

Comparison of techniques and materials used for teaching English in public and private schools

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Abstract

The current study provides a comparison of techniques and material used for the teaching of English in government and private schools. The study adopted quantitative research design to gather and analyze data from the participants. A self-report questionnaire and an observation sheet was designed which was based on close-ended was used. The study was descriptive in nature and survey technique was used to collect the data. The population of the study consisted of all public and private secondary schools of the province of Punjab. It was not feasible for the researchers to include all the public and private secondary schools of the Punjab. Therefore, convenient sampling technique was used to select the sample. Total sample size was 80 teachers from which 40 were taken from public primary schools and 40 were taken from private schools. As the focus of the study was to have a brief comparison of the teaching techniques and the teaching material of English being taught in the public and private schools, it is revealed that the conventional style and methodology for teaching of English is still prevailing in the public schools. For sure, the degree of level has decreased much now after the induction new teachers after revised criteria and the reforms by the government on the other side the private sector has grown on a higher rate than the public sector and have got success in convincing the parents to send their kids in private schools at least at primary level this state of mind has been developed.

Keywords: teaching techniques, English materials, government and private schools, ESL learning

1. Introduction

Teachers are considered liable for the upbringing of useful members of the society; they have much heavier responsibility other than anyone else to produce a kind of student who could become more effective for the society. In Pakistan, the primary school teacher's role has been become more vibrant as they are to build a new generation and the students of primary level totally depend upon the teacher. In Pakistan the situations under which English is taught are not encouraging. According to Crystal (1997) [3]. There are no specific curricular objectives for the courses that are taught .pedagogical tools are not being used by the English language teachers and even they are not aware of the use of these tools and more importantly rather painful fact that they even not bother to use such tools and rely on conventional techniques and methods. They remotely use audio visual aids for the English language teaching. Recent study deals with the impact of home environment on second language acquisition at early childhood (Krashen 1982) [5].

Many previous researches prove that public private partnership has played a vital role in the socio-economic development as well as the education sector in many countries successfully (Azam *et al.*, 2014) [2]. As far as Pakistan is concerned, the private sector has been contributing a lot in the increasing literacy and development if nation into a skilled manpower. On the other side Government sector has also been playing its part but not at that extent to which was required rather which was expected and there has been many flaws and problems in the public education sector. The Government, being responsible legally to provide quality education to each and every person of the society seems failed in doing so as it is also

elaborated in the constitution of the country. The conventional styles and dependency on teachers are the reasons which declined the quality of education in public schools in the recent times. On the other hand private schools have won the confidence of the society at a significant level and the confidence even there is a school of thought that discourages the private school education. For sure, there are some certain issues with the private school as well that need be address but in the comparison of Government schools except some aspects the situation is quite favorable for the private sector (Wachtel, 1998) [7].

1.1 Reasons of dissatisfaction about public schools

As reported by Quddos (1990) [6], the system of education in Pakistan is based on imbalanced lines. There are different types of systems in public and private schools which creates a sense of inequality in the community and is cause of social divide in Pakistan at the moment. This hell difference between the systems of education is one of the major cause of high drop outs rates and illiteracy in the country in both rural and urban areas. A very low percentage of GDP for the education budget is also a factor which contributes in the declining literacy rate and low standards of education in the public schools. The quality of education in the public schools has always been a question mark as because of some certain reasons. Ellis & Diane (2006) [4] stated that most important reason for this issue is that in Pakistan the teachers hiring has not been made on a standard criteria rather the induction of the teachers in education sector has been considered the easiest one and each and every person who got failed in getting job in his relevant field he joins school as a teacher. Non-professional teachers have been

inducted in public schools which resulted in low quality of education. Secondly, conventional methods of teaching and out dated material teaching without any ICTs and helping material the quality has gone down a lot in public schools. Thirdly, absenteeism of teachers in public schools and lack of the provision of school amenities is also a cause of low quality of education in public sector. Consequently the parents prefer to send their kids in private schools.

Education plays a pivotal role in the rise and fall of nations especially in 21st century. It is mainly due to the emergence of global competition in education and technology. This competitive environment is the core need for progress of any country. Ali (1982) ^[1] argues that all developing countries including Pakistan have different school systems but when we divide them we find two major categories of school systems: private and public schools. In Pakistan private schools are getting mass acceptance to ensure sustained progress of the country. Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to analyze the quality of education introduced in private schools in comparison with public schools. The quality of education is assessed by education levels of teachers, method of teaching, curriculum, and educational environment. During 90s and 20s private sector was emerged as a key provider of education services in Pakistan both in absolute terms and relative to the public sector.

Several characteristics are responsible for making private schooling more attractive to parents compared to government schools; these include better test scores, better physical infrastructure, and lower rates of teacher absenteeism. Even if we disregard the debate of whether the learning levels are better in private or government schools, the fact remains that the learning levels for both types of institutes remain poor in an absolute sense. The private schools advantage over the public schools is marginal up if we look at the problems of education in the country holistically speaking. Therefore, the policy developers should cater to supporting and improving both the sectors and not either of the two.

The outcomes of private versus public schools' debate may be a popular discourse, however, at a policy level it is essential to understand that the current education emergency in Pakistan cannot be confronted with just a single player in the education sector. Multiple players, other than the government alone are required in the process to combat the problems. The government needs private sector's help to contest the challenges. (Daley & Burt, 1974; Fathman, 1975; Makino, 1980 cited in Krashen, 1982) ^[5] Various other challenges including the flood, security issues and dislocations of citizens due to the regional conflicts in the country also pose major concerns that the households and state need to plan around in the future. The need of the hour is a collective action by all the stakeholders, including the households, government, private sector and the civil society. It can be a better option if the government uses its resources not on increasing the number of schools but rather on the quality of existing schools. Increasing access to education for children by increasing the number of schools should be a policy left for the private sector and the government itself should concentrate on improving the quality of physical facilities and teachers in the existing schools. By doing this, the benchmark for the private schools will also increase, thus increasing both access to, and quality of education.

1.2 Research Questions

1. What kind of material is used to teach English in public and private schools at primary level?
2. What kinds of techniques are used to teach English in public and private schools at primary level?
3. What kind of A.V aids are used in public and private schools for the teaching of English at primary level?

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Methodological Framework

The study was descriptive in nature and survey technique was used to collect the data. The population of the study consisted of all public and private secondary schools of two districts Bahawalpur and Lodhran. It was not feasible for the researchers to include all the public and private secondary schools of the Punjab. Therefore, convenient sampling technique was used to select the sample. The Bahawalpur district was particularly focused and 60 respondents were selected from here while from Lodhran District 20 teachers were selected as respondents. Total sample size was 80 teachers from which 40 were taken from public primary schools and 40 were taken from private schools. From the selected sample, the researchers gathered responses through two research tools i.e. a questionnaire which was containing all the major factors presenting good teaching techniques and teaching material for teaching of English and the other tool was an observation sheet which was also used for the same purpose to have a brief comparative study of the factors which make the private schools prominent from the public schools and to know the kind of teaching techniques and teaching material used in both sectors along with the use of ICTs. Both tools were developed keeping in mind the ground realities of the public and private sector primary schools in the local settings. The Questionnaire was comprised of 32 questions and likert scale was applied there to know the degree of agreement of the respondents while in observation sheet 27 key indicators were included to find the degree of comparison between public and private primary schools.

2.2 Data collection and instrumentation

40 public schools teachers and 40 private school teachers from two districts i.e. Bahawalpur and Lodhran, to have a comparison techniques and material used for the teaching of English in both sectors. The target population of the study was the teachers of primary level of both public and private schools by using convenient and correlational type sampling techniques. Descriptive and inferential statistic techniques were applied for the analysis of the data. This study was conducted by using two tools.

1. A questionnaire that was containing 32 major indicators presenting all the important areas for the teaching techniques and teaching material for English teaching.
2. An observation sheet was used containing 27 major indicators presenting all the important areas for the teaching techniques and teaching material for English teaching. Both tools were Comprising on main indicators and factors regarding key components of English language teaching material and techniques both. Comprehensive and brief indicators were included in check list to observe the view of respondents. All the data was analyzed to dig out the problems and issues faced by teachers in public schools at primary level for the teaching of English.

2.3 Pilot Testing

A pilot testing was conducted by researcher before launching the formal data collection. The purpose of the pilot testing was to test the reliability of the tool and for this purpose the tools were applied on ten respondents who were not the part of the research. The data was feed in SPSS and reliability score of the results was checked and the chronbach alpha value was above .90 which was reliable for a valid tool.

2.3.1 Validity and reliability

The validity of instruments was determined by presenting questionnaire and observation sheet to the supervisor. As this questionnaire and observation sheet was self-reported that's why for the validity this was presented to the supervisor. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated through pilot testing on five teachers of public schools and five teachers of private schools who were not the sample of this study. After having reliable results of pilot testing and get it checked to the supervisor the researcher started data collection on the same pattern of the questionnaire.

2.4 Research Procedure

To conduct a research survey it is necessary to select a suitable sample for the study. For recent study, the sample size selected for the study was 40 teachers of public schools and 40 teachers of the public schools from Bahawalpur and Lodhran Districts by using convenient and survey type sample technique. Furthermore, questionnaire and observation sheet was administered to the teachers but before administering the questionnaire consent was taken from teachers. As the topic of the study was a comparative study of public and private schools regarding the teaching techniques and material used for the teaching of English the researcher took sufficient time to compete the data. It took more than two months to get the complete data from 40 teachers of public and 40 teachers of private schools equally. Statistical formulas were applied to analyze and interpret the data. Furthermore, conclusion was drawn from the data and recommendations were suggested for future research.

3. Findings and Discussions

Most developing countries provide public education free or at minimal cost to their citizens. Across the Third World, public schools enroll approximately 90 percent of all primary and 70 percent of all secondary students. But because of physical constraints have been increasing recently, in many countries the public sector's ability to expand the provision of free public education has been limited. In particular, this has created a serious problem for the poorest countries where the demand for schooling is projected to increase dramatically over the next decades. One way around this problem is to charge tuition fees for public education services, and many countries have adopted this policy. Another option is to rely on private schools to handle at least part of the expansion. Governments can encourage this development by relaxing restrictions on private schools, by providing loans to and information about them and by restricting the number of places available in public schools. Some reports suggest that, if governments were to adopt such policies, not only would more resources for education be generated but also standards of efficiency

and quality would increase

Private schools in developing countries including Pakistan do not necessarily have an elite bias, and that a range of low fee-charging private schools exist that cater to the rural poor. Several characteristics are responsible for making private schooling more attractive to parents compared to government schools; these include better test scores, the use of English as a medium of instruction, better physical infrastructure, and lower rates of teacher absenteeism. One reason why private schools have never been seen or used as an instrument for mass education is that they typically serve the elite. Moreover, the share of private schooling is higher in tertiary and secondary education compared to primary education, by which time a large share of children from poor families have dropped out. South Asian countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh and India all show high shares of private enrollment at the primary level. Countries such as Zimbabwe in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as Lebanon and the gulf-states in the Middle East also stand out, with both high private school enrollment and a larger private sector share at the primary level.

Regrettably the approach of the primary school teacher has been quite concerning as they do not adopt the required change and do not use the modern techniques of teaching learning process. It is important to judge the reasons that why they don't have that sort of attitude? Lack of knowledge is also a major reason which affects the effective learning in the class room. Their professional training and skill is another issue which needs to be addressed as they should apply the training and skills in class room for maximum learning.

As the focus of the study was to have a brief comparison of the teaching techniques and the teaching material of English being taught in the public and private schools, it is revealed that the conventional style and methodology for teaching of English is still prevailing in the public schools. For sure, the degree of level has decreased much now after the induction new teachers after revised criteria and the reforms by the government on the other side the private sector has grown on a higher rate than the public sector and have got success in convincing the parents to send their kids in private schools at least at primary level this state of mind has been developed. The way teaching techniques are adopted in primary schools of private sector it enables the kid to think independently while on the other side the kids have been made dependent and can only think in a particular circle which is damaging the creativity of a kid. The analysis reveals that even though public schools at primary level have left some of the conventional methods yet they are facing various issues with the teaching material they are provided with and they are also lacking use of ICTs which has got a vital role at primary level to compete with private schools. Schools building, environment, class room environment, and facility of the public schools is bit better but yet quite far away from the private schools. In above analysis it is disclosed that teacher's preparation and students participation in the class room is a major factor contributing in the quality of education being provided by the schools. The techniques adopted by the public schools teachers are still based on teacher centered method while on the other hand in private schools these are based student centered. Even in the observation sheet the researcher found that the factors involved in the good teaching techniques and good teaching material for English are lacking in public

schools as compare to private schools.

Findings reveal that private schools are at much better position in the context all given indicators and factors. As the focus of the study was to have a brief comparison of the teaching techniques and the teaching material of English being taught in the public and private schools, it is revealed that the conventional style and methodology for teaching of English is still prevailing in the public schools. For sure, the degree of level has decreased much now after the induction new teachers. On the other side the private sector has grown on a higher rate than the public sector and have got success in convincing the parents to send their kids in private schools at least at primary level this state of mind has been developed. The way teaching techniques are adopted in primary schools of private sector it enables the kid to think independently while on the other side the kids have been made dependent and can only think in a particular circle which is damaging the creativity of a kid. The analysis reveals that even though public schools at primary level have left some of the conventional methods yet they are facing various issues with the teaching material they are provided with and they are also lacking use of ICTs which has got a vital role at primary level to compete with private schools. Schools building, environment, class room environment, and facility of the public schools is bit better but yet quite far away from the private schools. In above analysis it is disclosed that teacher's preparation and students participation in the class room is a major factor contributing in the quality of education being provided by the schools. Several characteristics are responsible for making private schooling more attractive to parents compared to government schools; these include better test scores, the use of English as a medium of instruction, better physical infrastructure, and lower rates of teacher absenteeism.

Private schools are not accessible to poor parents. Wealthier parents are more likely to send their children to private schools than poor parents. The share of private school-going children increases with socioeconomic status. Parents across all socioeconomic groups favor females in the private versus public schooling decision. While parents discriminate against females in the enrolment decision, they are more likely to choose private schooling for their daughters rather than for their son. Girls from richer households are more likely to go to private schools than girls from poorer households. Lower teacher absenteeism and better teacher accountability in private schools have been observed very less as compared to public schools. In the private sector, teacher remuneration is more closely linked to student outcomes than in the public sector. Private school teachers are less likely to be absent than teachers in public schools. So, teachers operating at low fee private schools would be under pressure to perform and meet certain result-oriented outcomes. In the public sector, on the other hand, there is greater job security. Thus, the differential incentive package in the private relative to the public sector may be a factor in explaining why private schools out-perform government schools.

The quality of English, science, and mathematics teaching is generally higher at private schools than at public schools. Parents' ratings of the quality of teaching of these three subjects at their child's school are very important. The teaching quality gap between private and public schools is evident a larger percentage of public school-going

children's parents rate the teaching as 'average' (or 'poor') compared to those of private school-going children. Conversely, the percentage of children whose parents rate the teaching as 'excellent' is higher for private schools.

The educational cost is assumed to be the most important factor for not only the decision of schooling but also the choice of public vs. private schooling as well. We have used the fee of school as the proxy of school cost. Although the transport cost, the expenditure on educational material and uniform have significant share of the total cost of schooling. Moreover, in poor households the opportunity cost of schooling also remains high. We have found inverse relation between the school fee and choice of private school. As the fee rises, the probability of attending private schools falls.

The English attained the language of high status in Pakistan. Proficiency in English is assumed to be required for joining and advancement in armed forces, civil services, better paying jobs in private companies and NGOs. It is also medium of instruction in universities that is why it is required by parents in schools. The English language was seen as the major determinant of this expansion and as basic requirement by the parents. So, we have found a positive association between the choice of private school and medium of instruction as English. Medium of instruction in English along with discipline and status symbol associated with private schools is responsible for preference of private schools. On the other hand, most of the public schools are Urdu medium so parents do not prefer public schools. Now The Punjab Government's initiative of transforming Urdu medium public sector schools into English medium may result into increase in enrolment in public sector schools.

Student teacher ratio is very high in public schools and seventy plus students in one class. So a teacher cannot give proper attention to each student and all students also cannot communicate with teacher easily. On the other hand in private schools there are thirty plus students in a class so there is much better student teacher relationship and a teacher gives proper attention to students.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the current study revealed that material being taught in private school is found updated and embedded with the ICTs usage quite frequently while on the other side in public schools outdated and convention method is still in use. It was disclosed that in private schools the techniques are also embedded with the curriculum as per the need and capacity of the student and having relevance to the topic of the subject, particularly arrangements of proper assessments, planning of the lesson, having review of previous lesson, letting the kids participate independently, and keeping in mind the students need are the factors which were found at a higher degree in the private schools during the data analysis of questionnaire and observation sheet with the help of T test cross tabulation to understand the degree of difference and gaps of both sectors. Kind of ICTs used for the teaching of English were also analyzed and found a big gap between public and private sectors as private schools are using all the important it's required for the teaching of English at primary level and are found ahead of the public schools in this aspect all the way. The way teaching techniques are adopted in primary schools of private sector it enables the kid to think independently while on the other side the kids have been made dependent and can only think in a particular circle which is damaging the

creativity of a kid. The analysis reveals that even though public schools at primary level have left some of the conventional methods of teaching English yet they are facing various issues with the teaching material they are provided with and they are also lacking use of ICTs which has got a vital role at primary level to compete with private schools. Schools building, environment, class room environment, and facility of the public schools is bit better but yet quite far away from the private schools. In above analysis it is disclosed that teacher's preparation and students participation in the class room is a major factor contributing in the quality of education being provided by the schools. The techniques adopted by the public schools teachers are still based on teacher centered method while on the other hand in private schools these are based student centered. The study concludes with the following recommendations:

1. Teachers in public schools must be recruited and promoted on the basis of professional qualifications and performance.
2. Text book board and other relevant authorities must focus on the updated teaching material for the English to compete with the private sector and apply these changes effectively to get the better results.
3. Use of ICTs should be made integral by the school principals to make the lessons fruitful and for the better understandings of the students particularly for the teaching of English.

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