



Challenges in Quality of Education in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of Pakistan

Zohaib Hassan Sain

Superior University

Corresponding email: zohaib3746@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is based on exploratory research to identify “Challenges in Quality of Education in HEIs of Pakistan”. The exploratory research approach is used to achieve the study's objectives in less time and inexpensively. Pakistan is facing a lot of challenges in the education sector such as curriculum, few training institutions, corruption in education, teacher behavior, and less research work. The purpose of our research is to identify the major challenges in the educational sector in Pakistan which the educational sector is suffering for the last few years. The researcher used triangulation to carry out the reliability and validity of the data for results. So, to conduct this triangulation the researcher used questionnaires for the students, questionnaires for the teachers, and interviews with the management. . In this regard primary data was collected from the focused group of students using a sample of 100 questionnaires for each university were filled by the students of the selected five universities. The findings highlight the positive relationship of quality education with curriculum, few training institutions, corruption in education, teacher behavior, and less research work. These challenges caused restrictions in accomplishing competent teaching and learning with respect to quality education.

Keywords: Curriculum; Corruption; Teacher’s Behavior; Research Work.

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INTRODUCTION

What does quality mean in the context of education? Many definitions of quality in education exist, testifying to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. Considerable consensus exists around the basic dimensions of quality education today, however. Quality education includes:

- ✓ Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities
- ✓ Environments that are healthy, safe, protective, and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities.

It is well said that education is the road to national development. “Education is a vital process of the development of any society. It is considered one of the main pillars of a society” (Adams, 1988). Education creates awareness among people about life and the challenges in

the world. Quality of Education is a description of how well the learning opportunities made available to students help them to achieve their awards. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, assessment, and learning opportunities are made available to students.

The challenges in the quality of education in HEIs of Pakistan can be found back to the very beginning of the country when the newly independent state came into an already-defined system of education. This whole system was very weak, poorly managed, and classified. The system could not be improved according to the social category of the people. Due to this, Pakistan is still scuffling with the lowest literacy rate in the world even after 74 years of its existence from 1947 to 2021. UNESCO Institute for Statistics in 2019 stated that the literacy rate of Pakistan is 58%. This study aims to analyze the various challenges in the quality of education in Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan.

In Pakistan, the education system is categorized into five levels. These are:

- **Primary Level**
- **Middle Level**
- **Secondary Level**
- **Intermediate Level**
- **University Level**

After focusing on levels of the education system, if we talk about schools, colleges, and universities, they are also categorized into three types. These are:

- **Government Schools**
- **Private Schools**
- **Madaras**

The quality of Education in HEIs of Pakistan is having bad configuration at the moment. There is no doubt in accepting the fact that education stands as the backbone for the development of nations. This research is aimed at identifying the factors affecting the quality of education in HEIs in Pakistan. Several research has been conducted related to this sector. The role of TQM in educational sectors is the basic research problem. In Pakistan, the quality of education has a declining trend. Research provided only short-term solutions to the problems. Previous research provided only problems rather than solutions and only information related to public sector HEIs.

Currently, the economic situation in Pakistan is under severe stress and the education sector has received the highest impact. According to the Pakistan Economic Outlook, the economy is getting worse as the fiscal year (July 2021–June 2022) comes to an end. The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has led to the fact in the following words:

“The state of Pakistan shall remove illiteracy and provide free and compulsory secondary education with minimum possible period”.

This research focuses on a complete overview of challenges in the quality of education in HEIs of Pakistan. This research also provides information about long-term solutions to the problems. In this research, the most important challenges are discussed along with their recommendations. This research will be helpful to students, researchers, managers, policymakers, trainers, the target population, and the general public.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research is aimed at identifying the factors affecting the quality of education in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Pakistan.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1. What are the challenges in the quality of education in higher education institutions in Pakistan?

Q2. What solutions can be proposed to improve the quality of education in higher education institutions in Pakistan?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Main Objective:

- To identify the Challenges in the Quality of Education in HEIs of Pakistan.

Sub Objective:

- To identify the relationship between Curriculum and Quality of Education.
- To identify the relationship between Less Training Institutions and Quality of Education.
- To identify the relationship between Corruption in Education and Quality of Education.
- To identify the relationship between Teacher's Behavior and Quality of Education.
- To identify the relationship between Less Research Work and Quality of Education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical structure for this study was formed by observing the connection of parameters with one another. The parameters in this research were Quality of Education, Curriculum, Less Training Institutions, Corruption in Education, Teachers' Behavior, and Less Research Work. The dependent variable was the Quality of Education and the independent variables were Curriculum, Less Training Institutions, Corruption in Education, Teachers' Behavior, and Less Research Work.

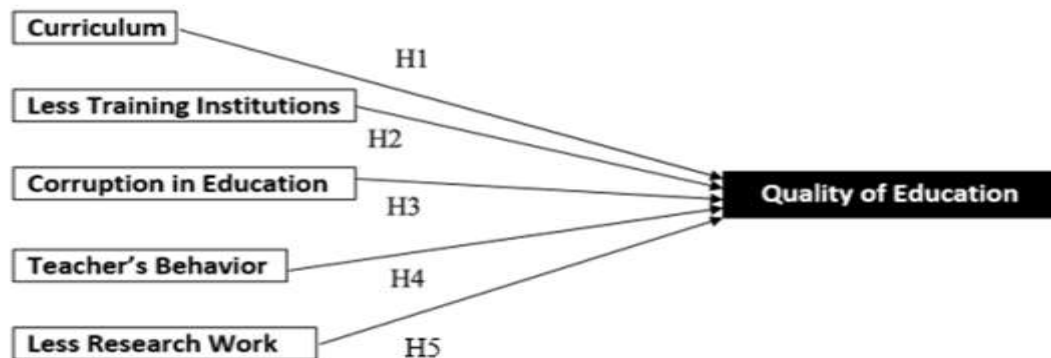


Figure-1 Schematic Diagram of Variables

Figure 1 indicates the connection of the parameters/ variables.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Evolved from theoretical structure, the following hypothesis can be formed:

H1: There is a positive relationship between curriculum and quality of education.

H2: There is a positive relationship between less training institutions and quality of education.

H3: There is a positive relationship between corruption in education and quality of education.

H4: There is a positive relationship between teachers' behavior and quality of education.

H5: There is a positive relationship between less research work and quality of education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nowadays positive conditions and a rapid world, the education sector including the public sector is tremendously affected by management practices of the business world and no doubt, Total Quality Management is an example that has entered the public sector. It is a combined management philosophy that is needed to be implemented at all the institutional levels (Oakland, 2003) i.e. it will not be successful if executed at odds and ends.

The Total Quality Management (TQM) methods that foreign higher education institutions adopt globally are followed by an analysis of how much Pakistani HEIs have incorporated those principles into their functional architecture. Customers of HEIs include students as well as other stakeholders who will benefit from students' knowledge and skills, including entrepreneurs, families, business/industry, society, and HEI employees (Kanji & Malek, 2000; Bayraktar, 2008). These two groups' requirements are key determinants of quality. Total Quality Management is compatible with higher education, for the reason that it is a direct procedure that is focused on expanding productivity, reducing costs, and enhancing quality (James and James, 1998). Numerous Higher Education Institutions in America have accepted the approach of Total Quality Management but still, there are some circumstances where the academic quality has not upgraded much. There is an infrastructure improvement, administrative processes have enhanced rapidly and there is also an increase in student and staff satisfaction but more clearly that education or academic quality needs betterment (James and James, 1998).

Preceding research indicated the break-up between individual or institutional reasons behind educational development (Amundsen and Wilson 2012; Trowler and Bamber 2005). Single reasons examine the major cause of teaching training courses to be committed for faculty members in a procedure of individual impression on education to give changes in individual educators' concept of teaching and learning, connecting this to teaching practices. Higher education development is considered afterward as anything personal and optional. On the other hand, institutional grounds are interconnected to quality management and strategic planning (D'Andrea and Gosling 2005; Havnes and Stensaker 2006). Development leads are frequently controlled and happen regarding an institutional plan (Amundsen and Wilson 2012). Effect on institutional change and improved educational quality promoted if the courses are made mandatory (Havnes and Stensaker 2006; Trowler and Bamber 2005).

In keeping with both points of view, the primary expectation is that the HETT courses will affect a single educator who will put up to change the institution and elevate the quality. The plan of automated change is nevertheless, sturdy in the institutional point of view and condemned by intellectuals who claim that the link is not automatic between the development of teaching and institutional change but it needs more examination (Gibbs and Coffey 2004; Trowler and Bamber 2005).

As reported by N.A. Jafarey,

“Pakistan's low level of scientific research is due to a culture that discourages independent and critical thinking”.

No doubt that university education in Pakistan, especially the government and the teacher pay slight attention to research work. As a result, students remain oblivious to the methods of research. The outcome is that a student does not have a clear concept of critical analysis. The second reason is there are not enough resources for conducting research. Research work is indeed very essential, especially at the undergraduate level. Although researchers play an important role in getting a job in the market.

METHODOLOGY

In this research paper, an exploratory approach has been taken on. The purpose of applying this approach is to pin down the confrontations in the excellence of learning in the institutes (HEIs) of Pakistan. Based on similarity, five universities were chosen as a sample such that all of them were associated with the government section and engaged with a similar local authority (Provincial Government). The preference of this sample was justified upon the same environment, reliance on similar superior ministry, location, and classification. From each university, a total of 500 questionnaires were filled out by students and teachers of the focused five universities.

Table 1.1

S.No.	University	Students	Teachers	Management
1	A	95	5	3
2	B	95	5	5
3	C	95	5	4
4	D	95	5	3
5	E	95	5	4
Total		475	25	19

Table 1.1 explains the data about 475 students (questionnaires), 25 teachers (questionnaires), and 19 management personnel (interviews) of the focused five universities. Whereas the transcription of the interview with management is in the appendix.

Concerning the reliability and validity of the particulars for a conclusion, the researcher used triangulation. In order to out carry this triangulation, polling for students; questionnaires for the teachers, and meetings (interviews) with the management were used by the researcher. Google Forms were used in order to collect the data for the questionnaire. Actual outcomes from the audience were reflected using this tool.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The In this study, the researcher has applied Pearson Correlation to check/test the hypothesis. Pearson Correlation has been used to check the relationship between each of the independent variables with the dependent variable. The value of the Pearson Correlation varies between 1 and -1. Alternatively stated, if the value is higher than 0 this means the relation is favorable although the relation is not favorable when the value is less than 0.

Table 1.4

Factors	Pearson Correlation
Curriculum and Quality of Education	.576
Less Training Institutions and Quality of Education	.862
Corruption in Education and Quality of Education	.405
Teacher's Behaviour and Quality of Education	.644
Less Research Work and Quality of Education	.687

H1: There is a favorable relationship between Curriculum and Quality of Education.

Based on the findings of Table 1.4, the correlation between Curriculum and Quality of Education is positive, because of the non-negative sign at a correlation (.576). Hence, the researcher acknowledged the first hypothesis.

H2: There is a favorable relationship between Less Training Institutions and the Quality of Education.

Based on the findings of Table 1.4, the correlation between Less Training Institutions and Quality of Education is positive, because of a non-negative sign at a correlation (.862). Hence, the researcher acknowledged the second hypothesis.

H3: There is a favorable relationship between Corruption in Education and the Quality of Education.

Based on the findings of Table 1.4, the correlation between Corruption in Education and the Quality of Education is positive, because of a non-negative sign at a correlation (.405). Hence, the researcher acknowledged the third hypothesis.

H4: There is a favorable relation among/between Teacher's Behavior and the Quality of Education.

Based on the findings of Table 1.4, the correlation between Teacher's Behaviour and Quality of Education is positive, because of the non-negative sign at a correlation (.644). Hence, the researcher acknowledged the fourth hypothesis.

H5: There is a favorable relationship between Less Research Work and Quality of Education.

Based on the findings of Table 1.4, the correlation between Less Research Work and Quality of Education is positive, because of a non-negative sign at a correlation (.687). Hence, the researcher acknowledged the fifth hypothesis.

The question of confrontation in the excellence of education in Higher Education Institutions is straightway linked with the quality of education. The Curriculum, Less Training Institutions, Corruption in Education, Teachers' Behaviour, and Less Research Work are significant providing elements in declining the quality of education. In Pakistan, the quality of education is declining especially in the public sector. This research underlined some of the confrontations that have a direct link with the quality of education. On one side, public universities do not have a quality education but on the other side, private universities have better quality education. In this status, the commitments fall on the Federal Government and the Higher Education Commission to maintain the quality standards in the universities. Hence, the researcher acknowledged the fifth hypothesis

RECOMMENDATION

Research Question 2: What answers must come up with concerning to enhance the quality of education in Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan?

Taking note of the research analysis and the conclusion of this study, succeeding is recommendations given below to improve the excellence in learning in Higher Education Institutions as below:

- Curriculum should be evaluated on annual basis. In this regard, a vast survey could be conducted to seek options from teachers, parents, and the community regarding their expectations and observations. In this light the expert recommendations of the education researchers, the curriculum goals should be redefined.
- In view of the importance of education, the government should take solid steps towards implementation instead of projecting policies like forming an evaluation team that could take control of the quality of education. In this regard, the government should establish more training institutions for better and continuous features of the quality of education in Pakistan.
- The system of accountability must be strengthened and all the professionals associated with the system of education should be educated to own their

responsibilities on an individual and collective basis. This helps in creating a sense of ownership of the system and its functions.

- Government should conduct workshops and training programs to make teachers aware of their behavior towards students.
- The culture of research should be promoted within educational institutions. For this purpose, the pace of research-oriented programs in teaching and learning should be accelerated in educational institutions around the country, especially at higher levels. Government should increase the volume of funding to the Higher Education Commission for this purpose.

CONCLUSION

This essay's thesis is that education advances individuals in all spheres of life, including social, moral, spiritual, political, and economic development. Many nations have strong educational institutions, and as a result, they are taking the lead in the international community. Pakistan's education system poor quality has prevented it from effectively contributing to the development of the country. This element has aided in the escalation of social discontent in Pakistan. This study also discusses issues with educational quality in Pakistan's higher education institutions, revealing many results from the body of existing knowledge and the country's contemporary circumstances. The results of this study have implications for future research by national and international scholars, higher education institutions, teachers, and students. The study's final finding is that Pakistan's educational system needs urgent reform in order to achieve its goals.

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