assessment compared science and mathematics scores of 3,300 students of grade 4 and grade 5 respectively. These students were selected from three provinces i.e Punjab, Sindh and N.W.F.P. The achievement scores for the students of all three provinces were quiet low (Unesco,2002).

According to the Global competitiveness report [7], Pakistan was ranked at 112 out of 144 countries with regard to quality of primary education with a value of 3 out of 7. In the context of the south Asian region, Pakistan was ranked the lowest when compared with its neighboring countries like Bangladesh and India [7]. This proves that quality at the primary level of education is very low and that drastic changes are necessary in order to overcome the existing challenges.

Statement of the Problem



Source: ASER (2016)

Figure 1:

According to the Annual status of education report (2016), in the rural district of Attock, 60% of primary age children are enrolled in public primary schools while 34% are enrolled in private primary schools. This shows the high percentage of children enrolled in public primary schools in rural areas of the district Attock. The report also assessed the learning levels of primary students in Urdu, Mathematics and English. The figures are shown in the following bar chart (Figure 1):

The assessment survey included story and letter writing for English and Urdu. For Mathematics, only basic arithmetic functions (division, multiplication, subtraction, addition) were a part of the assessment survey. It can be seen that there exist learning inequalities between students from public and private schools. In all three subjects, students belonging to private schools outperformed students who are enrolled in public primary schools [8]. According to another report of ASER (2012) in the district of Attock, 58% of the children of grade 5 were three years behind with respect to their competency level. They were unable to read story texts of grade 2 in Urdu, 49% of grade 5 were unable to read story texts of grade 2 in English and 66% were unable to do divisions of grade 2 Math. This shows that most of the students are three years behind with respect to their competency levels [4].

The prevailing low learning levels in public primary schools have motivated the researcher to conduct a study to identify the reasons for poor quality of primary education in UC-21 Village Hameed, District Attock. Most of the studies so far have been conducted on urban areas. There is very little evidence available for rural areas and especially at the village level. This study would be the first one to analyze the reasons for low learning levels that exist at the very micro level.

Conceptualizing the term Quality of Education

The concept of quality of education is a very controversial topic. The term quality is very subjective and has diverse interpretations by individuals and international organizations. Quality has been stated differently by diverse categories of stakeholders. Adams (1993) defines quality as the extent to which set targets and goals are achieved. The term quality has often been interpreted, synonymously with effectiveness, equity, efficiency, and equality. The concept quality of education is somewhat elusive as it involves the complications of the teaching- learning process (Mirza, 2003). Quality of education is a composition of six components. These are reputation of the institution, quality of basic resources and inputs, processes, content, outputs and outcomes and value added [9].

Hawes and Stephens (1990) interpreted the term quality of education as a composition of three dimensions; Efficiency in achieving the declared targets, its appropriateness to human conditions and needs and "something more" in the context of happiness and betterment. In the context of quality, efficiency is demonstrated as making the best use of inputs or getting the maximum out of the available limited resources to improve the learning skills of students. Relevance is context specific considering the present and future needs of learners. "Something more" refers to the extra quality of creativity, innovation, and happiness for

others, which are rarely observed in school environment [10].

In 2005, UNESCO formulated an educational quality framework, it was named "Education for all; The Quality Imperative". The framework underpins four major factors; (1) characteristics of learners such as their social and economic background, health, prior learning, and religious affiliation etc. (2) The educational context where the learning takes place. (3) The enabling inputs such as availability of rooms, teachers, water and sanitation facilities and availability of instructional materials etc. These are important as a lack of enabling facilities would undermine the learning levels of students. (4) Lastly, the outcomes are mostly asserted as achievement scores or exam performance [1].

Factors affecting quality of education

This part of the paper focuses on the factors that have an impact on the achievement scores of students. Factors are categorized as; physical school facilities, class size/pupil-teacher ratio, availability of quality teachers and teaching aids/instructional materials, teaching methods and parental involvement. These factors are selected after reviewing thoroughly the related literature of the term quality of education. Moreover, these are also selected on basis of the proposed definition of the term quality of education by the author himself.

The availability of basic school facilities such as rooms, blackboards, water and sanitation facilities, teachers, libraries and laboratories etc. are strongly linked with achievement scores of students/quality outcomes. Mbole nakong et al (2016) had observed a strong correlation between school facilities and pupils' achievement in the west region of Cameroon. By conducting regression analysis, they concluded that basic school facilities are one of the profound determinants of pupils' achievement scores. Quality of education heavily depends on the availability of school facilities in which the teaching-learning process takes place. Lack of adequate facilities and instructional materials had a negative impact on the quality of education in Ethiopia (Afewerk & Asfaw, 2014). In developing countries, there exist huge disparities among rural and urban schools in terms of sanitation facilities. The unsatisfactory and appalling facilities often result in health-related issues and thus such schools are not regarded as secure places for children to learn. These inferior sanitation facilities have a stronger negative impact on girls compared to boys. Girls who are in menstruation cycle often miss the schools because of the lack of clean sanitation facilities. Moreover, they find it difficult to catch up with the lessons. As a result, they often drop out from school [11].

Class size is defined as the total number of students an instructor teaches in a classroom at a given point of time. Class size and pupil-teacher ratio are often used interchangeably to show how many pupils are accommodated by an educator (UIS). In this regard, it is pointed out that reducing the number of students in a classroom will help the instructor to gain in-depth understanding of student's needs via more detailed and focused discussions (OECD).

According to several studies, a smaller class size is positively correlated with student achievement. Filling classes with a large number of students negatively influences the learning process.

Teachers are found to be more satisfied and efficient and able to give attention to every individual when the total number of students in a class is kept around 25. It has been found in a study that children were likely to score 1.5 times lower scores and a decreased survival rate [12]. Dabo (2015) found that due to the expansion in enrolment of students at primary level in Bauchi state, Nigeria, classes got overcrowded. It had interrupted the teaching-learning process. Students were no longer showing any interest in learning. Teachers were facing all sorts of issues such as evaluation and management problems etc.

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The quality of teaching-learning process heavily depends on the quality of human resources available at school. Teachers are considered to be the vital part of an educational system. They are one of the key determinants of students' achievement [12]. Teacher quality is determined by the qualification and years of teaching experience [13]. Strong (2011) described five characteristics of teacher quality. These characteristics are years of teaching experience, former education, certification received, coursework taken to teach the subject and students exam scores.

According to Unesco [14], the world needs 24.4 million teachers at the primary level to provide primary education to children. More specifically, South Asia, being the second largest region in terms of non-availability of teacher's requires 4.1 million teachers at the primary level of education. Creamer (1994) asserts that due to lack of teachers, on duty teachers must take extra classes. The heavy burden of classes and extra workload hinders the teaching learning process. This in turn, affects the learning process for students.

The phrase "parents' support and involvement" refers to numerous kinds of actions, ranging from home based to school level. It includes giving support and helping children at home with homework and attending school meetings. Parents' attitude towards their children motivates them to put more effort in educational activities. (desforges & abuchaar, 2003). Baker (2003) asserts that home environments differ in many ways such as the parents' socioeconomic background, level of education, occupation, values and beliefs, interests, and expectations for their children etc. Same as home environment parents' involvement also differs in many aspects and so as the pupils' academic performance. Home environment and parental involvement considered to be a one component of learning institution for the learners (Baker 2003) [15-17].

Mahuru & Hungu carried out a study in Iganga and Mayuge districts in Uganda. They estimated the impact of parental participation and support on academic performance of students. Study was carried out in both public and private primary schools. They concluded that one unit increase in parental participation and support increases the performance of students by 6 to 15

percentage points. Moreover, they found increments of 6 to 12 percentage points in literacy scores of students [18-20].

Research Methodology

This section provides the details regarding the different procedures used to conduct this study. It includes targeted population, sample size and techniques, data collection tools and data analysis procedures.

Targeted population

The targeted population of this study includes public primary schools situated in UC-21 village Hameed constituency. Union council -21 has got four villages namely, Pethi, Kaaloo, Peerrzai and Hameed. UC-21 Hameed has eight public primary schools. Each village has two public primary schools one for girls and one for boys. For this study, only 4 public primary schools were selected one from each village. Of these four, two girls and two boy's public primary schools were included.

Head teachers, teachers, students, parents, and education officers were included to find the reasons of low primary educational quality.

Sample size sampling techniques

All respondents were selected randomly for this study. A total of 76 respondents were selected. From these, 4 head teachers, 20 teachers, 40 students, 10 parents and 2 education officers were interviewed to get the required information.

Sources of data and data collection tools

The author has used primary data for this study. Questionnaires were created to collect primary data for the analysis part. Questionnaires were translated into national language (urdu) for the ease of respondents. Five different open -ended and close ended questionnaires were used to retrieve responses.

Data analysis procedures

The conceptual framework illustrated in figure 2 has been used to examine the responses and to identify the reasons of the low quality of education at the primary level. The conceptual framework measures quality of education from two different dimensions; (1) physical factors categorized as inputs and teaching learning process categorized as process factors. Tabular interpretations and charts have been used to analyze and present data.

Data Analysis, Presentation of Findings, and Interpretation

Perceptions of Head teachers and Teachers about the adequacy of selected physical facilities in the schools

The study sought to find out the availability of physical facilities and their impact on the quality of education in the public primary schools. For this purpose, both the head teachers and teachers were questioned to specify whether they were satisfied with the adequacy of physical facilities in their schools or not. The responses by both the head teachers and teachers are summarized below in the following table (Table 1).

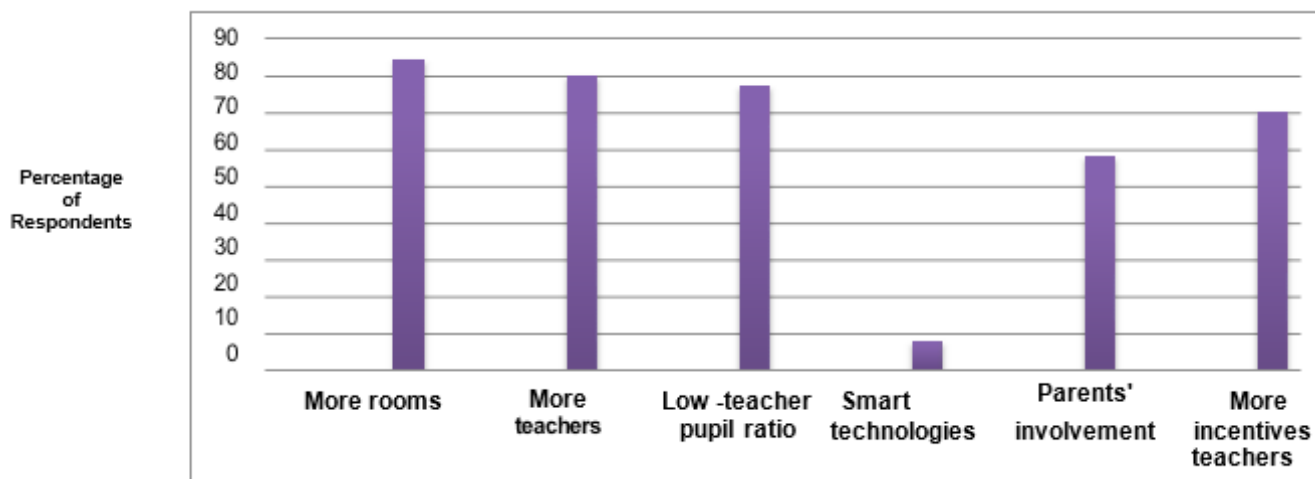


Figure 2: Responses from head teachers, Teachers and education officials on factors that could enhance the performance of students.

Table 1: Responses on the adequacy of the selected physical facilities in the public primary schools as specified by the head teachers and teachers.

Facilities	Yes		No		Total	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Classrooms	2	8.3	22	91.6	24	100
Water	20	83.3	4	16.6	24	100
Toilets	20	83.3	4	16.6	24	100
Electricity	2	8.3	22	91.6	24	100
Textbooks	23	95.8	1	4.1	24	100
Library	1	4.1	23	95.8	24	100

N= Number of respondents

Source: Own elaboration based on field data

From the findings of the study as shown in Table 5, all the head teachers 4 out of 4 (100%) and 16 teachers (80%) out of 20 reported water and sanitation facilities as adequate. In addition, all the head teachers 4 out of 4 (100%) and 19 (95%) teachers indicated that their schools had adequate textbooks for the students. However, most of the respondents stated that they were not satisfied with the availability of classrooms 22 (91.6%) out of 24, electricity 22 (91.6%) out of 24, and library 23 (95.8%) out of 24 [21-24].

From the respondents, all the head teachers indicated that their schools had inadequate classrooms, electricity, and library. The responses of teachers were quite like those of the head teachers. Out of 20 teachers, 18 (90%) reported inadequate classrooms, 18 (90%) indicated lack of electricity and 19 (95%) mentioned inadequate library in their schools. Lack of physical facilities negatively influences the quality of education. For instance, inadequate classrooms force teachers to teach multigrade congested classes. Moreover, congested classrooms resulted in management issues for instructors. In addition to that, non-availability of electricity made the matters worse. Students find it difficult to concentrate

on what is being taught. The high number of responses confirms that availability of physical facilities does matter for the quality of education. These findings are in line with the findings of Abdullahi (2013) who found that lack of physical facilities was a major factor in influencing the quality of education in public primary schools of Mombisa district, Kenya [25-28].

Perceptions of head teachers and Teachers about teachers' adequacy, pupil teacher ratio and teachers' workload

To find out the faculty and teaching situation in the schools, three indicators were used, availability of teachers, pupil teacher ratio and teachers' workload. Head teachers were asked whether they had the required number of teachers or not in their schools.

It shows that 3 (75%) out of 4 head teachers reported that their schools did not have enough teachers. This might be one of the reasons that why the quality of education is low in the public primary schools of UC-21 Hameed, Village. These findings are in line with the findings of Creamer (1994) and Osman (1989), who

found that shortage of teachers undermines the effective teaching and thus negatively influences the quality of education [29-30].

Teachers were further asked to indicate the number of students they teach in a given classroom. The findings are tabulated below (Table 2).

Table 2 indicates that out of 20 teachers 9 (45%) reported that they had a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:45. Furthermore, 7 (35%) out

of 20 teachers indicated pupil teacher ratio of 1:40. This means that 16 (80%) out of 20 teachers had 40 and 45 students in their classes. On the other hand, 5 (20%) out of 20 teachers said they had pupil teacher ratio of 1:25, 1:30 and 1:35 respectively. From the findings, it is evident that majority of the teachers (45%) had pupil teacher ratio of 1:45 which was greater than the internationally recommended pupil- teacher ratio of 1:40 for developing countries (Unesco, 2011).

Table 2: Responses of teachers about the number of students they teach (pupil teacher ratio).

Ratio	N	Percentage
1:25	1	5
1:30	2	10
1:30	1	5
1:40	7	35
1:45	9	45
Total	20	100

N= Teachers' respondents

Source: Own elaboration based on field data

Furthermore, teachers were asked whether they were satisfied with the given teacher-pupil ratios to investigate the impact of pupil teacher ratio on the quality of education. The responses are presented below (Table 3).

Table 3 demonstrates that 16 (80%) out of 20 teachers were not satisfied with the number of students they had in their classes. The author further questioned them about the reasons for dissatisfaction. All the 16 (80%) respondents indicated that such a huge number of students cause discipline and management

issues which make it harder for them to teach students with full concentration. Consequently, high pupil teacher ratio negatively influences the teaching- learning process and thus the quality of education. From the findings, it is evident that the public primary schools in UC-21 Hameed, Village had high pupil teacher ratios. The high number of responses against the high teacher-pupil ratio confirms that pupil teacher ratio does matter for the quality of education. These findings support the findings of shad & inamullah (2012), and Carlson (2000), that the smaller class size positively influences the quality of education [31-32].

Table 3: Responses of teachers on the satisfaction of pupil teacher ratio.

Ratio	N Response	Percentage
1:25	1 Yes	5
1:30	2 Yes	10
1:30	1 Yes	5
1:40	7 No	35
1:45	9 No	45
Total	20	100

N=Number of respondents

Source: Own elaboration based on field data

To seek information about the teachers' workload, teachers were inquired to indicate the number of lessons they teach on weekly basis. The responses are tabulated below (Table 4).

The Table 4 reveals that 13 (65%) out of 20 teachers had 49 lessons per week. It means 7 lessons on daily basis. 7 (35%) out of 20 teachers said they had 35 lessons per week. Teachers were further asked about their workload as heavy or light. All the teachers

reported their workload as heavy. These findings also confirm that schools did not have enough teachers. Due to this, teachers were forced to take the extra burden and teach a lot of lessons. These findings confirm the findings of creamer (1994) who found that due to a shortage of teachers, on duty teachers must teach extra classes that undermines the effective teaching. Shortage of teachers and heavy workload might be the reasons that negatively influence the quality of education in the schools [33].

Table 4: Responses of teachers on workload.

Number of lessons	Number of responses	Percentage
35	7	35
49	13	65
Total	20	100

Source: Own elaboration based on field data

Perceptions of students about teaching techniques, homework assignments, assessment, and feedback

The study tried to analyze the impact of teaching styles, teachers' motivation, assessment, and feedback on the quality

of education. Teaching styles were classified into two categories: traditional methods as direct lessons and participatory methods as active involvement of students. Students were asked to indicate the type of teaching techniques their teachers employ during teaching. The responses from students are tabulated below (Table 5).

Table 5: Responses of students on teaching styles.

Teaching styles	Number of responses	Percentage
Direct lessons	32	80
Participation method	8	20
Total	40	100

Source: Own elaboration based on field data

Table 5 shows that 32 (80%) out of 40 students indicated that their teachers employed traditional methods during teaching. While 8 (20%) out of 40 reported that their teachers employed participatory methods during teaching lessons. The students were further questioned whether they were satisfied with respective teaching techniques. 29 (90.6%) out of 32 (Direct lessons) said they were not satisfied with the way of their teachers' teaching methods. Students were further asked to identify the reasons for dissatisfaction. They mentioned that direct lessons were too boring for them. They sat silently and were forced to take notes. They were not allowed to inquire about anything. Even in most of the cases,

teachers had not been taking lessons seriously. These findings reveal that direct lessons or traditional way of teaching were dominant in the public primary schools.

The study further inquired about the homework assignments, assessment, and feedback given to students by their teachers. Assessment and feedback are an integral part of the teaching-learning process. Students were asked to indicate about whether they get homework assignments or not and whether their teachers do any kind of assessment and provide feedback to them. Responses from students are tabulated below (Table 6).

Table 6: Responses from students on homework assignments, assessment, and feedback.

	Yes		No		Total	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Homework Assignments	32	80	8	20	40	100
Assessment Feedback	4	10	36	90	40	100

N= Number of responses

Source: Own elaboration based on field data

From the findings of table 6, it is evident that the schools lacked assessment and feedback. Majority of the students, 32 (80%) out of 40 mentioned that their teachers gave homework assignments to them. 36 (90%) students out of 40 said that their teachers neither did assessment nor did they provide any sort of feedback on their homework assignments. The students further mentioned the extent of the lack of assessment and feedback by saying that most of the time class representative does the assessment and report it to teachers. This shows the extent of the weakness of assessment

and feedback process in the public primary schools.

Dominant traditional teaching approaches and lack of assessment and feedback might be the reasons contributing to the low quality of education in the schools. These findings affirm the findings of Ali. et al (2010) and Staub & Stern (2002) who established that constructivist teaching approaches and ongoing assessment and feedback enhance problem -solving skills and help learners to work on their mistakes. Consequently, these approaches make teaching- learning process more effective.

Perceptions of teachers about their motivation

The teachers were asked to indicate whether they feel motivated in performing their teaching duties. The responses from teachers are presented below.

Majority 15 (75%) out of 20 teachers said that they did not feel motivated in performing teaching duties, while only 5 (25%) out of 20 teachers were felt motivated in performing their duties. Teachers who felt demotivated were further asked; what are the

reasons for their demotivation? (Table 7).

Table 7 reveals that the majority of 9 (60%) out of 15 teachers said due to low wages, heavy workload, and a shortage of teachers they felt demotivated. 2 (13.3%) out of 15 and 3 (20%) out of 15 indicated that due to heavy workload, shortage of teachers, lack of incentives and no promotion caused them demotivation. From the findings, it is evident that majority of the teachers were demotivated and hence this negatively impacted the quality of education in the public primary schools in UC-21 Hameed, Village.

Table 7: Reasons for demotivation.

Reasons	N	Percentage
Low pay scale, Heavy workload & shortage of teachers	9	60
Heavy workload & shortage of teachers	2	13.3
No incentives & promotion	3	20
No promotion	1	6.6
Total	15	100

N= Number of responses

Source: own elaboration based on field data

Perceptions of parents about the quality of education

Parents were questioned about the quality of education in the schools. They were asked to indicate the factors that contribute in a negative way on the education performance of their children. Their responses are tabulated below (Table 8).

Table 8 shows that 6 (60%) parents out of 10 indicated the shortage of rooms and teachers as the main reasons for the low quality of education. The high percentage response in favor of shortage of rooms and teachers are in line with the earlier findings that schools lack both human and material resources.

Table 8: reasons for the low quality of education in the eyes of parents.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Shortage of rooms and teachers	6	60
Appointments of teachers on political basis	4	40
Total	10	100

Source: own elaboration based on field data

The remaining 4 (40%) parents out of 10 indicated the Appointments of teachers on political basis as the main reason for the low quality of education. They further added that; "Political favoritism is the main cause for the low quality of education. Since teachers have political connections, they do not take their work seriously. And they know they are not accountable to anyone" (interviewee 66, 69, 70, 71).

The above findings suggest that apart from school-based factors there are other factors too that could be the reasons for the low quality of education. Factors like these could be classified under the umbrella of contextual factors in which the whole working of the education system takes place.

Perceptions of students, teachers and parents about parents' educational support and involvement in school activities

The study also sought to find out the involvement of parents

at home and in school activities. For this purpose, parents were asked to specify whether they receive invitations from school authorities for attending meetings or not. Majority 17 (85%) out of 20 parents indicated that they did not receive any invitations from school authorities to attend meetings. To get a clearer picture of the parents' involvement in their child education; teachers were asked to indicate whether parents visit the school to inquire about their child education performance or not.

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The majority, 17 (85%) out of 20 parents, indicated that they did not receive any invitations from school authorities to attend meetings. To get a clearer picture of the parents' involvement in their child education; teachers were asked to indicate whether parents visit the school to inquire about their child education performance or not. The responses from teachers are summarized below.

Data shows that majority 15 (75%) out of 20 teachers said that parents did not come to school to inquire about their child education performance. Students were further asked to mention whether their parents provide them with any educational support at home or not. Responses from students are presented below in the following figure.

It reveals that majority 26 (65%) out of 40 students reported that they did not receive educational support from their parents at home. 14 (25%) out of 40 said they received educational support from their parents at home.

Above all, it is evident from the findings that schools lacked the parental support and involvement. On first-hand, school authorities were responsible for not inviting parents to attend meetings. Secondly, parents were equally responsible for not providing educational support to their children at homes. Lack of support both from teachers and parents has negatively influenced the quality of education in the public primary schools. These findings support the conclusions of Mupalika (2014) and Iqbal et al (2010) who found considerable variation in the educational performance of students who had parental support as compared to students without parental support.

Perceptions of Educational Officials about the Quality of education

The educational officials were interviewed to know their perceptions about the quality of education. They were asked to indicate.

- what are the reasons for the low quality of education in your area?

(1) Shortage of human and material resources and (2) Corporal punishment

The educational officials indicated the shortage of teachers, rooms, and unavailability of electricity as the main reasons for the low quality of education in the schools. In addition, they added that in some cases they had received complaints from parents about the corporal punishment given by teachers to students. They further mentioned that corporal punishments could make students disinterested in school. This could impact the performance of students. Since disinterested students won't put much effort in their studies.

- In your opinion, what are the factors that could contribute in a positive way to student's performance?

(1) Teachers' attention and (2) supervision

According to educational officials, students' performance could

be improved by teachers' attention and supervision. They indicated that teacher's need to put more effort into their work. Teachers' attitude and behaviour towards students should be very kind and friendliness. In addition, they should honestly do an assessment and should provide feedback accordingly. Teachers are an integral part of the teaching-learning process, and they should guide their students and act as their facilitators.

- In the past five years, which steps you took to improve quality at the primary level?

(1) Effective monitoring and (2) huge investment in building infrastructure

The educational officials reported that in the last five years educational authorities have improved a lot in monitoring and supervising activities. In addition, the government has also taken investment initiatives to improve infrastructure.

From the findings, it is evident that schools had inadequate human and material resources. Educational officials did mention about the steps taken by the government to improve quality of education. However, from the responses of head teachers and teachers in regard to the adequacy of physical facilities and teachers, still more is required to overcome these challenges.

Apart from the stated reasons in questionnaires, respondents were further asked to indicate any other factors they might think responsible for the low learning levels of students. They stated the following reasons.

- Compulsory to promote students to next grade even if they fail the exams

3 (75%) out of 4 head teachers stated that promoting students to next grade even if they fail the exams might have a negative impact on the performance of students. According to the head teachers, this policy was implemented in 2012 to encourage students to perform well in exams. However, they said that this policy might be having a negative impact on the performance of students. Students know that their effort does not matter in the end they will be promoted to next grade.

- No extracurricular activities

Few of the teachers' respondents, 8 (40%) out of 20 said that due to the absence of extracurricular activities in schools, students did not find school an attractive place. Head teachers, teachers and education officers were asked to indicate which changes they would like to see that could have a positive impact on the performance of students. The responses from head teachers, teachers and education officers are tabulated below (Figure 2).

Figure 2 shows that majority of the respondents 22 (84%) out of 26 said that more rooms should be built. Moreover, 21 (80%) out of 26 respondents said that more teachers should be recruited to decrease the workload on teachers. 20 (77%) out of 26 indicated that teacher-pupil ratios should be decreased. 15 (58%) out of 26 suggested that parents should involve themselves in school activities and 18 (70%) out of 26 respondents said that incentives should be provided to teachers to make them motivated

for teaching duties. While 2 respondents (8%) out of 26 mentioned the installation of smart technologies.

Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal the reasons for the low quality of education in the public primary schools in UC-21, Hameed Village. From the findings several conclusions were made; firstly, the schools had inadequate teaching-learning facilities such as rooms, electricity, labs, and libraries. Schools had high teacher-pupil ratio. In-adequacy of teaching-learning facilities and high teacher-pupil ratio both affected the quality of education.

Secondly, the schools had shortage of teachers. Due to shortage of teachers on duty teachers had to deliver 35 and in some cases 49 lectures per week. This resulted in heavy workload for teachers. Moreover, traditional teaching techniques were very common in the schools. Students were given homework assignments, but they did not receive any feedback on their work. Teachers' motivation was very low due to heavy workload, lack of incentives and promotion and low pay scale. All these factors had a negative impact on the teaching-learning process. Consequently, it affected the quality of education. Thirdly, parents' involvement in school activities and at home was very limited. It was further noted that school authorities had not been taking efforts to indulge parents in school activities. Hence, there is no single factor that could be linked to the low quality of education. All the above-mentioned factors are related to each other and had a direct or indirect impact on the quality of education.

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Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest.

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