

Role of District Education Officials in Quality Education in Nanguan and Shikarpur Districts: A Comparative Study Between China and Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to understand the role of district educational official(s) in bringing *quality in education* in schools at district level with respect to the educational objectives at ministry of education level, provincial education department level and at local district level. Two districts; Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) are studied and compared with each other because of the convenience for researcher and good friendship between these two countries. This is comparative study, which adopts descriptive type of research, and qualitative research design. Semi-structured interview and observation report; are used as research tools for data collection. Purposive sampling type is adopted as to make this study possible to complete and having strong relationship of district educational officials' interventions with quality in education in variety of schools. District educational official(s) and four schools (primary, junior secondary, countryside and city) in each district are visited. Results of the study show that district educational officials of both districts are aware about the educational objectives at these three levels of educational administration. They perceive quality in education differently with respect to their local and contextual environment. Arranging different trainings for school heads and teachers and calling meetings are the only two similar interventions among these two district educational officials that they take to achieve *quality in education*; rest interventions are totally different. There seems more implication of the interventions of the Nanguan district education bureau official in the schools than the implication of the interventions of Shikarpur district educational officials in schools; as to achieve their *perceived quality in education* in their respective districts.

Definition of key terms:

District Education Officials: The head of all public educational affairs in a district; position title may vary in each district.

Quality in Education: How district education official perceive quality in education? It is perceived quality in education by district education official.

Nanguan: It is a district in Jilin province; north of China.

Shikarpur: It is district in north of Sindh province, Pakistan.

主题: 区域教育行政人员在教学质量中的作用: 中国南关区和巴基斯坦希卡布尔县情况的对比研究

摘要: 本研究旨在了解区域内教育行政人员对中央、省级及地方各级教育部门设定的教育目标的理解以及这些人员在促进区域学校教学质量中所发挥的作用。研究者利用自身便利条件并考虑到中巴两国的友好关系, 选取了南关区(中国)和希卡布尔县(巴基斯坦)进行情况对比研究。本研究采用描述性和质性研究设计, 以半结构式访谈和观察形式进行数据收集。为确保本研究的可行性, 证明区域教育行政人员的干预度与学校教育质量之间存在密切关系, 本研究主要采用目的抽样, 对两个区县的教育行政人员进行访谈并对两区域内的四所学校(含小学、初中、农村学校和城市学校)进行参观。研究发现, 这两个地区的教育行政人员对三级教育行政部门所设定的教育目标均有所了解, 但由于两地区各方面环境的差异, 这些行政人员对教学质量的理解决却不尽相同。为达到教学质量, 这两个地区教育行政人员均安排校长和教师参加不同的培训、会议, 这是两地区采取的唯一相似的干预措施, 其余干预措施则完全不同。在实现各地区的教学质量方面, 南关区教育行政人员对学校的干预似乎比希卡布尔教育行政人员对学校的干预更加含蓄。

1. Introduction

The most district officials try to balance and follow the centralized expectations, accountability, and resource management with flexibility of school needs and support school personnel to adapt with district goals and plans to the circumstances of their schools with appropriately individualized district support (Fullan et al. 2004; Hightower et al. 2002). During a pilot investigation about the links between educational leadership and the quality of teaching and learning in schools at district level, draw the attention to the fact that district education officials often talked about district- wide programs and initiatives affecting all schools, and also about the roles

and interventions that focused on supporting improvements in schools. This study explores “how district officials strive hard to accomplish the needs of schools and balance the centralized expectations, objectives and policies with the *quality in education* at district level; by studying two districts; one from China and other from Pakistan as the ties between these countries are hot these days and also these countries share many things with each other. Such area of study is rarely explored and studied in practice, which is in part; the motivation for researcher to explore the role and perception of district educational officials in quality education. The role of district educational officials in quality education at district level is the key component of the study that is how districts balance objectives of education at different levels and quality in education at local level? RJ (Nico) Botha, (2007).

1.1 Background

Normally; in public education setup, government policies at local district level ensure that right decisions must be taken and the resources to support the delivery of education services in schools need to be provided equally across the region(s) (e.g., periodic and school specific budget, School Management Committee Fund, Development Fund and Recurrence expenditures, Students’ Stipend, Endowment Fund) as per the need of schools like pupil/teacher ratio, facilities, teacher salaries, textbooks and other resources. On other hand, there are also provisions that exist to allow the differential decisions and allocation of resources by district educational officials.

Historically, schools at districts level are managed and controlled by the different educational officials at district level depending on the level and type of schools like (e.g, District Officer Primary, District Officer Elementary, District Officer Secondary Higher Secondary, District Officer for primary, elementary/Junior Secondary/Senior and Higher Secondary/Senior High schools) and in compliance with legislated categorical differences in students served and programs offered by particular schools (e.g., Male, Female Schools, instruction language, vocational and special education schools and programs).

The rationale for taking decisions that meet the needs of learners and schools in best way, must be ensured as right and equivalent to all the schools, with centered commitments by ensuring all the students and schools have equal opportunity to quality education.

Due to the international commitments like “No Child Left Behind” Sustainable Development Goals; Goal 4 for quality education, Vision 2030 of Pakistan, Education reforms in China, Increasing pressure of adopting western culture and English language teachings in School in China, issues of the education of migrant workers in China and many more have pushed the state governments and local district authorities at local district level to *do more* and now they are expected to improve their performance that could contribute to improve the schools, performance and student learning outcomes as per the prescribed government educational objectives and policies of education at district level.

1.1.1 Pak-China Education and Research Exchange (EDUCATION CORRIDOR)

China–Pakistan relations began in 1950, since then bilateral, diplomatic, strategic, military relationships become stronger day by day, but since last one decade the economic and educational relationships have increased at fast pace. Till this moment there has been more than 100 billion U.S dollar foreign direct investment in Pakistan in different developmental projects; and Pakistan has been the strong ally and largest import market of many Chinese products from electronics to military weapons and heavy machinery. China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is one of those projects with an investment of 46 billion US\$; this project will connect the Western China to the Middle east and African countries and will prove to be the main path to reduce the freight cost of oil from middle east to China through Gawadar deep sea port in Pakistan and simultaneously it will develop the western parts of China and Pakistan’s economy as well. Except these relationships the Pak-China education exchange and research relationship has also grown up. As two of the top scholarly minds in Pakistan and China agree that the two countries must promote faculty and student exchange programs as well as joint research projects to learn from each other’s experiences. The idea was stressed upon in a meeting between China Association of Higher Education (CAHE) President Du Yubo and Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed.

Pakistan and China have agreed to intensify the cooperation in the education sector and promote the university-to-university linkages and academic interaction.

The ambassador Masood Khalid highlighted that the cultural and educational corridors complement – the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) – is a flagship project of Belt and Road Initiative. CPEC Universities Consortium is established between both countries. Pakistan’s ambassador attended the China Higher Education Expo, the 2nd Annual Conference of the CPEC Universities Consortium in Zhejiang University and the Inaugural Meeting of the Belt and Road Research Center of CAHE in Yunnan University.

National University of Modern Languages (NUML) and Xinjian Universities have also signed MoU to cooperate with each other in the filed of research and experts exchange between two countries.

Sindh-Hainan universities cooperation between Sindh Madarassatul Islam University (SMIU) and four

universities in Hainan, China is also announced formally.

Collaboration between the universities of Sindh and Chinese province of Hainan is a ‘healthy departure’ by Pakistan from the old policy of looking towards educational institutions in Europe and United States, and that ‘**education corridor**’ would play a role in forging unity among the nations in Asia.

Sukkur IBA University and Huazhong University of Science and Technology also had such agreements in past for the exchange of expats. And there are also many other academic and research exchanges that have been made time by time between the institutes of China and Pakistan.

Vice chancellors of 13 universities from Sindh province of Pakistan have taken took part in a conference held in Hainan with Chinese delegates from four universities of Hainan and strengthen the relationship further. Acting consul general of the Chinese mission in Karachi, Pakistan Mu Yong Ceng, hopes that the education corridor would open up new avenues in the field of education between both countries. Prof Lu Dan, president of Sanya University, says cooperation between the two countries in the field of education was the only way to gain prosperity for which he gave example of China’s development that it achieved in one-third time compared to what other nations took.

A Confucius institutes have also been established in the University of Karachi, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) and the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan. Across the border in China, Pakistan Study Centres had been established in four of its universities.

Basic Education Stats Comparison Between China and Pakistan

S.No.	STAT	China	Pakistan
1	Adult literacy rate	93.7	53.7
		Ranked 42nd. 74% more than Pakistan	Ranked 103th.
2	Average years of schooling of adults	6.4	3.9
		Ranked 45th. 64% more than Pakistan	Ranked 75th.
3	Children out of school, primary	17.45 million	5.37 million
		Ranked 1st. 3 times more than Pakistan	Ranked 1st.
4	Children out of school, primary per 1000	14.19	29.98
		Ranked 21st.	Ranked 13th. 2 times more than China
5	Children out of school, primary, female	8.48 million	3.05 million
		Ranked 1st. 3 times more than Pakistan	Ranked 1st.
6	College and university (Gender parity index)	1.13	0.908
		Ranked 50th. 24% more than Pakistan	Ranked 63th.
7	Compulsory education duration	9	5
		Ranked 60th. 80% more than Pakistan	Ranked 107th.
8	Government spending on education (Proportion of GDP)	1.91%	2.17%
		Ranked 115th.	Ranked 20th. 14% more than China
9	High school enrolment rate	95.14	72.56
		Ranked 49th. 31% more than Pakistan	Ranked 79th.
10	Literacy (Total population)	91.6%	49.9%
		Ranked 2nd. 84% more than Pakistan	Ranked 10th.
11	Primary education, duration (Years)	5	5
		Ranked 154th. The same as Pakistan	Ranked 164th.
12	Primary education, teachers per 1000	4.42	2.45
		Ranked 71st. 81% more than Pakistan	Ranked 71st.
13	Pupil-teacher ratio, primary	16.79	41.35
		Ranked 80th.	Ranked 19th. 2 times more than China
14	Pupil-teacher ratio, secondary	15.15	41.86
		Ranked 48th.	Ranked 2nd. 3 times more than China
15	Secondary education, duration (Years)	6	7
		Ranked 104th.	Ranked 56th. 17% more than China

SOURCE: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics.

1.2 Statement of Purpose

Contemporary district officials' practices and policies have shifted the scenario of educational leadership from expected leadership to differentiated leadership to ensure quality in education at district level. There is severe shortage of professional educational officials as leaders who can contribute in quality education and could improve the existing scenario of education at district level. Traditional policy makers at the provincial or high level are unaware about the administrative needs of the educational officials and school heads have limited authority inside the school that they are unable to contribute in quality education at district level and it takes time for divisional, provincial or high level officials to respond the issues and deal with the problems that raise at district level. Recognizing the fact, many countries around the globe are paying special attention towards the educational leadership at root level, which includes school heads (school leadership) and district educational officials (District Education Leadership). In contrast to China, the most educational officials in Pakistan at district educational administrative positions like District Education Officer (DEO) or Executive District Officers (EDOs) are appointed from amongst the teacher cadre (school or college side) who lack proper understanding and importance of their role along this they also lack the leadership skills and abilities and educational management expertise. This study describes the situation in scientific way.

1.3 Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study is to know the awareness level of educational officials about the educational objectives at district and provincial level and to know the perception of district educational officials about quality education and what they have done towards achieving their perceived quality of education and verifying those interventions at school level that district educational officials have taken to achieve their perceived quality of education at district level schools.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. Knowing the awareness level of district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) about the educational objectives at district, and provincial level
2. Knowing the perception of district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) about the quality in education.
3. Identifying the most important interventions that district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) have taken to achieve their perceived quality in education.
4. Verifying the interventions of district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) in schools.

1.5 Research Questions

1. Are district education officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) aware about the educational objectives at district and provincial level?
2. What is the perception of district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) about the quality in education?
3. What are the most important interventions that district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) have taken to achieve their perceived quality in education?
4. What are the implications of the interventions of district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) in schools?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study helps to understand the differences and similarities in the decisions of district educational officials of China and Pakistan and helps them to improve their practices. This study is first of its kind that is conducted at ground root level of educational administration of China and Pakistan comparatively. This study is the good contribution in the contemporary discourse of Pak-China relationship so called Pak-China Friendship. And this is a valuable contribution in the literature review of educational leadership and management in Asia. The Results of the study are useful for learning good practices of both districts (Nanguan and Shikarpur) The Results of the study may improve monitoring system at District Educational Management level. The study helps teacher training institutions in improving existing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs designed for prospect educational officials. And this would help in bringing positive change in quality education at ground root level.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Defining Quality in Education

What does the quality education mean? Many definitions of quality in education exist, explaining the complexity and multifaceted nature of the concept. The terms *efficiency*, *effectiveness*, *equity* and *quality* have often been

used synonymously (Adams, 1993). 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;

Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace.

Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.

Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

This definition propels us to understand the quality education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. (UNICEF, Italy, 2000)

2.2 How Quality Education is related with the District Educational Officials

The district education officials (DEOs); as middle level managers in the education system, education officers play an increasingly important role in executing government's education policies. In doing so they interpret, priorities, implement, monitor, supervise and evaluate the respective policies, programmes and projects. They also provide feedback from policy users to policy makers so that any shortcomings can be addressed. It can be said, that DEOs perform a 'cushioning' role between policy-makers and policy-users. But do the DEOs in reality have any impact on school heads, teachers, learners and parents? This is a critical question that needs exploration. Barr and Dreeben remind us that "education would be a strange organization indeed, if superintendents had no impact upon principals...". Similarly, Pfeffer explains that leaders at the higher organizational levels should have greater impact on the quality of education because, being in a centralized setup, they have more exposure to educational innovations and have more discretion in decisions and activities.

It is likely that such involvement will create a more balanced system of both centralized and decentralized control of education. With this new image of DEOs and the emerging trends of school-site management and teacher leadership and professionalism, the promotion of quality education becomes the responsibility of everyone rather than that of school level personnel only. For this to happen, it is necessary for those taking up the job of DEOs to be successful instructional leaders and facilitators. This is because they can be influential in the development of goals at various levels in the education system, the selection and supervision of school heads and teachers and the establishment of school, district and nation-wide instruction and curriculum plans. With instructional leadership experience, they can contribute enormously to creating many of the organizational conditions for quality education.

The present leadership role of DEOs is clearly focused on power relationships, generally in terms of a top-down model of power relationships, rooted in the notions of classical bureaucracy (Abbot and Caracheo 1988). Reform literature has, however, focused on the notions of participatory management or power from the bottom rather than the top (Pfeffer, 1981). Although educational management in developed countries highlighted the need for such enlightened practices, no serious attempts have been made to adopt them in Asia. The few school systems that attempted such changes did not ultimately succeed. A good example of this is the school-based curriculum development initiative in the United Kingdom. Moves are now being made there to return to a national curriculum with a tight regulatory framework to monitor its delivery (Lofthouse 1994).

In a traditional sense, schools have been primarily the organizations for formal learning. Writers such as Fullan (1993, 1995) and Velayutham (1996) see educational institutions as learning organizations. According to them such organizations can cultivate the desired and concerted action to learn from their own past and present actions and experiences with new ways of learning, management and improved quality in education.

Educational Officials have a significant role to play in this direction. And to perform such responsibilities successfully, their leadership qualities and their approaches will have to be transformational in character. In this regard, DEOs may find the following suggestions of Fullan (1993) beneficial: (a) push for change but allow self-learning to unfold; (b) take work as a journey rather than a destination; (c) see problems as friends and as sources of creative resolution; (d) involve all concerned in vision building; (e) value both individualism and collectivism; and (f) recognize every person as a useful member of the team. Clearly the emphasis in Fullan's suggestions is on 'staff development' and we also believe that this is the primary responsibility of DEOs.

In brief, then, the new role of EOs that we are advocating has to be characterized by strong leadership rather than following a well-written duty statement. Recent literature reviews on the role of district education officials in quality education through schools' improvement (e.g., Datnow et al. 2006; Marsh 2002; McLaughlin and Talbert 2002) and case studies (e.g., Cawelti and Protheroe 2001; Elmore and Burney 1997; Hightower et al.

2002; Snipes et al. 2002; Zavadsky 2009) reflect on the idea to support the schools at the district level. The phenomenon of district role in improving quality education is rarely addressed analytically and comparatively because of the explicit dimension or issue of district-school relationship. Case studies of district improvement reveal, however, that this is common in districts to deal with multiple schools in each area with variability in student characteristics and localities. Literature review highlights various themes in how the role of district educational officials is related in improving quality education in schools.

Recent studies show that district administrators often speak in negative terms about prior decentralization strategies for school improvement (e.g., infrastructure development, capacity building of teachers and school heads, funding, reform model or comprehensive schools). They refer us to diminished coherence in schools' goals and programs, and the difficulties that present students' and teachers' performance in the school, and for the schools the district educational officials' capacity to provide effective direction and support for quality improvement across the schools is affected by these objectives and policies from top hierarchy at divisional and provincial level. **(Cawelti and Protheroe 2001).**

Current stories of district-wide education quality improvement often tell the tales of increasingly controlled school system goals, curriculum, and expectations from teaching, leadership, and student performance. On the other hand, a small but notifying number of schools (e.g., Philadelphia, New York City, Chicago) have embarked upon a highly decentralized diverse provider approach to district educational governance, that presents an alternative perspective on systemic decentralization of those districts that remain outliers among the vast majority of school districts across the United States. **(Boyd et al. 2008).**

The analytical framework for this study systematically applies this taxonomy of relationships between district educational officials and quality improvement in schools that right approaches so called the right decisions will lead us for improved quality in education at district level as the basic unit of provincial and country's educational administration.

2.3 District Education Management in Jilin, China

Ministry of Education of PRC is the supreme education administration body in China, which is responsible for carrying out related laws, regulations, guidelines and policies of the central government; planning development of education sector; integrating and coordinating educational initiatives and programs nationwide; maneuvering and guiding education reform countrywide.

Afterwards provinces and independent regions are the responsible for the education matters of the province or region. In Jilin province the Jilin Department of Education is responsible for the matter of education in the province. It performs the following functions mainly:

Jilin provincial department of education has different divisions and wings at different levels of its administration to perform different functions.

At district level it has the District education bureau with the Elementary Education Division I and II. And Education Supervision Office for formulating regulations for local education supervision and supervision index system, guiding the provincial educational supervision; organizing the supervision assessment and acceptance inspection on eliminating illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults of secondary and below secondary education; publishing the educational supervision report of provincial government; carrying out the provincial elementary education development level and quality monitoring; undertaking the daily work of provincial government education supervision group. The office at district level is called district education bureau and it do not have staff more than 5 people; specially talking about Nanguan District. I could see the head of whole education affairs in district and assistant official.

2.4 District Education Management in Sindh, Pakistan

According to the constitution of Pakistan; Article 25-A, "the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of age 5-16 years; in such manner as may be determined by the law." Further in response of the 18th amendment in said constitution in 2005-2006, in the response of said article, the education has been matter of provincial governments of Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Now the each province/administratively independent area is responsible for its education matters like as China. Education and Literacy Department Government of Sindh is responsible for the matter of education in Sindh province. As the minister of education (elected) is at top of its hierarchy followed by Secretary Education as the top bureaucratic official. Additional and Special Secretaries, Then Divisional Heads follow this hierarchy for different types of education and at different levels, which later are followed by District Education Officials or District Executive Officer (DEO). These DEOs are categorized by DEO primary schools, DEO Elementary and High/Higher Schools. And there are also few other officials like District Officer (DO) information, DO planning and development, and so on.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

2.5.1 Theory of Change

Theory of Change (ToC) is a specific type of methodology for planning, participation, and evaluation that is used in the not-for-profit and government sectors to promote social change. Theory of Change emerged in the 1990s at the Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change as a means to model and evaluate comprehensive initiatives for education quality.

This theory is related with the study in the way it talks about the evaluation and initiatives of the government personnel for quality of education and for change. And this is the main theory of the Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) Model that is used in this study.

2.5.2 Transformational Leadership

Bernard M. Bass (1985) introduced the term “transformational” in place of “transforming.” Bass added to the initial concepts of Burns (1978) to help explain how transformational leadership could be measured, as well as how it impacts follower motivation and performance. It states, that “*a leader works with subordinates to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group.*”

This theory related with the sharing of vision, mission, objectives, ideas, opportunities, authority, and resources from top to bottom of hierarchy as to achieve the better results. In this study it the district educational official is at the top of district education hierarchy so he has normal communication with the heads of the schools; likewise he transfers his vision, mission, objectives, ideas, opportunities, authority, and resources to the school heads as to improve the quality education in schools in his district.

2.5.3 Instructional Leadership Theory

This theory is generally defined as “the management of curriculum and instruction by a school heads”. This term appeared as a result of research associated with the school improvement movement of the 1980s. **Hallinger and Murphy’s (1985)** conceptual model has been most widely used in empirical studies of instructional leadership. The authors proposed the key role of instructional leaders in three dimensions: 1) Defining the school mission, 2) Managing the instructional program, and 3) Promoting a positive school-learning climate.

This theory relates with the instructions of the school heads with teachers and schools staff. As he/she get the transformative vision, mission, objectives, ideas, opportunities, authority, and resources from the district educational official; afterwards that are instructed to the teachers and school staff for better performance of the schools.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

As its common phenomenon that all decisions are made at top level of the administration and they flow from top to bottom. District Education official is the key player in implementing those decisions, which he or she receives from the provincial, and divisional head. The decisions of district educational official are critical towards the quality in education at district level. Because there is a lot of pressure of expectations of the school heads, teachers and school community from the district educational official and meeting those expectations within the given policies and procedures and the directions from the divisional and provincial authorities and within limited resources and authority, it is challenging for the district education official to take such a decision that can meet all these conditions and above all the objective of *quality improvement* could also be achieved. So the district education official is the key person at the district level educational administration and his/her decisions are critical to the quality of education in the district. As it is shown in the Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Model.

2.7 Analytical Framework

On the basis of conceptual framework; I assume that quality in education at district level is dependent of the decisions of district education officials; having the direct and positive relationship between decisions and educational quality; right decisions taken by district educational officials will improve the quality and wrong decision taken by district educational officials will affect the quality in education negatively. As the Figure 2: Analytical Framework Graph shows below.

2.8 PELP: Public Education Leadership Project

In 2003, Harvard Business School (HBS) and Harvard Graduate School of Education

(HGSE) launched the Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) in order to improve the management and leadership competencies of public school leaders to drive greater education outcomes and educate all children to their optimum potential.

During the past ten years, PELP developed new integrated managerial knowledge and strengthened the leadership capacity of nearly 500 leaders from 22 participating urban school districts. However, the public education sector is at an important inflection point and districts are operating in an increasingly complex ecosystem.

This framework is derived from the experiences of school-district relationships with large-scale improvements. The design of this framework is built on the SINGLE improvement strategy across function, programs and schools.

This framework allows specific responses of district education officials towards the issues of schools.

This is a nested model, which works at classroom, school and at system level simultaneously, as shown in Figure 3: PELP: Public Education Leadership Project Model

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Type and Design

This is descriptive type of research, which incorporates the qualitative research design.

3.2 Areas of Study

The conceptual area of this whole study is based on the Educational Leadership and Management, in other words we can also use Educational Administration as a term, which is mostly used and considered in China at the place of Educational Leadership and Management. The geographical area of the study is the Nanguan district and district Shikarpur. Nanguan district is situated at 43°51'26"N 125°20'12"E on world map and in the Northeast of China. **Nanguan District** (simplified Chinese: 南关区; traditional Chinese: 南關區; pinyin: *Nānguān qū*) is one of six districts of Changchun, the sub-provincial or capital of Jilin province, People's Republic of China, and forms part of the urban core, which has twelve sub districts, three towns, and two townships for its administration.

Shikarpur district is a district in the Sindh province of Pakistan., which coordinates at 43°51'26"N 125°20'12"E on world map and is in North of Sindh province and around 8 hours drive from the largest city of Pakistan; the Karachi. The city of Shikarpur is the District, there are four (04) Sub-Divisions, locally called (Taluka) Lakhi Ghulam Shah, Garhi Yasin, Khanpur and Shikarpur itself.

3.3 Sample, Sampling and Sample Size

Purposive Sampling of the two districts, one from North of China and second from North of Sindh province, Pakistan and four schools in each district, total eight schools were visited.

3.4 Data Collection Tools

Semi-structured interview and Observation tools are used in this study. Semi structured interviews are conducted from the district education officials and school heads separately. There are separate interview sheets for district education officials and school heads. Further; these sheets are categorized on the basis of Primary schools and Junior/High Schools. School Observation Report includes the aspects of infrastructure facilities in school, classroom teaching observation and discussion with students.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The semi-structured interviews were started from district education officials then their responses were incorporated in the semi-structured interviews of school heads. To verify the interventions of district educational officials; the school heads were interviewed about the interventions of district education officials that they have taken to improve the quality in education at district level. And afterwards the school observations were conducted about specified interventions of district education officials to see the outputs of those interventions. Researcher and team conducted field visits. There is no funding source of this study. The data collection expenses of this study are born by researcher.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data is analyzed on the basis of research objectives and research questions. The base for the analysis of the study is the PELP Framework, which is based on two core strategic principles—integration and differentiation (effectiveness and efficiency ‘taking right decisions rightly’) —and how their interaction relates to each other’s support.

The developers of the PELP framework suggest that district leaders can achieve greater coherence through four integrating mechanisms: common policies that apply district-wide, accountability systems, strategic operating functions, and organizational learning strategies and activities.

3.7 Limitations

The finding of the study may not be generalized for whole China and whole Pakistan.

3.8 Delimitations

The findings may vary with respect to other district or region in China and Pakistan, the weather, language and

culture barriers may be considered and ignored in the study.

4. Results

Nanguan district education bureau head is well aware about the educational objectives at all 3 levels of educational management. That are at; Ministry of Education, Jilin province Department of Education, Nanguan District Education Bureau.

“Quality in education especially running a school is based on the original concept of to improve overall development. And quality lies with the development of students’ personality and promotion of students’ academic and moral outcomes and teachers’ professional growth.”

The most important interventions that district educational official of Nanguan district (China) has taken to achieve his perceived quality in education

Intervention 1

“Special attention is paid to the professional growth of school heads, school staff and teachers especially to improve their teaching and leadership skills. Attention is also given to improve the research capability of teachers through training activities in the district.”

Intervention 2

“Continuous Professional Development is carried out in schools and the schools heads are called periodically to share their problems with the district bureau office regarding the improvement in teaching and learning outcomes of the students. Recently; we have launched the Ecological Classroom Research Program to improve the quality of teaching in district.”

The implications of the interventions of district educational official of Nanguan district in primary, junior secondary, countryside and in city schools

Countryside Primary School

School head is aware about the interventions of Nanguan District Educational Official and, He states the implication of these two interventions of Nanguan district education official as below.

Implication of First Intervention in Countryside Best Primary School

“We are encouraged to carry-out school-based research from the perspective of teachers’ theoretical learning, improving teaching abilities, and broaden the horizons of education at same time. Our district educational official gives us opportunities to share our problems with him. Small subject based researches and other activities have improved the teaching and comprehension abilities of teachers greatly.”

Implication of Second Intervention in Countryside Primary School

“An experimental study of ecological classroom in Nanguan is being experimented here in out school. Our school has made a joint exploration of teaching and research relying on the small classes, and step-by-step implementation to create ecological classroom as to improve the quality of teaching. Other schools in Nanguan district have also joined this intervention of constructing ecological classrooms, which is a good initiative to achieve quality education in our district. Our students are also given opportunity to visit the different places in the district as to learn more. And our district is paid especial attention for the continuous improvements of the schools”

Countryside Junior Secondary School

Implication of First Intervention in Countryside Best Junior Secondary School

“I as school head; have been called to attend the variety of training sessions which were organized by district education bureau each semester. Getting along with experts, periodic visits of district educational official and effective communication and coordination among schools and district education bureau have harvested well for me professionally and for better quality of education school as well.”

Implication of Second Intervention in Countryside Junior Secondary School

“The research has been carried out in our school and in other schools of the Nanguan district. Many teaches from my school have joined the Ecological classroom research team for different subjects. Teaches in my school have developed a deeper understanding of the ecological classroom intervention by district education bureau office.”

Primary School in Changchun City, Nanguan District

Implication of First Intervention in Primary School (City)

“Nanguan district education official has given great importance to the research and teaching capabilities of the school heads and teachers. In addition to this, different activities have also been organized outside of the district for school heads and for teachers. In past two years; I went to East China Normal University; Shanghai, a university in Yatai state, and other places for the capacity building trainings, these trainings have affected my remarkably that I have transmitted all my knowledge and experiences to the teachers and I feel improved teaching and learning process in my school.”

Implication of Second Intervention in Primary School (City)

“ The study on the ecological classroom has been carried out in Nanguan district since last few years. This has

become now a regional research intervention. A series of ecological classroom research activities have been carried out. Recently a ecological classroom city-area meeting, the promotion meeting, the exhibition and a seminar are carried out. In November; this year, the district bureau office held the award distribution ceremony for those school heads and teachers who performed well the ecological classroom intervention in the district.”

Implication of First intervention in Junior Secondary School (City)

“1. Participated in the famous principal studies of Gao Haiyan, and under her leadership I studied the school management practices seriously. 2. Nanguan district bureau organized the training for curriculum reform and teaching quality improvement with the collaboration of jilin provincial government; and I have also attended that. 3. I have participated in the training of teaching guidance and experiencing the teaching at school, which was also organized by the Nanguaan district education bureau. 4. Nanguan district education bureau have also organized a program for the evaluation of principals’ performance and principals’ narrative research capabilities.”

Implication of Second intervention in Junior Secondary School (City)

“Since the implementation of the practical research on regional ecological classroom intervention in Nanguan district in early 2013, the school has combined its own developmental needs, and we have carried out the research on efficient classroom teaching model which is based on the ecological classroom intervention. The grounding ideology of ‘learning before teaching, teaching less and thinking more, combining thinking with happy learning of students’ is inferred. The four key objectives of ‘independent learning, improvement by questioning, mutual assistance in groups and transfer, expansion of classroom teaching ability’ are formulated. The six-steps classroom-teaching model (Study-guide-research-exercise-extension-theory) is constructed. Students have changed their role from being listeners to being hosts of the classroom. We have made different spaces for initiatives to improve the teaching quality like the teacher space at the back of stage, students space, electronic schoolbag initiative, micro lesson initiative, video lectures and so on are implemented in teaching practices. Biology curriculum has also been developed. There is marked change in the students’ status. The interest of independent learning, motivation for students’ thinking has become our trend in the school.

Shikarpur District (Pakistan)

Awareness of the educational objectives at Provincial, District and Sub-District levels by District Education Official (Primary Schools)

He is aware about the objectives of education at provincial, district and sub-district (Taluka) levels.

The perception of district educational official (Primary Schools), Shikarpur District (Pakistan) about quality in education:

“If there is no involvement of the unions of teaches and the politics in education and its administration then I am confident that we have more quality of education than private schools in the district”

The most important interventions that district educational official of (Primary Schools) District Shikarpur (Pakistan) has taken to achieve his perceived quality in education

Intervention 1

“I have arranged different trainings for the teachers in the district.”

Intervention 2

“I have worked on to ensure the punctuality of teachers in the schools of my district.”

Implication of First Intervention of District Educational Official in Government Primary Schools in District Shikarpur (Pakistan)

“Yes; different trainings have been organized time by time but by the provincial government for school heads and for primary school teachers but the nomination of the school heads and teachers that is mostly done by the provincial office; is not on need based. Its on opportunity based. There are many school heads and teachers who have attended same training previously but again they are nominated. And there are also school heads and teachers, which need the capacity building and other trainings, but they are not nominated. So I guess that there is lack of coordination an awareness about ground realities between the schools-districts-and provincial education offices.”

Implication of Second Intervention of District Educational Official in Government Primary Schools in District Shikarpur (Pakistan)

“Since the implementation of Biometric Attendance system for school heads and for teachers in the Sindh province; Yes the punctuality and regularity of school staff has improved but there are also sever issues of this Biometric attendance system in the schools. First and the most important is that the back support and database of this biometric system lacks the technical staff and up gradation and support. For example: if any of teacher or other staff is transferred from one school to other school; then his or her salary is not released for on time because there is no body at back of thee system and no coordination between the educational administration section and the Information Technology section of the education department of Sindh province. So the teachers and other school staff suffer this.”

District Education Official (Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools)

Awareness about educational objectives at provincial, district and sub-district (Taluka) level. He is also aware about the objectives of education at provincial, district and sub-district (Taluka) levels. Perceived Quality in Education by District Education Official (Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools): *“I perceive quality in education as; it is the improvement in the academic performance of the students and having the trust of parents, children, and teachers in public education system. And quality in education also means the increase in the enrollment of students in schools in district”*

Interventions taken DEO (Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools) District Shikarpur (Pakistan):

Intervention 1

“I have started the enrollment campaign in the district to raise the awareness of the parents and community to enroll their students in the government schools instead of enrolling them in private schools.”

Intervention 2

“I have called the School Management Committee’s (SMC) meetings several times to address the issues of the schools and to improve the quality of education in district schools.”

Implication of First Intervention of District Educational Official in Government Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools in District Shikarpur (Pakistan)

“Yes, we are aware about the enrollment raising campaign, but actually this is not the intervention that district educational official (Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools) district Shikarpur has taken. In fact its an initiative of international funding bodies like world bank and UNICEF, who have funded government of Sindh province to raise the enrollment because in Sindh province still more than two million children are out of school. So in response of this foreign push, Education and Literacy Department Government of Sindh issued orders the divisional and district educational officials to start the campaigns at local level in schools as to raise the enrollment of children in the government schools instead of going to private schools. So district educational official (Secondary and Higher Secondary) like-wise other districts’ officials did not took this initiative at his own, But YES he is part of this initiative. In regard of this; the teachers have visited communities nearby school many times.”

Implication of Second Intervention of District Educational Official in Government Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools in District Shikarpur (Pakistan)

“NO such interventions or decisions have been taken by district education official (Secondary and Higher Secondary) district Shikarpur recently. Because these days the final examinations of Secondary and Higher Secondary Classes are in progress.”

5. Discussions And Conclusion

The district educational officials of Nanguan district (China) and Shikarpur district (Pakistan) are aware about the educational objectives of Ministry of Education; China, Jilin provincial department of education and Nanguan bureau of education, educational objectives of Education & Literacy Department Government of Sindh, District education office Shikarpur and Sub-district education offices at Shikarpur; respectively.

The perception of Nanguan district educational official about *quality in education* is that “running a school in well manner and ensuring the development of students’ personality and promotion of students’ academic and moral outcomes and teachers’ professional growth is quality in education”.

Shikarpur district education official (Primary Schools) perceives *quality in education* “if there is no involvement of the teacher unions and the politics in educational administration then we have better quality than private schools in the district”. And district educational official (Secondary & Higher Secondary Schools) perceives *quality in education*, as “it is the improvement in the academic performance of the students and having the trust of parents, children, and teachers in public education system, and the increase in the enrollment of students in schools in district”.

One intervention of Nanguan district education official to achieve his perceived quality is: to improve the professional growth of school heads, teachers and school staff especially to improve their teaching and leadership skills, and attention is also given to improve the research capability of teachers. And the second intervention of Nanguan district education official is: the Continuous Professional Development and the launch of the Ecological Classroom Research Program to improve the quality of teaching in district.

Arrangement of different trainings for the teachers in the district and ensuring punctuality of teachers in schools; are the two interventions of Shikarpur district educational official (Primary Schools) to achieve his perceived *quality in education* in the district. Starting the enrollment campaign in the district to raise the awareness of the parents and community to enroll their students in the government schools instead of enrolling them in private schools, and calling upon the School Management Committee’s (SMC) meetings several times to address the issues of the schools; are the two interventions of district education official (Secondary & Higher Secondary Schools) to achieve his perceived quality in education.

Encouraged school heads to carry-out school-based research, launch of ecological classroom initiative in Nanguan, provision of capacity building trainings for schools heads and teachers, outside district visits for

students, improving the research and teaching capabilities of the school heads and teachers, award distribution for those school heads and teachers who performed well in the ecological classroom intervention in the district, adoption of the six-steps classroom-teaching model (Study-guide-research-exercise-extension-theory), up-gradation of Biology curriculum, usage of technologies such as electronic school-bags and micro-class videos, are the implications of the interventions of Nanguan district education bureau official to achieve his perceived *quality in education*.

Provision different trainings to the school heads and teachers, implementation of Biometric attendance system in schools, enrollment raising campaign, calling of school management committees are the implications of the Shikarpur district Educational officials to achieve their perceived *quality in education*.

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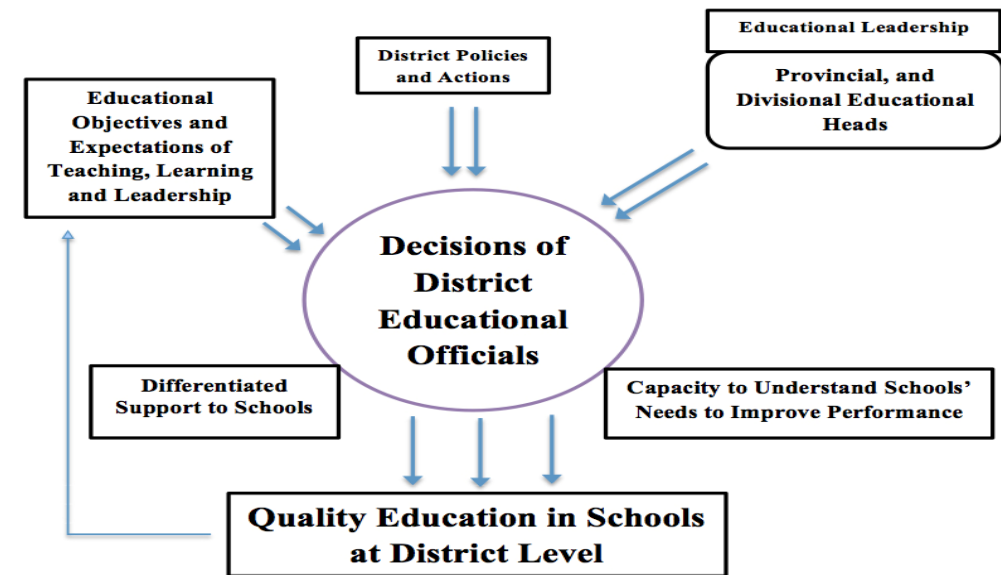


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Model



Figure 2: Analytical Framework Graph

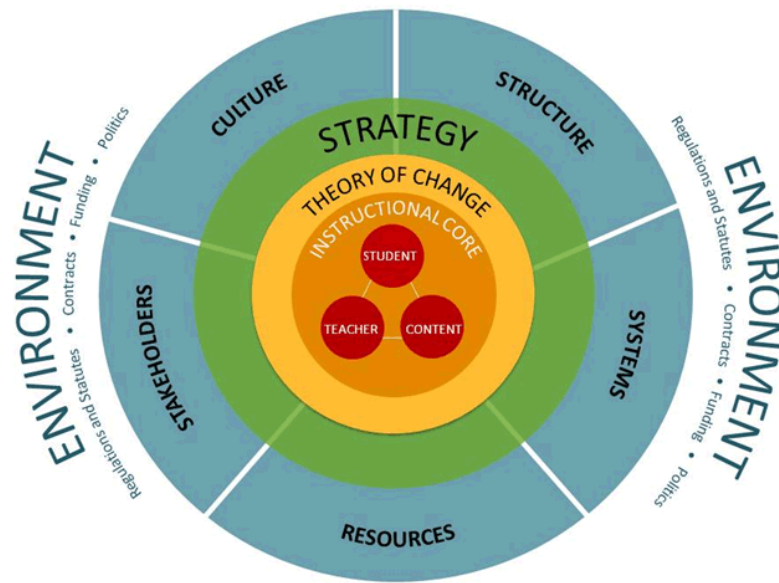


Figure 3: PELP: Public Education Leadership Project Model