

## Journal of Educational Research & Social Science Review (JERSSR)

### A Study of Quality Indicators at Intermediate Level Institutions in Southern Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan

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#### Abstract



*The study aims to see the quality indicators at Govt. Colleges and Government Higher secondary schools and to investigate its effect on students' academic achievements at an intermediate level. All teachers at Govt. Colleges, as well as Higher Secondary Schools, constitute a total of 2639 teachers population (lecturers 372 and 2267 subject specialists) of the study and 16 teachers were taken as a sample of the study from the entire population in four Southern districts (D.I.Khan, Tank, Lakki, and Bannu) of KP by applying multi-stage sampling techniques. Data were collected through a valid open-ended questionnaire from the respondents. The instrument covers variables including physical facilities, teaching and learning environment, teaching and learning materials, the attitude of institutional heads, parental guidance, and parent-teacher coordination, number of classrooms, library, laboratories, equipment, and security setup. The annual intermediate results of sessions 2018 and 2019 were focused to see the academic achievements of intermediate level results. The collected data were presented in a narrative summary form. The results of the study reveal that Govt. Colleges performed better than Govt. Higher Secondary Schools. The urban setup of these both institutions was comparatively better than that of the rural setup. The study recommends KP Govt. may provide proper physical facilities, a congenial environment, parent-teacher interaction, and other quality indicators to higher secondary schools and colleges of rural setup.*

**Keywords:** Quality Indicators, Intermediate Level Education, Colleges & Higher Secondary Schools, Pakistan

#### Introduction

Quality education means that the center may be provided with all facilities, the community may fully support the whole process, and students may be motivated to participate in the learning process. Social life skills may be provided for learning, and an appropriate attitude may be provided. Safety, security, and healthy interaction should be given for better achievement (Bernard, 1999).

Casanova et al. (2018) suggest that students and teachers play a small role in designing a learning environment. The learning environment may be made conducive in light of students' perspectives. A pleasant and suitable environment promotes the learning of the students. Students may be provided facilities and a flexible environment where they feel at ease. Voogt and Pareja Roblin (2012) support activities that suit modern working life and gaining twenty-first-century skills. Self-studying and group working areas are recommended for getting better results. Student-centered activities demand proper spaces with ICT resources and other forms of support, such as the presence of teaching personnel. Students need to be engaged in productive need-based activities that flourish their creative inner abilities. ICT-based learning is a need of the day, and students may be familiarized with applying these resources for acquiring skill-based knowledge, which makes them able to live with honor in modern society. Education is a forceful asset to be invested in boosting any society's human and financial development (NEP, 2009). Reforms of various nature since the creation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the map of the world were started to ensure qualitative and

quantitative developments in education. Seven policies of education, various five years plans, and education sector reforms were launched and accomplished. Instability in government, political setup, and other challenges do not pave the implementation of the policies and reforms in the true sense. Justice was not done in implementing these policies, plans, and reforms by every successive government in the past (Siddiqui, 2007; Ahmed, 2012). Changes were suggested and implemented from time to time to bring desired quality-based changes in the education sector. Still, the stereotyped traditional system could not cause desired change in the system (Ahmed, 2012). UNESCO (2000) reports that communities are improved by fulfilling the global needs for ensuring quality and effective education so that a man can grow and develop, which is revealed in Govt. Educational Policy 2009 of Pakistan states that individuals should be highly polished to produce productive and supportive personalities to promote society. Many qualitative indicators may be employed and understood in practice; many academic programs aim to enhance and ensure quality education. There are so many higher secondary schools and colleges/Institutions in which intermediate-level courses and subjects are taught, i.e., pre-medical, humanities, pre-engineering, Inter-Science, etc., that provide occupational and educational training to promote and enhance the economic, political, and social life of individuals which is initially possible via intermediate schooling or education. Federal Government of Pakistan (2008), every citizen of Pakistan has the right to get an education, and intermediate education has a transitional role in the development of the state or country by enabling young individuals to enter the workforce and other related activities. Every citizen of Pakistan must improve the productivity and efficiency level of individuals along with the provision of human resources, long-term development, and financial support for which higher education is essential and mandatory.

The world is moving fast, and recent technological advancement has affected modes of education, too, i.e., learning, teaching, and assessment in tertiary level education (Darling-Hammond, 2016). Relevant material and students' friendly teaching methods support students to learn and think critically and generate passion for actively engaging them in classrooms. Effective teaching methods can help students to think critically and generate enthusiasm for actively engaging in a classroom (Cherif and Somervill, 1995; Wood, 2003). Various teaching approaches, i.e., role play, pair work, and problem-solving techniques, can lead us to keep the learners engaged in creative activities which support them in critical thinking skills. We can guide them, keep the students on the right track and keep them open-minded, fair-minded, and sympathetic human beings. It is a workable activity involving the students to resolve their issues collectively. (Jones, 2007; Mooradian, 2008) Here in Pakistan, especially in the Province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Government provides an intermediate level education in colleges and higher secondary schools, the stakeholders talk about the quality of education that needs to be provided to students. The study is hereby undertaken to determine whether the education at an intermediate level that is being provided is of standard level and whether the Government meets all the indicators mandatory for quality education.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze and determine the quality indicators of Intermediate level education between Govt. Colleges and Govt. Higher secondary schools in the four southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.
2. To investigate and compare the quality indicators in terms of students' academic achievement in both types of institutions in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

### **Research Questions:**

**Research Question 1** What is the significant difference between Intermediate education and between Govt. Colleges and Higher Secondary Schools of KPK province in light of teachers' perspectives?

**Research Question 2** What is significant difference among the quality indicators of inter-level education in terms of Academic Achievement of students in both types of Government Institutions in light of teachers' perspectives

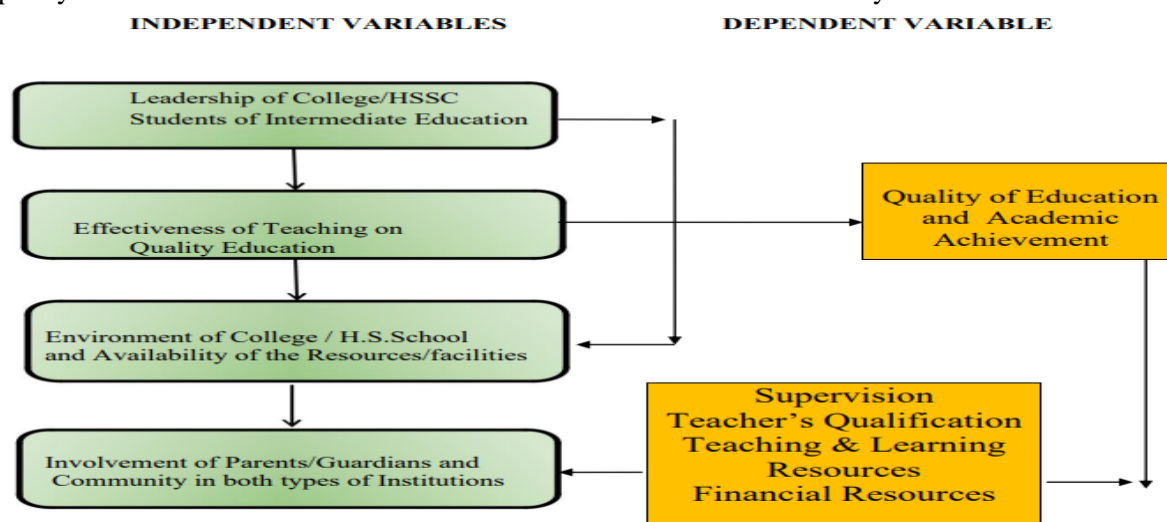
### **Literature Review**

Valtonen et al. (2021) support developing a proper learning environment for higher education institutions. The shift can be seen in pedagogy and learning approaches. The student-centered teaching-learning process is highly focused and admired. Activity-based learning practices where students may be practically involved in the learning process. These may include the availability of resources on the campus, flexible learning environment, effective learners' centered teaching pedagogy, use of ICT for the teaching-learning process, and informal learning setup where students

feel at ease to work alone or with peers or hang out. The other thing is to provide a flexible learning mode. Vercellotti (2018) focused on the significance of the physical facilities, i.e., buildings, seminars, libraries, and lecture rooms. Physical facilities promote a healthy environment where they can feel at ease and motivate them to learn. Goe's (2007) talks about teacher quality indicators: qualifications, characteristics, and teacher practice and effectiveness. Imran (2008) did a comparative evaluation of education satisfactory in Punjab's public and private secondary colleges. They have a look its predominant objective became to look at the excellent education in instructional institutions, mainly the reasons for the reduction in secondary school first-rate, and to evaluate public and personal institutions. In addition, the Intermediate college students' effects had been in comparison to study and analyze their overall academic performance. The main inspiration was that each Institute's teachers take the desired steps to help boom the academic general of Inter-degree pupils. Saeed and Zyngier (2012) discussed the importance of motivation for keeping the students engaged in educational activities. Sahito and Väisänen (2018) emphasized the quality of teacher education, considering that everyone is directly or indirectly associated with the education system. The parents want a better quality of education for their kids. Quality education covers five indicators for quality education students and teachers as learners, content/learning material, standards, environment, and achievements). Yackulic and Noonan (2001) reported on the quality indicators in education, i.e., current scenario, objectives, continuous feedback, and advancement for achieving objectives. NACTE (2009) highlighted national standards for education, i.e., instructional material, assessment and evaluation system, assessment and physical facilities, academic facilities, learning resources, and human resources. Batool and Qureshi (2007) focused on quality education to meet international standards. Quality assurance may be ensured in light of the global international indicators in the universities of Pakistan. Rind and Qasim stressed quality assurance, including openness, transparency, fairness, equity, and accountability as practiced worldwide. Similarly, Knight and Nestor (2000) describe how these are growing the employed round the sector for the excessive first-class of intermediate education which can don't forget and implement several measures of qualitative tutorial indicators. Pleasant warranty examines how systems and processes are developed and implemented to ensure that the services and products meet uniform standards and are constantly advanced. Chande (2016) memorized the excellent indicators: a) Participation of instructors in academic programs b) collaborative efforts with faculties to improve teaching competencies. c) Establishing educational necessities. d) Long-term idea drafting. e) Instructors' nicely being in such surroundings. f) Learning plans which are focused on college students. g) The institutional shape and practical framework are up to date on a regular foundation. h) An informational record in writing. i) Infrastructure provision and improvement. j) Acquiring investor comments.

### Theoretical Framework

The study follows the theoretical framework that aims to see the effect of variables covering effective leadership, relevant teaching strategies, congenial environment, availability of all physical facilities, and parents' support in the teaching-learning process. The effect of these quality indicators on the quality of education and students' academic achievement is seen in the study.



**Fig 1.1:** Theoretical Framework of the study

### **Research Methodology**

The study is qualitative, and open-ended questions were asked from the teachers about the status of quality indicators and how these can be improved to achieve better results and quality education. From the respondents, demographic data were collected about their name, sex, age, qualification, experience, the teacher-student ratio in the college/school, and course file. The other variables, i.e., whether the institution facilitates teachers with training, suitability of the workload, adopt relevant teaching strategies; the teachers maintain proper course file covering time table, academic calendar, students' results, and topics covered in the session. They were also asked to discuss the administration and leadership styles, environment, and availability of resources such as course materials, management, physical resources, discipline, cleanliness, and security setup. They also facilitated informing us about parents/guardians' support. They were asked questions about the main hurdles and how they can be resolved. All the respondents provided a free environment of interaction and to express themselves freely, keeping in view the ethical consideration and confidentiality of their views just for research purposes and to get the actual status of quality education. The items were also discussed with other professors for validation purposes. Some irrelevant and unjustified/redundant items were deleted from the unstructured interview items. Four colleges and four higher secondary schools were randomly selected for this qualitative study in districts D.I.Khan, Tank, Lakki Marwat, and Bannu. Two lecturers (one male and one female) and two subject specialists (one male and one female) were randomly selected from these colleges and higher secondary schools. Thus total respondents of the study were 16; eight lecturers from the college side and 8 subject specialists from the higher secondary side constitute the target sample size of the study. Similarly, the academic achievement of Inter-level students was measured using the two-year board's results sessions 2018(A) & 2019(A). The teachers were asked for items related to physical facilities covering availability of suitable place, availability of classrooms with benches and desks for students, textbooks, a laboratory for science practical work, enough numbers of computers, enough open space for games, and clean water. Items related to the learning environment cover staff for teaching, conducive learning environment, support and encourage students, high expectations for students, support students in answering questions, assignments/tests, to assess students' learning. It covers the respondents' demographic information such as gender & age level characteristics etc. It also focuses on the peaceful environment of the teaching and learning process. It seeks information regarding the parents/guardians, community members, leaders, and other social workers and their involvement in school/college meetings, decision-making, and other activities. The respondents also discussed the different problems such as students' indiscipline issues, community & security problems, and residential troubles.

### **Findings**

As a result, the status availability of qualitative indicators in colleges was good compared to schools. These indicators supported Intermediate Education at Government Colleges regarding teachers' perceptions. As a result, it may be argued that government colleges performed outstanding results than government H.S.Schools. There were notable differences between the two groups, according to the findings. As a result, the quality education in terms of students' academic achievements provided to College students in Government institutions was superior to that provided to higher secondary school students in southern areas of KPK. As a result, it is justified and asserted that government colleges perform better than government higher secondary schools. The data reveals that 25% of students at Government Colleges received an A-1 grade, whereas 12% of students in Government Higher Secondary Schools received an A-1 grade. Similarly, 53% of students at government colleges and 25% of pupils in government higher secondary schools received A grades. Similarly, at the Intermediate level, more than 60% of students in Government Colleges received B grades, while 41% of students in Government Higher Secondary Schools received B grades. According to the report, 20% of Government Colleges students received a C grade for good academic accomplishment, whereas 77% of students in Government Higher Secondary Schools received a C grade. It means that as the colleges were facilitated with quality indicators in light of teachers' perceptions, the results of students in colleges were also better than those of schools. The same is the position of urban and rural setup; the institutions of rural setup were less facilitated with quality indicators, whereas the institutions situated in urban areas were enjoying the facilities.

## **Discussion**

Vercellotti (2018) discussed the importance of interactive learning in classrooms and keeping the students engaged in research and innovative learning. The technology further makes learning easy and effective for students as well as for teachers. The interactive pedagogy affects a lot on students' learning achievement. Ghazi et al. (2014) reported that the school environment, IQ years of schooling, and parents' educational background influence the students' achievement. Goe (2007) supports teachers' quality for students' better achievement. The study supports the previous studies that quality indicators, including physical facilities, congenial environment, effective teaching strategy, and parental care, promote high-quality learning of students. The physical facilities covering libraries with suitable books, laboratories with all needed equipment, the required number of spacious classrooms, playgrounds, and proper security setup are necessary for quality education. The teachers also supported that parent-teacher coordination should be ensured for achieving desired education at intermediate educational institutions. Fazal (2011) supports that tertiary-level education promotes leadership. The study reveals that universities may be facilitated with merit-based admission policy, research, hostel facility, equipped laboratories, multimedia, and academic audit system for better achievement. Ali, T (2011) suggests quality education, continuous professional development, and new ways of teaching and research.

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

The study concludes that a friendly environment may be provided, the students may be facilitated with physical facilities, and competent teachers having effective teaching strategies can promote students' achievements. The Government should focus on the colleges and schools of rural set up to facilitate them with all the facilities needed for quality education. The study recommends that all the quality indicators covering physical facilities, congenial teaching and learning environment, availability of instructional materials, positive attitude of institutional heads, suitable parental guidance, co-ordination among teachers – parents, and terror-free environment may be ensured for quality education at an intermediate level educational institution.

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