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A Critical Analysis of Quality Challenges in Educational Institutions in Balochistan

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ABSTRACT

The study used a mixed-method approach to examine key challenges to quality education in educational institutions across Balochistan. The quantitative aspect of the study consisted of administering a sstructured questionnaire to 300 teachers from government primary schools across Balochistan. Descriptive statistics and logistic regression analysis were used to identify factors affecting quality education in government schools. The qualitative component consisted of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 20 head teachers, 20 parents/guardians, 20 community members, and six educational administrators. Thematic analysis was used to analyze data gathered to get comprehensive insights into their experiences regarding key challenges to quality education in the province. The findings of the study reveal that quality education in Balochistan faces multifaceted challenges, including underqualified teachers, teacher absenteeism, ineffective school supervision, outdated curriculum, flawed examination system, and lack of infrastructural facilities. In order to tackle these challenges effectively, we require strong political will, more funds for teacher training programs and infrastructure development, curriculum reforms, and robust accountability mechanisms.

Keywords: Curriculum Reform, Teacher Absenteeism, Educational Challenges, Educational Inequality

INTRODUCTION

In addition to human resource deficiencies, infrastructural inadequacies also severely affect the learning environment (Chishti et al., 2011). Many schools in Balochistan lack basic facilities such as clean drinking water, electricity, boundary walls, and toilets. The absence of such facilities not only deters students' attendance—particularly girls—but also severely affects the overall learning environment. The province's geographical remoteness makes the problem worse, particularly during adverse weather conditions (UNICEF, 2011).

Outdated Curriculum and an ineffective examination system contribute to the deterioration of educational quality. The contents taught in the classroom have little implication in the practical world and fail to develop student's analytical skills and critical thinking. Moreover, the absence of a formative assessment system encourages rote learning practices and memorization of a few topics to pass examinations. There exists a clear urban-rural divide in educational attainments. Urban centers like Quetta show better learning outcomes, whereas rural and tribal areas exhibit low enrollment, poor performance, high dropout rates, and gender disparities.

In order to improve the quality of education, several policies were proposed, but all failed due to bureaucratic inefficiencies, undue political inference, and lack of substantial investment (Balochistan Education Sector Plan, 2013-2018). The deteriorated standard of education in the province calls for a critical and multidimensional analysis to understand the main challenges in providing quality education and propose sustainable solutions. This study aims to explore multifaceted quality challenges in educational institutions in Balochistan. It has examined institutional, infrastructural, and policy-level barriers that create obstacles to providing quality education in the province.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the institutional challenges in providing quality education in Balochistan
2. To examine the infrastructural challenges in improving the standard of education in the province
3. To suggest sustainable initiatives to improve the quality of education in the province

LITERATURE REVIEW

The National Education Assessment System (NEAS) of Pakistan indicates that the education system in the country is substandard. Educational institutions must urgently adopt innovative teaching methodologies, assessment systems, infrastructure, and learning environments to elevate educational standards. The primary elements that substantially promote the development of the educational system are the quality of learning, guidance, and student counseling. However, Pakistan's educational institutions are devoid of all these essential elements.

Pakistan has inherited a substandard educational system, particularly primary

education, which has not undergone any substantial changes since independence. Consequently, the country has the lowest literacy rate in the region. Poor communication, inadequate teaching-learning resources, lack of professional training, absence of appropriate coordination, budgetary constraints, poor school management, poor policy implementation, and defective examination system are the primary challenges that affect quality education (Ahmed, 2013).

According to UNICEF (2005), Pakistan faces numerous severe issues, including poverty, unemployment, sectarian violence, and terrorism. Rehman (2011) stated that the fundamental causes of these severe problems are a lack of awareness, intolerance, and illiteracy, which are fostered by an outmoded educational system. Policymakers have neglected the critical role of education in national development, which has led to unsatisfactory growth in numerous life sectors. The standard of education has declined due to the country's lowest education budget. As a result, the country's education system has been unable to boost economic, political, and social development.

The educational system in Pakistan is substandard. The education sector in the country is performing poorly, as evidenced by low enrollment and high dropout rates, inexperienced teachers, lack of teaching-learning tools, inadequate physical facilities, poor supervision, and significant regional and gender-based disparities. Since independence, the education sector has received the lowest budgetary allocation, which is the main cause of its poor performance. Poor teaching and inefficient policy and program implementation undermine the nation's educational system (Yousif, 2013).

Several issues, such as low enrollment, gender inequality, regional disparities, lack of physical facilities, and ineffective human resources, affect Pakistan's education system. Memon (2007) lists the high rate of dropouts, mostly at the primary level, low completion rates, teacher absenteeism, and low literacy rates as the main reasons for poor performance in the education system. Education has never been a top priority of the Pakistani government since its independence (Saeed et al., 2013). In terms of quality, Pakistan's education system ranks last globally. The country's poor educational quality is the result of a variety of challenges, including political interference in school decision-making, lack of trained and qualified teaching staff and a heavy workload, teachers' inability to cope with field challenges, lack of coordination between teachers and administration, inadequate education budget, and politically appointed untrained and incompetent teaching staff. Additionally, the quality of education is adversely affected by lack of textbooks, curriculum challenges, poor supervision and administration, and a lack of motivation among teachers to pursue a career in education.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methods. This methodology facilitates a comprehensive examination of the challenges to providing quality education in Balochistan by integrating

quantitative data with qualitative insights. Structured questionnaires were used to gather statistical insights into teachers' availability, teacher-student ratios, infrastructural deficiencies, and teacher credentials. Additionally, key informant interviews and focus group discussions were carried out to get comprehensive insights into the institutional and infrastructural challenges associated with delivering quality education. The target population of the study included primary school teachers, head teachers, educational administrators, parents of enrolled students, and community members from the three districts of Jaffarabad, Naseerabad, and Sohbatpur. A simple random sampling technique was used to choose a sample of 300 teachers from various government primary schools.

Additionally, 20 head teachers, 20 parents/guardians, 20 community members, and six educational administrators were chosen by using purposive sampling. The quantitative data collected using the structured questionnaire is analyzed using both descriptive statistics (frequency distribution and percentage) and inferential statistics (Binary Logistic Regression Analysis). Additionally, thematic analysis is used to analyze data collected through interviews and focus group discussions.

RESULTS

Table.1 Teachers' Profile

S.No.		**Category**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	Gender of the Respondents	Male	150	50%
		Female	150	50%
		Total	**300**	**100%**
2	Age of the teachers (in years)	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Average**
		22.00	50.00	36
3	Teaching Experience	5.00	30.00	17.5
3	Level of education	**Category**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
		Masters	21	7%
		Bachelor	54	18%
		Intermediate	105	35%
		Matric	120	40%
		Total	**300**	**100%**
4	Professional Qualification	M.Ed.	9	3%
		B.Ed.	21	7%
		CT	63	21%
		PTC	99	33%
		Nil	108	36%
		Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field survey, 2025

Description of Table 1:

Three hundred teachers from 300 government primary schools completed the structured surveys. Males constituted fifty percent of the total, while females also constituted fifty percent. The ages of respondents varied from 22 to 50 years, while their teaching experience spanned from 5 to 30 years.

Respondents were classified according to their educational attainment: 40% possessed a Secondary School Certificate (Matric), 35% had a Higher Secondary School Certificate (Intermediate), and 18% had a Bachelor's degree. Merely 7% of teachers had a Master's degree. The responders' professional credentials were also taken into account. Table 4.1 indicates that 33% possessed a Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC), 21% held a Certificate of Teaching (CT), and 7% obtained a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree. Only 3% of teachers held a Master of Education (M.Ed.). Most notably, 36% of teachers lacked a professional degree.

Table. 2 Schools' Profile

	Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
	Number of Teacher		
Teacher/s	1	240	80%
	2	45	15%
	3	15	5%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
	Number of Classroom		
Class room/s	0	45	15%
	1	216	72%
	2	39	13%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
	Teacher-Student Ratio		
Student-teacher ratio	20:1	30	10%
	30:1	36	12%
	40:1	45	15%
	50:1	75	25%
	60:1	60	20%
	70:1	54	18%
	Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field survey, 2025

Description of Table 2:

The table indicates that the majority of schools (80%) had a single teacher to teach a multi-grade class. Furthermore, 72% of schools had just a single classroom and lacked a separate space for the kachi class (Nursery), while 15% had no availability of classrooms entirely, compelling students to learn outdoors in extreme heat.

The findings also reveal that the majority of schools (63%) had a student-teacher ratio over 50 students per teacher, exceeding the UNESCO recommended ratios of 40 students per teacher for developing nations and 29 students per teacher

for developed countries. It indicates that majority of schools had an inadequate student-teacher ratio. Consequently, teachers' classroom performance suffered, preventing them from providing individualized attention to each student, especially the slower learners, due to the high student-teacher ratio.

Table. 3 Physical facilities in schools

Facilities	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Electricity	Yes	105	35%
	No	195	65%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
Water facility	Yes	114	38%
	No	186	62%
	Total	**300**	**100**
Toilet facility	Yes	123	41%
	No	177	59%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
Boundary wall	Yes	120	40%
	No	180	60%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
Sport facilities	Yes	00	0%
	No	300	100%
	Total	**200**	**100%**
Adequate furniture for teacher	Yes	129	43%
	No	171	57%
	Total	**300**	**100%**
Adequate Furniture for students	Yes	60	20%
	No	240	80%
	Total	**300**	**100%**

Source: Field survey, 2025

Description of Table 3:

The table shows that 65% of schools were without electricity, 62% were devoid of water facilities, 59% lacked bathroom facilities, 60% had no boundary walls, 57% were insufficiently furnished for teachers, 80% lacked adequate furniture for students, and no school was provided with sports facilities.

Table. 4 Binary Logistic Regression Model

Variables	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig. P	Exp (B)
X1 Underqualified Teacher	-.1.374	.613	5.020	.025	0.253
X2 A Teacher's absenteeism	-1.314	.624	4.435	.035	0.269
X3 Ineffective School Supervision	-3.004	.645	21.674	.000	0.150

X4 Outdated curriculum	-1.359	.616	4.874	.027	0.257
X5 Flawed examination system	-1.225	.586	4.378	.036	0.294
X6 Lack of infrastructural facilities	-1.203	.546	4.859	.028	0.300
Constant	5.490	1.213	20.488	.000	242.150

Source: Field survey, 2025

Description of Table 4:

The binary logistic regression analysis results are found in Table 4.4. The results reveal that all six variables were significantly associated with quality education. The results show that underqualified teacher was negatively associated with quality education (OR=0.253, $p > 0.05$), implying that underqualified teachers negatively influenced quality education 3.95 times. The results also reveal a negative association between quality education and teacher absenteeism (OR= 0.269, $p > 0.05$), implying that teacher absenteeism decreased quality education 3.71 times.

The results further show that ineffective school supervision was negatively associated with quality education (OR= 0.050, $p > 0.01$), implying that ineffective school supervision 6.66 times more negatively affected quality education. The results also reveal a negative association between quality education and outdated curriculum (OR=0.257, $p > 0.05$), suggesting that outdated curriculum negatively affected quality education 3.89 times.

Moreover, the results further reveal that a flawed examination system and quality education were negatively associated (OR = 0.294, $p > 0.05$), implying that a flawed examination system decreased quality education 3.40 times. Similarly, the results indicate a negative association between lack of infrastructure facilities and quality education (OR= 0.300, $p > 0.01$), suggesting that lack of infrastructural facilities 3.33 times decreased quality education.

DISCUSSION

Underqualified Teachers

The findings of the study reveal that one of the significant challenges to quality education in Balochistan is underqualified and untrained teachers. The participants stated that underqualified teachers lack basic understanding of core subjects like English, Science, and mathematics which leads to shallow or incorrect understanding of these subjects among students. These teachers cannot effectively deliver lessons, manage classrooms and assess students' actual academic performance which often leads to low retention and high dropout rates. The most serious concern raised by the participants was that when community members realize that the schools are staffed with underqualified and untrained teachers, they stop enrolling children in schools leading to low enrollment rate.

The participants of the study mentioned that most primary school teachers in

Balochistan are underqualified, having only ten years of education (SSC) with a nine-months of pre-service training (PTC), which is deemed insufficient to teach at the primary level. Moreover, they lack the basic understanding of several important concepts and, in some cases, perform worst in English and Mathematics than their students.

Teacher's Absenteeism

The participants of the study unanimously agreed that teacher absence adversely impacts educational quality by disrupting learning continuity and hindering students' ability to grasp the curriculum and retain essential knowledge fully. Frequent teacher absence often leads to poor student performance in assessments owing to insufficient instruction and guidance. It also demotivates students, which causes a lack of discipline and interest in studying. The main concern is that in rural areas, where students, especially females, already face obstacles to accessing education, frequent teacher absenteeism exacerbates existing inequalities. Governments allocate funds for infrastructure and materials, but when teachers are absent, these resources are underutilized, resulting in significant waste.

The participants mentioned that teacher absenteeism is prevalent in Balochistan due to inadequate and ineffective monitoring and supervision. Teacher absenteeism significantly impacts single-teacher primary schools, resulting in the closure of educational institutions during the teacher's absence. Teacher absence is a primary factor contributing to substandard education in the province, resulting in students' poor academic performance.

Flawed Examination System

The findings of the study reveal that flawed examination is one of the main predictor of poor quality education in Balochistan. The participants of the study said that the examination system in the province is outdated and incapable of accurately assessing learners' actual knowledge and performance. The existing assessment system substantially undermines the quality of education in Balochistan in several critical ways. The participants mentioned that this system undermines critical thinking, analytical abilities, and creativity in students by prioritizing memorization over a profound comprehension of subjects. Teachers and students primarily focus on preparation for examinations rather than acquiring a profound understanding of the subject matter, leading to a superficial learning experience.

The participants added that the use of unethical tactics in examinations, such as widespread cheating, paper leaks, and bribery, undermines the credibility of this system and diminishes the value of genuine academic endeavors. This approach just evaluates students' written knowledge, ignoring crucial skills such as communication, practical application of knowledge, and digital literacy. This assessment system fails to evaluate students' genuine potential and capabilities, often putting excessive pressure that results in unnecessary burnout and stress.

Outdated Curriculum

The findings of the study show that outdated curriculum is the main challenge to educational quality in Balochistan. Participants stated that the majority

of government schools in the province teach outdated curricula that scarcely meet the demands of the contemporary world. Most of the textbooks used in these schools are based on curricula that have not been updated for years and emphasize rote memorization over in-depth conceptual understanding. Students are discouraged by this method from learning to think critically and apply what they have learned to solve real-world issues.

The participants further said that the curriculum places little to no emphasis on some vital practical life skills, such as communication, digital literacy, vocational training, and financial literacy. As a result, after graduation, students without life skills often struggle to join the workforce or cope with everyday challenges. They are unprepared for employment, entrepreneurship, and higher studies.

The participants agreed that The outdated curriculum negatively impacts the educational quality in government schools, leading to poor academic performance, high dropout rates, and unequal opportunities. Students from underprivileged backgrounds are most adversely impacted, as they depend on government institutions as their sole source of formal education.

Ineffective School Supervision and Monitoring

Most of Participants mentioned that Pakistan's school inspection model is colonial. The British inspection system in Pakistan is unable to work successfully due to inconsistent government policies, lack of resources, law and order situation, and weak administration.

They also mentioned that school inspection and supervision system in Balochistan is inefficient as the supervisory staff lacks the necessary training and ability to monitor schools effectively. They rarely visit educational institutions. Under these circumstances, activities in schools are not monitored regularly, which results in the poor performance of the education system.

Most of participants said that ineffective supervision and monitoring affects quality education in several critical ways. Firstly, poor monitoring leads to teacher absenteeism which is one of the serious problems in remote areas in the province. When district education officials fail to monitor schools regularly, many teachers in remote areas remain absent from schools which deprives students of consistent learning and understanding of some core subjects like Mathematics, Science and English.

Secondly, inadequate monitoring results in little or no accountability of poor teaching practices. When classrooms are not monitored regularly, most teachers continue using outdated lecture based approached instead of interactive student-centered teaching. Moreover, without effective monitoring mechanism, students' assessment and attendance records are often neglected or manipulated which provides inaccurate data about school performance, making it difficult for policy makers to identify problem areas and allocate resources effectively. In turn, intervention from high-ups remain misdirected or delayed, and systematic issues continue to grow.

Lack of Infrastructural Facilities

Participants stated that one of the most significant challenges to quality education in Balochistan is the lack of infrastructural facilities in educational institutions. It has a significant impact on both educational access and learning environments. A substantial number of schools in the province function in temporary, damaged, or even open-air environments, making it difficult for children to concentrate on learning, particularly in extreme weather conditions such as extreme heat and cold. The participants also noted that many schools lack basic facilities such as electricity, clean drinking water, and functional toilets, particularly for girls. This has a direct impact on students' capacity to study and attendance, leading to absenteeism and, in some cases, dropout.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the dismal condition of education in educational institutions accross Balochistan. The findings of the clearly reveal that education system in Balochistan faces structural, administrative, and pedagogical challenges. The main challenges include underqualified teachers lacking the professional competence to deliver lectures effectively, an ineffective and inadequate school monitoring and supervision system that fails to ensure accountability and performance, and widespread teacher absenteeism that disrupts the continuity of effective instruction.

Furthermore, the use of an outdated curriculum that lacks essential knowledge to meet global demands, along with a flawed examination system that has failed to evaluate students' true competence, substantially impacts students' academic success. These issues, coupled with a lack of physical facilities such as classrooms, electricity, and clean drinking water, further impact student attendance and instructor engagement.

These interrelated problems present a serious challenge to quality education; without immediate and focused reforms, the goal of providing quality education in government schools across Balochistan will not be accomplished. Strong political will, funding for teacher training programs and infrastructure, curriculum reforms, and efficient accountability mechanisms are needed to solve these issues. We can only change the educational landscape of Balochistan to satisfy the needs of the modern world by implementing such focused and consistent efforts.

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