

**Expansion of Private Public Schools in Khyber
Pakhtunkhwa and Policy Imperatives:
A Case Study of Peshawar**
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Abstract

Education is a sustained march of human society towards high pedestals of civilization, and determines true destiny of a nation, striving amid hard pursuits for survival. Education is of different types depending upon the needs and demands, and resources available in a country. Owing to meager resources, and, the growing demands for education, especially in the developing countries; the governments alone are unable to fulfill the educational needs of the whole population adequately. Therefore, the private sector has entered in the education sector to help achieve the national targets set in a country. Although, private schools were nationalized in 1972 in Pakistan, the subsequent National Education Policies adopted in 1979, 1992-2002 and 1998-2010 have provisions to involving private sector in the educational development and delivery system in the country. This paper describes the temporal expansion of private public schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province of Pakistan and evaluates the same in Peshawar, the capital city as a case study, in terms of selected variables vis a vis the existing education policy. Data for the study was obtained from field survey using questionnaires, EMIS office of the Education Department, KP, research reports, books and internet. The study shows mushrooming growth of private public schools and greater increase in number of students in the province in general, and Peshawar in particular during 1998-2010. Despite progressive contribution in education, a high proportion of private schools were found without the essential infrastructure for students' entertainment and recreation. The policy imperatives provided to regulate activities and functioning of the private sector need urgent implementation to improve education quality and control the tendency of exploitation by the private education sector.

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Introduction

Education is the process through which a nation develops its self-consciousness of individuals who compose it. Khurshid, Ahmad quoted by Iqbal broadly defined education as “it is not mere public instruction it is a social institution, which provides mental, physical, ideological and moral training to the individuals of the nation so as to enable them to have full consciousness of their mission, of their purpose in life and equip them to achieve that purpose. Education not only helps to instill morals into young minds, but also stimulates them to fit into the framework of social life”.¹ Khalid quoting Ibn Khaldun says that education is aimed at the intellectual and moral training of individuals through which their potentialities are developed, the traits of the Creator inculcated in them, and the culture of the people is transmitted to the coming generation.²

Education is one of the basic activities of all human societies to lead towards a prosperous, just and healthy civilization. Besides, education also plays a vital role in the socio-economic development of a nation. The future of a society greatly depends on the quality of its existing education system.³ Education is an instrument of cultural change, to impart knowledge, training and skills as well as to inculcate new ideas and attitude amongst the youths. It is the culture in which education germinates and flourishes. It is the culture also, upon which education exerts, in tern, a nourishing influence.⁴ In the words of Dewey, education is the development of all those capacities in an individual, which will enable him to control his environment and fulfill his responsibilities.”⁵ Education is concerned with preparing mind of the pupil for the right type of thinking in a society so that the problems of stratification and disintegration with which society is confronted, could be solved peacefully. Education is expected to play an important role in tackling anti-social behavior.⁶ Education thus should be the first priority for development. The positive education enhances healthy, positive and progressive value, and the negative education breeds, selfish, emotional, corruption and non-scientific tends. Quid-e-Azam once said, that “Education should be our first priority. Democracy, social justice, nationalism, and patriotism are needed for national solidarity and such noble ideals can only be achieved if education becomes our first priority.”⁷

According to Bennett, modern industrial civilization has brought about a very highly specialized and complex order of affairs. To meet the obligations of this modern development, the modern school has a new and much broader responsibility than the schools of the simple society of former generation.⁸

Private Schools

The private schools according to some dictionaries, is a school under financial and managerial control of a private or charitable trust accepting mostly fee paying students. Thus private school means those schools that are not financed by the state. The term private school is used in Pakistan to identify schools that are not operated by government, "Private" is used increasingly in the USA and Canada to identify such schools, though they are sometime called "non-public" or "independent schools".⁹

Global Position of Private Schools

The private schools are gaining recognition both in the developed and less developed countries. The different private schools are managed and run by foundations in US. According to a report "Individuals, corporations and foundations in the United States contributed more than \$295 billion to nonprofits in 2006. This figure includes contributions to all non-profit corporations holding IRS 501(c) (3) status, such as arts organizations, healthcare and social service agencies, churches and church-related institutions, as well as schools and libraries. According to National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities, "There is one problem many private schools are happy to face: coping with growth. When the size (i.e. number) of the student body is increasing and the waiting list for enrollment grows longer, a school may assume that it is accomplishing its mission and educational goals."¹⁰

In Ontario, (a province of Canada), the people prefer the private schools due to better facilities than that of public schools. Private school attendance in Ontario has grown over recent decades from 1.9 percent of the student population in 1960 to 5.6 percent in 2006. Reasons for Choosing Private Schools were disappointment with the public system, dedication of the teachers, concerns for morals / values, religion, family and character development, individualized attention, and a motivating, supportive, nurturing educational environment that instilled confidence and independence in the students.¹¹

According to NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) USA (January 2006), a report contending that charter school students scored lower than students in public schools was fiercely contested. Other studies were then released to demonstrate that charter

schools produce greater gains in student learning.¹² Similarly, 60 percent of the resources for public primary education in Cambodia are provided directly by households rather than indirectly via the State, while in Indonesia 69 percent of the resources of private primary schools are provided by the Government. In Singapore, students meet 20 percent of the recurrent costs of public university-level education through fees, but at the secondary level, the government meets over 90 percent of the costs of the institutions in the Independent Schools Scheme.¹³

Education in Netherlands is free for the compulsory years of schooling. At all levels of education, the Dutch government spends at the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) average.¹⁴ Expenditure per student on the basis of US PPP dollars in 2005 at the primary, secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education level in the Netherlands is 7,045. This is just about the OECD average, which is 7,065, and about the same as Germany, 7,039 and Australia, 7,142, but significantly less than Denmark, which is 8,997, the United States (9,769) and Norway (9,975). Education spending as a proportion of GDP is 4.8 percent, which is below the OECD average of 5.0 percent. Thus, achievement levels are high, while relative costs are low. School choice in the Netherlands manifests itself in the existence of a large number of private schooling options for parents and their children. This competition may lead to, among other things, schools becoming more effective in managing personnel, teaching students, promoting school efficiency, managing budgets, and involving parents.¹⁵

Private Schools in Pakistan

Formal education in Pakistan is given in the institutions like schools, colleges and universities. These institutes are supervised by the ministry of Education and other administrative bodies working under the Ministry of education. The private sector played an important role in the development of education system in the country before formulation of National Education Policy 1972. However, under the National Education Policy 1972, private schools were nationalized, which being a major setback for the private sector, created obstacles in further expansion of private sector in the country. Nevertheless, the subsequent National Education Policies 1979, 1992 and 1998-2010 made due provisions for the involvement of private sector in the process of educational development in the country. Consequently, private sector is substantially contributing in quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement of education system. A large number of educational institutions are privately managed and tough competition is found among these institutions for producing quality education. Unfortunately, however,

information about private schools is not available due to which real situation in respect of their contribution in the development and promotion of education at national level is not known.¹⁶

According to a survey carried out by Gallup Pakistan in 2009, majority of Pakistanis (74%) have one or more school-going children in their households. Although, more than half of the respondents (59%) claim to prefer private schools, a higher percentage of people (70%) have enrolled their children in /government schools. One of the main reasons for sending children to government schools is affordability as nearly half of all Pakistanis (49%), across all income groups, believe private schools charges much large in amount of fees.¹⁷

Owing to low literacy rate, demand of education for the growing population, the government cannot alone build and run all educational institutions required for this purpose. Hence to fulfill the educational requirements of the growing population, the private sector is contributing up to greater extent. It helps both in the qualitative improvement and quantitative expansion. These private schools have been attracting parents much more as compared to the government schools for the last several years. They are successful in their aim and mission.¹⁸

Private Schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Peshawar

Peshawar is the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, standing right at the entrance of the world famous, Khyber Pass. The district lies between 33^o 44' to 33^o 15' north latitude and 71^o 22' to 71^o 42' east longitude. The total area of the district is 1,257 sq km. It is approximately 1173 feet (358 meters) above sea level.

It is the largest urban center of the province. There is a wide network of schools and colleges in the district educating the public. Due to increasing population pressure, the government sector alone cannot give facility of free and less costly education to all the citizens. Therefore, the private schools are performing their role in educating public generally. The private schools are completely owned by a person or an organization and they take monthly / per semester or annual fee. All over the world, the private education system is working; however the private schools are always under the obligations to obey the minimum rules and regulations in vogue in a country.¹⁹

Objectives of the Study

In order to achieve aim of the study, the following objectives were set for the study;

- To assess about the expansion in private schools in terms of number of schools, students and teachers over the years in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Peshawar.
- To explore the existing academic system of education in private schools of Peshawar.
- To describe the basic facilities and problems faced by teachers and students of the private schools in the study area.

Methods and Materials

Data Collection

The research methodology used various sources and techniques to gather Primary and Secondary data as described below;

Primary Data

Primary data was collected through field surveys using questionnaire. Two types of questionnaire were used for the collection of primary data, i.e. for heads, and for teachers of the private schools. About 30 schools were selected using stratified random sampling method for the survey.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from EMIS (Education Management Information System) Peshawar, DCR, library, books and internet.

Variables

The variables used in the study were total No. of schools, students / enrollment, teachers' number, qualification of heads and teachers, medium of instruction, schools' discipline, and entertainment facilities (Sports ground and open spaces)

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed and presented with the help of basic quantitative techniques and computer accessories (Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word).

Results and Discussions

The study was carried out to determine the temporal expansion of private schools in Peshawar in term of number of schools, number of students and number of teachers which is shown in detail in the tables below.

Table1
 Private schools: Total Number of schools by level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Peshawar

Area	Years	Primary	Middle	High/H. Sec.	Total No. of Private Schools
K P. Statistics	1998-1999	1041	440	228	1709
	2001-2002	2780	833	421	4034
	2004-2005	1865	1816	1203	4884
	2010	2321	1978	1802	6101
	Peshawar Statistics	1998-1999	-----	-----	-----
	2001-2002	193	132	68	393
	2004-2005	196	270	153	619
	2010	268	330	292	890

Source: EMIS, Peshawar

The Table-1 shows that the total number of private schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was 1709 in 1998-1999, which increased to 6101 in 2010. The primary level schools increased in 2001-2002, however, decreased in 2004-2005 and increased again in 2010. The number of Middle schools and High / Higher Secondary schools has also increased.

The study reveals that the number of private schools in Peshawar increased from 181 in 1998-99 to 890 in 2010 that is about 5 times increase in number.

Table 2. Private schools: Total number of students by level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Peshawar

Area	Years	Primary	Middle	High/H. Sec.	Total No. of Private School's students
K P. Statistics	1998-1999	121447	71571	64035	257053
	2001-2002	239054	45141	13794	297989
	2004-	156247	272972	436699	865918

Peshawar Statistics	2005				
	2009-2010	191558	339702	699022	1230282
	1998-1999	-----	-----	-----	31057
	2001-2002	50525	8690	2608	61823
	2004-2005	21786	43727	76722	142235
	2009-2010	33900	67995	134055	235950

Source: EMIS, Peshawar

The Table 2 shows consistent growth in number of students in private schools by level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during 1998 to 2010. However, the number of students in primary schools decreased in 2004-05 in Peshawar.

Table 3. Private schools: Total number of teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Peshawar

Years	Total in KP	Peshawar
1998-1999	11548	1357
2001-2001	26209	3516
2004-2005	51692	7734
2009-2010	68656	12878

Source: EMIS Peshawar

The Table 3 shows that the total number of teachers of private schools were 11548 in 1998-99, which increased to 68437 in 2009-2010 in KP. Similarly, in Peshawar the total number of teachers increased more progressively from 1,357 in 1998-1999 to 12,878 in 2009-2010.

Table 4. Private schools: Qualification of Heads, teachers and medium of instruction

Qualification	Frequency	% of the Total
A. Qualification of Heads		
BA	04	13.3
MA	17	56.67
MSc	09	30
B. Qualification of teachers		
BA	10	33.33

MA	09	30
MSc	11	36.67
C. Medium of instruction		
Urdu	0	0
Pashto	0	0
Persian	1	3.33
English	29	96.67

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The Table 4 shows the qualification of Heads and teaching staff of private schools in the surveyed areas of Peshawar. The study shows that majority of the staff have Master degree by their qualification. Furthermore, in majority of the schools, the medium of instruction is English in the study area.

Table 5. Private schools: Students' teachers' ratio in Peshawar

Student Teacher Ratio	Frequency	% of the Total
1:10	2	6.67
1:20	15	50
1:30	8	26.67
1:40	4	13.33
1:50	1	3.33

Source: Field Survey, 2008

The Table 5 describes that in majority i.e. 50% of schools, the teachers' students ratio is 1:20, and a very less number i.e. 3.33% of schools the ratio is 1:50.

Table 6. Private schools: Open space, playgrounds and discipline in Peshawar

Variables	% of the Total
A. Open space	
With Open space	83.33
Without open space	16.67
B. Playground	
With playground	56.67
Without playground	43.33
C. Schools' discipline	
Satisfactory	93.33
Unsatisfactory	6.67

Sources: Field Survey, 2008

The Table 6 depicts that in 16.67% schools, the buildings are small, and therefore, there is no open space for the students' mental and visual comforts. It also shows that about half of schools are without the basic facility of playgrounds for students' physical and recreational activities in the schools. However, 93.33% respondents are of the opinion that the discipline in their respective schools is satisfactory.

Policy Imperatives

The National Education Policy 2009 has important policy imperatives for the private sector in education. The policy encourages private investment in education, however, it requires for regulatory authorities/bodies at the national as well as provincial levels to regulate and monitor activities privately-owned schools and other institutions of higher education. The policy provisions will be implemented through proper rules and regulations. The fee structure of private institutions including schools shall also be decided in consultation with the government to ensure education affordability by the masses of country.

The study shows that there has been no progress so far with respect to policy imperatives that require establishment of regulatory bodies and adoption of rules and regulations for the private institutions in the country.

Conclusion

The study was carried out on private schools of KP in general and the detailed information relating to private education system was obtained from the case study of Peshawar. The analysis reveals that there was an overall 185.7 % increase in private schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during 1998 to 2005. While 241.9 % increase occurred in Peshawar during 1998 to 2005. The breakup of data shows that there is 24.9 % increase in number of schools during 2005 to 2010 in KP, which, however, is 43.7 % increase in private schools of Peshawar during the same period. The analysis suggests that the highest growth in number of schools occurred between 1998 to 2005 in KP and greater mushrooming growth in Peshawar.

The study shows that the teaching staff is well qualified and qualification of teaching staff in 50 % of the surveyed schools have MA/MSc. 50% of the private schools have 1:20 teacher students' ratio, which indicates more attention to students in private schools. The study reveals that basic facilities are available in all schools; however, about 43.33% schools are without playground, and 17% without open spaces.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, an overall 378.61% increase occurred in number of students during 1998-2010, while 659.75% increase

occurred in Peshawar during the same period. The number of teachers increased 494.5% in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during 1998-2010, while 849.0% in Peshawar increase occurred during the period. The progressive growth in number teachers suggests that that the private schools also play a vital role in providing employment opportunity in the country. From the growing number of students' enrolment in the private schools, it is revealed that parents prefer to admit their children in private schools due to their satisfactory results as compared to the government schools. However, the government's role to regulate activities and smooth functioning of the private schools including the fee structure is lacking in the country's most important sector.

Suggestions

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following suggestions are hereby forwarded for improvement of the situation:

- Government should help the private schools in term of relief taxes because they are playing vital role in the spreading education and improving the status of education.
- Parents should keep regular check on their children because only an institution cannot make a successful personality, and also parents should keep themselves aware about schools where there children's are studying.
- Most of the teachers of private schools are highly qualified (M.A/ MS.c) but there is lack of professional training. So there should be proper training for improvement of the level of their teaching, and at least Bachelor of education degree should be the basic selection criteria for the primary and middle level school teachers.
- Parents are giving preference to private schools because in private schools the teachers give full concentration to the children, therefore the private schools should maintain 1:20 ratio in classrooms.
- The private schools should give some allowance to the teachers to avoid the trend of leaving one school for another due to relatively attractive salary. If the private schools give salary to the teachers according to their qualification and hard work then this negative trend can be controlled.

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