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Analysis of Educational Facilities and Opportunities for Students with Special Needs at University of the Punjab

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Abstract

Inclusion of special students at higher education and their diverse needs require special arrangements in environment for them. The provision of educational facilities and opportunities as per their needs also help them to develop their maximum satisfaction for their educational institutions. As much as these special students are satisfied, there are better chances for the academic achievements. This study has been conducted to analyze various educational opportunities and facilities for the special needs of students at University of the Punjab. The analysis of result revealed theoretical and practical implications for special students at higher education. It is concluded that satisfaction level of students with special needs from educational facilities and opportunities provided at the University was a bit more than average. This shows that needs and requirements of students with special needs are not neglected at the University.

Key words: Students with special needs, Facilities, Curriculum modification and adaptations, Opportunities

Introduction

The concept of “diversity” describes that human beings are heterogeneous and they differ to each other in various ways (Deary, Penke, & Johnson, 2010). This diversity also helps to understand the learning differentiations among students (Lundberg, 2010). The enrollment of students with special needs automatically leads to

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completions of education like other students (Ball & Lund, 2010). If relevant facilities and assistance is provided at higher education, students with special needs may complete their education with relevant academic skills and methods (Ruijs, et al., 2010). The most important pillar of universities is not only the general understanding of education as quality but to develop student's acquisition of competencies relevant to market job. Aldridge and Rowley (1998) reported the view of student's better learning opportunities to be conditional to quality education. He further reported that student's success or failure in learning is the result of their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Further, Bert and Rehman (2010) in their study investigated the determinants of student's satisfaction in higher education and their influence on level of satisfaction and found that students are satisfied with higher education in Pakistan. However, the level of satisfaction varies on gender basis due to their socio economic setting. He further identified that teachers and classroom facilities are the key factors to enhance the student's satisfaction at higher education. Various researchers identified that image of university, quality of instructors, education, test books, intimation before attending university, methods of teachers, administration of courses are key factors to develop and enhance student's satisfaction at higher education or universities. (Palacio, et al. 2002; Aldermir&Gulcan 2004; Navarro, et al., 2005).

As compared to normal counterparts, the participation of the students with special needs in higher education is a matter of equal opportunity and empowerment (Vickerman& Blundell, 2010). In spite of various legislations about the inclusion of students with special needs, this issue has still not been addressed very well. Mostly the concept of barriers rather than to describe the person's impairment is based on social model of disability in which emphasizes upon societal constraints in participation (Barron & et al., 1996).

This study presents an overview of satisfaction level of students with special needs in higher educational institutions of Pakistan. This research embarks on available facilities and services (accessing the buildings, hostel, scholarship, library, etc) for students with special needs in the University of the Punjab, Lahore. Additionally, curriculum and instructional adaptations made by the university teachers for these students in classrooms were covered in this research. Moreover, this research focused on problems faced by students with special needs with the discussion on facilities and services with special reference to demographic factors like gender, disability, age, and parental socio-economic backgrounds.

This research has many theoretical and practical implications. On theoretical perspectives, it is literary contribution into the disability literature with special reference to Pakistan. It highlights issues and concerns of students with special needs in higher education in Pakistan. On practical side, this research is valuable for educational

administration from apex level to the bottom line practically involved in teaching process as teacher, instructors and head teachers etc. Furthermore, this research is useful for researchers working in the area. It casts a view for further studies on these lines in Pakistan as well as in the broader convex of other countries on the globe.

Literature Review

Inclusion of students with special need in public institutions is hot topic of discussion all over the world. In continuation of this concern, the educational inclusion has become the primary concern for educational politics in many countries. Early years in 18th century, many countries adopted the concept of inclusion as means of creating equal system of education in which all children are uniformly treated regardless of their differences. Different studies highlighted the careful consideration of education of children with special needs in regular setup (classroom) instead of educating them in more restrictive (special) environment (Culatta& Tompkins, 1999; Jenkins et. al, 1990; Schmidt & Cagran, 2008).

Wide spread literature on disabilities cover educational requirements for students with special needs. Friendly environment, classes, public places, homes and learning practices should be uniform to avoid any injustice. Some students have also indicated some difficulties and challenges for children with special needs in inclusive setting. It is reported that most of the visually impaired faces the difficulties of transport, lack of social relationship, absence of counseling services, few number of books printed in Braille, non-availability of visual readers, ignorance of teachers towards special needs of children with special needs. Most of physically impaired persons face the difficulties of teacher's fast pace teaching and difficulty in discussion participation at universities. In Jordan University disabled children have highlighted the complaint of services. Similarly, Aahmadi (2007) reported the problems in building objective and the classrooms. This study also highlighted the less participation of physically handicapped students in various activities which consequently has developed the sense of loneliness and isolation in them. In the same way, Zakarya (1995) had reported shortage of trained staff, negative attitudes of teachers and normal counterparts, negative attitude to develop relationship with physically handicapped students in the university. Moreover, students with physical impairment also reported the difficulties like feeling of loneliness, less respect for their private parking, non availability of elevators and less space for their movement with wheel chairs in the university as per reported by Al- Hamad (2001). Most of the studies highlighted various problems faced by students with special needs in regular environment which include less suitable curriculum, learning difficulties, no special need focus teaching methodologies, lack of aids or equipments and negative attitude, less social relationship with regular peers, low self esteem and confidence which severely affect the academic performance of these students in the regular setup or in inclusion.

On the other side, some researchers concentrated on some specific disability rather than a general discussion on issues of students with special needs. Al Qaryouti (2010) reported that visually impaired face the problems like following the curriculum, test performance, instructing a research paper, slow reading and writing due to low Braille understanding by the teachers and less help by the classmates to students with visual impairment especially in exams. The social problems faced by visual impaired in developing their relationship may be by inability to interact with other people, lack of activities that helped the visually impaired to interact with their normal peers. He also further illustrated that environmental conditions often are source of danger for the visually impaired. Handicapped female students with moderate disabilities faced more social problems as compared to normal girls in the universities. The female students were more embarrassed when they use assistive tools in educational settings (Schaffner & Busnell, 1996). Likewise, Fuller et al. (2007) reported in their research that 44% barriers were connected to disability of students with special needs which impacted their learning in lectures. Virtually all students with more than one disability, two thirds of dyslexia students and over half of those were deaf or hearing impaired reported barriers of same sort. In many instance they faced barriers when lecturers talked too quickly, or removed visual material such as overhead transparencies before the student had time to digest the contents.

Research Questions

On the basis of literature review, following research questions were designed for this research:

1. Are special students satisfied with the facilities and services at university level?
2. Are there variances in satisfaction level of students with special needs with respect to gender and on the basis of educational system?
3. Does demographic variables (age, education system, family education, family, occupation, family income of the parents of special students) relate with the satisfaction of special needs (opportunities and facilities, services, curriculum and instructional adaptation and solution of problems)?

Methodology

The University of the Punjab is the oldest university in Pakistan, established in 1882. The University comprises 04 Campuses, 13 Faculties, 9 constituent colleges, more than 65 Departments / Institutes, and 500 affiliated colleges. It has more than 700 permanent faculty members involved in teaching to over 30,000 on campus students. In this university two percent (2%) seats have been reserved for students with special needs in all programs since 2000. The Department of Special Education has reserved 5% seats for students with special needs. This research study was carried out on a population of 78 students with special needs currently studying at various departments

of University of the Punjab. Keeping in view the small size of population, whole population was taken as sample. The responses of the students were elicited on five point Likert scale. Questionnaire was composed of three parts covering – demographic information, services provided to students with special needs (14 questions), and facilities provided to students with special needs (8 questions). The findings of the study are drawn on Cronbach's Alpha value .78 ($\alpha = .78$).

Data Analysis and Findings of the Study

Table: 1 Demographics of the Respondents

Distribution of Special Students as per category	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HIC= 14.1%• VIC=23.1%• PHC=62.8%	Students Enrollment in semester and annual system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Semester system=87.2%• Annual system=12.8%
Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Male=62.2%• Female=30.8%	Age of Respondents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 83.3% (20-25 Years)• 16.7% (above 26 years)
Parent's Occupation of the respondents	Fathers: Private Job: 16.7% Govt. Job: 20.5% Business: 56.4% Retired: 6.4%		Mothers: Private Job: 3.8% Govt. Job: 9% Business:6.4% Household: 79.5%
Income of parents	Fathers: 7000 to 15000(78.2%) 15001 to 23000 (21.8%)		Mothers: House Hold: No income (80.8%) 7000 to 31000: (19.2%)

Table1 indicates that that special students of different categories (HIC, VIC, PHC) were studding at the university. Majority of them were male (62.2%) and studying under semester system (87.2%). Most of the respondents were between 20 to 25 years old. Majority of fathers of the respondents belonged to business (56.4%) and children of household mothers (79.5%).

Satisfaction of Special Students with Educational Facilities and Services at University Level

Table 2.1 Group Statistics for Education System Regarding Satisfaction Level of Students with Special Needs from Opportunities and Facilities, Services, Curriculum and Instructional Adaptations, and Solution of Problems at Various Departments / Institutions of University of the Punjab.

	Education System	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Satisfaction from Opportunities and Facilities	Annual	10	2.65	.45	.14
	Semester	68	2.83	.44	.07
Satisfaction from Services	Annual	10	2.61	.44	.14
	Semester	68	2.81	.61	.07
Satisfaction from Curriculum and Instructional Adaptations	Annual	10	2.83	.61	.20
	Semester	68	2.98	.74	.09
Satisfaction from solution of problems	Annual	10	2.30	.37	.12
	Semester	68	2.47	.67	.08

According to Table 2.1 and Table 2.2, following results are drawn:

- i) There was more satisfaction of students with special needs with opportunities and facilities at various departments / institutions of University of the Punjab in semester system (mean = 2.83) than in annual system (mean = 2.65). The mean difference between education systems was .18 and the 95% confidence interval for the population mean difference was between -.55 and .20. The effect size was small ($d = .41$). An independent t -test showed that the difference between education systems was not significant ($t = -.932$, $df = 76$, $p = .177$, one-tailed).
- ii) There was more satisfaction of students with special needs with services at various departments institutions of University of the Punjab in semester system (mean = 2.81) than in annual system (mean = 2.61). The mean difference between sectors was .20 and the 95% confidence interval for the population mean difference was between -.60 and .20. The effect size was small ($d = .38$).

An independent *t*-test showed that the difference between education system was not significant ($t = -1.012$, $df = 76$, $p = .157$, one-tailed).

Table 2.2 . Results of Independent Samples *t*-Test for Education System Regarding Satisfaction Level of Special Students from Opportunities and Facilities, Services, Curriculum and Instructional Adaptations, and Solution of Problems at Various Departments / Institutions of University of the Punjab.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			<i>t</i> -test for Equality of Means			
						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Lower	Upper
Satisfaction from Opportunities and Facilities	Equal var. assumed	.87	.36	-.932	76	.354	-.55	.20
	Equal var. not assumed			- 1.108		.287	-.51	.16
Satisfaction from Services	Equal var. assumed	1.66	.20	- 1.012	76	.315	-.60	.20
	Equal var. not assumed			- 1.288		.218	-.54	.13
Satisfaction from Curriculum and Inst. Adaptations	Equal var. assumed	.63	.43	-.590	76	.557	-.63	.34
	Equal var. not assumed			- -.672	13.07	.513	-.61	.32
Satisfaction from solution of problems	Equal var. assumed	5.85	.02	-.766	76	.446	-.60	.27
	Equal var. not assumed			- 1.173		.255	-.46	.13

- iii) There was more satisfaction of students with special needs with curriculum and instructional adaptation made by the teachers at various departments / institutions of University of the Punjab in semester system (mean = 2.98) than in annual system (mean = 2.83). The mean difference between education systems was .15 and the 95% confidence interval for the population mean difference was between -.63 and .34. The effect size was small ($d = .22$). An independent t -test showed that the difference between education systems was not significant ($t = -.590$, $df = 76$, $p = .278$, one-tailed).
- iv) There was more satisfaction of students with special needs from solution of problems at various departments / institutions at University of the Punjab in semester system (mean = 2.47) than in annual system (mean = 2.30). The mean difference between education systems was .17 and the 95% confidence interval for the population mean difference was between -.46 and .13. The effect size was small ($d = .33$). An independent t -test showed that the difference between education systems was not significant ($t = -1.173$, $df = 19.30$, $p = .127$, one-tailed).

Variances in Satisfaction Level of Students with special needs and for provided educational facilities

Table 3.1 Group Statistics for Gender Regarding Satisfaction Level of Students with Special Needs from Opportunities and Facilities, Services, Curriculum and Instructional Adaptations, and Solution of Problems at Various Departments / Institutions of University of the Punjab.

	Education System	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Error
Satisfaction from Opportunities and Facilities	Male	54	2.81	.59	.08	
	Female	24	2.77	.49	.10	
Satisfaction from Services	Male	54	2.78	.61	.08	
	Female	24	2.79	.54	.11	
Satisfaction from Curriculum and Instructional Adaptations	Male	54	2.97	.74	.10	
	Female	24	2.93	.69	.14	
Satisfaction from solution of problems	Male	54	2.47	.67	.09	
	Female	24	2.38	.58	.12	

Table 3.2 Independent Samples *t*-Test for Gender Regarding Satisfaction Level of Students with Special Needs from Opportunities and Facilities, Services, Curriculum and Instructional Adaptations, and Solution of Problems at Various Departments / Institutions of University of the Punjab.

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			<i>t</i> -test for Equality of Means			
						95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Lower	Upper
Satisfaction from Opportunities and Facilities	Equal var. assumed	1.22	.27	.291	76	.772	-.23	.31
	Equal var. not assumed			.313	52.75	.755	-.21	.29
Satisfaction from Services	Equal var. assumed	.50	.48	-	76	.941	-.30	.28
	Equal var. not assumed			.074				
Satisfaction from Curriculum and Inst. Adaptations	Equal var. assumed	.48	.49	.234	76	.815	-.31	.40
	Equal var. not assumed			.241	47.53	.810	-.30	.39
Satisfaction from solution of problems	Equal var. assumed	.051	.822	.549	76	.585	-.23	.40
	Equal var. not assumed			.580	50.65	.564	-.21	.39

Analysis of educational facilities and opportunities with reference to gender reflected that the students with special needs (Table 3.1, 3.2) showed:

- i) More satisfaction with educational facilities and opportunities at various departments of university of the Punjab for male students (mean = 2.81) than for female students (mean = 2.77). The mean difference between genders was .04. The 95% confidence interval for the population mean difference was between -.55 and .20. An independent *t*-test showed that the difference between genders was not significant ($t = .291$, $df = 76$, $p = .386$, one-tailed).
- ii) More satisfaction with curriculum and instructional adaptation made by the teachers at various departments / institutions of University of the Punjab in male students (mean = 2.97) than in female students (mean = 2.93). The mean difference between genders was .04 and the 95% confidence interval for the population mean difference was between -.31 and .40. The effect size was small that presented almost similar results ($d = .06$). An independent *t*-test showed that the difference between genders was not significant ($t = .234$, $df = 76$, $p = .407$, one-tailed).

Relationship between Demographic Variables and Satisfaction of Special Needs

The correlation across the variables of gender, age, education system, family education, family occupation, family income, and satisfaction of students with special needs from opportunities and facilities, services, curriculum and instructional adaptation and solution of problems at various departments /institutions of University of the Punjab showed that there was no significant correlation between gender, age, education system, family education, family occupation, and family income with satisfaction from opportunities and facilities, services, curriculum and instructional adaptations and solution of problems for students with special needs at various departments / institutions of University of the Punjab.

Conclusions

1. Satisfaction level of students with special needs from educational facilities and opportunities provided at the University is a bit more than average. This shows that needs and requirements of students with special needs are not neglected at the University. Opportunities and facilities for students with special needs are better realized at University of The Punjab Lahore. Moreover, no differences in facilities and services for students with special needs on the basis of annual and semester system indicates that provided education services such as curriculum and instructional adaptations, services and solution of their problems are same under the both (annual & semester) systems at the University.

2. There are no differences in satisfaction level of students with special needs from opportunities and facilities, curriculum and instructional adaptations, services, and solution of problems in terms of gender (male, female). Both male and female students with special needs are equally satisfied without any considerable variations in responses.
3. Study proved that demographic variables – gender, age, education system, family education, family occupation, and family income had no relationship with research variables of satisfaction from opportunities and facilities, services, curriculum and adaptation, and solution of problems.

Discussion

Research findings in this study were similar to many other studies for students with special needs where there were considerations of varied requirements, opportunities, and facilities for students with special needs. This type of studies highlighted average results in recent past. Same were observed in the doctoral dissertation of Scott (2011) who focused on multicultural transitions for students with disabilities at post secondary education level on a wider scale. Similarly, Partab and Naidoo (2005) discussed the academic needs of students with visual impairments at University of KwaZulu-Natal. In their qualitative study of sixteen students, they projected exploratory design for inclusion of visually handicapped students in social set up. In their explanations on opportunities and facilities available to students with special needs, they were satisfied on the stance that their varied requirements were realized but were not fully provided at the moment. On the other end, Stella and Kawai (2012) discussed challenges and problems from the management perspectives. They showed that administration also faced similar problems in serving students with special needs but from different angle.

Therefore, in considerations of research studies on the same subject, it was clear that opportunities, facilities, services, and accommodations for students with special needs were in evolutionary process. Almost all institutions had realized the varied requirements and demands of students with special needs and were on the way to provide maximum arrangements. This was the reason behind the average results in studies of provisions and supports for students with special needs.

Recommendations

On the basis of findings of the study it is strongly recommended that:

1. All the education policies should observe the diversity and compulsory pedagogical requirements (informal and non-formal) to meet the needs of the children with special needs particularly for the inclusive setup.

2. There should be flexibility in educational practices, assessment and evaluation process with regard to inclusion of students with special needs.
3. The teaching process should be cooperative in classroom, in developing curriculum modification to meet the learning needs of the students to strengthen the concept of inclusion.
4. In order to achieve successful inclusion of students with special needs at universities the innovation and diversity must be kept in focus for everybody.
5. Physical environment in universities should be cooperative and friendly. Teachers must understand that students with special needs may demand special arrangements. The students with sensory impairment and physical impairment may require special modification in instructions of the teachers in the classroom.
6. All the students with special needs should be given respect and acceptance regardless their visual, physical, intellectual limitation in the universities for their handsome grooming in social fabric.

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Impact of School Councils on Head Teachers' Efficiency

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Abstract

This paper endeavored to discover the perceptions of head teachers of government schools towards the impact of school councils on academic, administrative and financial matters of schools. The descriptive analytical design was used to accomplish the study. The study was conducted in late 2010. The population comprised of public schools (primary, middle and high) of Lahore district. The researcher adopted the convenient sampling technique with a sample of 237 respondents. Data was collected through a questionnaire in which head teachers' opinions were measured upon 30 variables. Eighty percent of the total head teachers felt that School Councils could have an influence of some to a large extent on administrative and academic matters of the school. Similarly, 70 % of heads thought that School Council could have an impact of some to large extent on financial matters of the school. School councils may facilitate head teachers in different academic, administrative and financial issues of the school.

Keywords: School council, Head teachers' perceptions, Administrative role, Financial role, Academic role.

Introduction

School councils had appeared as an efficient beneficiary for educational development around the globe. It provides as an opportunity for parents and other member communities for the promotion in students' performance and achievement. As

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indicated in Handbook for School Council: “A school council is a legally constituted body consisting of the principal, parents, teachers, community representatives and students (where applicable) from the local school community who, while representing the interests of all students, work together for the purpose of enhancing the quality of teaching and learning and improving the levels of student achievement in their school” (Alberta Edcation, 1999, p.7).

There is no single definition of school council. A school council broadly refers to a school-based committee composed of the members like principal, parents, teachers and community participants. Effective school council structures, involving the whole school, can offer colossal benefits to both the community and the individual (School Council UK, 2009). They focus on students learning and enhance their achievements. They seek active and meaningful parent-community linkages. They provide clear understanding of roles, responsibilities and decision making to their members with mutual trust and respect for one another (School Council Guide, 2002).

Head Teachers’ Role in Schools in the Punjab

According to Punjab Education Code for the teachers and head teachers, head teachers include three main roles within the school; academic, administrative and financial. They are expected in role to help their teachers in improving their pedagogical skills and classrooms environment favorable to teaching learning. The administrative roles of head teachers are their central responsibility. They determine staffing needs; prepare time tables, maintain records required by district or provincial governments. While in financial role they are to prepare budgets for the school that have to be sent to local or provincial government and to act as drawing and disbursing officer of the salaries of the staff (Khan, 2012).

Roles and Responsibilities of Head Teachers in School Councils

Head teacher (HT) is the co-chairperson and co-signatory and a teacher member of a school council. He/she is usually responsible to collect applications chairperson in order to change membership in school council (SC). Head teacher (teacher member) is the only permanent member in S.C while other members can be discarded with the 2/3 majority of members. HT sends notice of meeting to all S.C members. Presence of HT is compulsory in all meetings of S.C. (PRSP, 2010).

School Councils in Pakistan

Pakistan has been ranked having the worst education other than any African country by UNDP. The reason is apparently obvious as numerous barriers in educational success like teacher absenteeism, low literacy rate including enormous dropouts and feeble retentions as well as unequal access. Literacy hardly exceeds 50%

of the total while only 45 percent of school aged children were enrolled in 2003. One in five teachers never showed up for work, one in ten schools had no building to teach in and with little or no access to school, only one third of girls were able to sign their names (McCutcheon, 2007). For such reasons Punjab Government took initiative for establishing school councils under Punjab Education Sector Reform after devolution (School Council Policy, 2007).

According to School Council Policy (2007), the members of school council consist of minimum 7 and maximum 15 including parents/guardians, teachers, and general members. The parents' representation should be 50% of total membership. The headmaster of school is the co-chairperson of school council. He should also be the co-signatory of school council accounts. Some of the responsibilities of school councils in Pakistan are as follows (PRSP, 2010):

Administrative:

- To monitor the attendance of teacher and support staff.
- To increase enrollment and to reduce the dropout rate.
- To instigate the administration of school for the Execution of co-curricular activities and to help them in parent teacher meeting, literacy day etc.
- Attempt to secure the rights of teachers and students.
- Attempt to remove the illegal possession of the property of school or building.

Academic

- To give awareness to parents about the importance of education so that they sent their children to school.
- To discourage physical punishments

Financial

- To monitor the collection of academic books and scholarship of girls student.
- To hold one meeting of school council every month so that there should be at least 10 meeting in year.
- Appropriate use of funds that get from government or other resources.

Research Studies regarding Benefits and Working of School Councils

A situational analysis in Pakistan conducted by Khoj in collaboration with Action Aid (2010) revealed that there is a gap between the educator and the community. The common people lack participation in school council due to discouragement, disinterest and distrust on state machinery for socioeconomic gains. It further indicated that the tilt in the authorization of the school councils is on the quantitative face of the education. But yet after over a decade the school councils failed to provide the hardware aspect of the school management.

Benjamin and Hong Sheung Chui, (1997) presented a study which investigated how school councils operate in the Australian, state of Victoria and how parent councilors participated in the affairs of the school council. They concluded that several factors to be positively associated with booming operations of school councils: the willingness of and mutual acceptance between parents and teachers; commitment of principal; parents' satisfaction with their participation; and parents' contribution and donations to the school.

Many research findings demonstrated that through the implementation of school-based management, school stakeholders have been empowered in decision-making, leading to create high levels of parental and community participation (Gamage, 2006b, 2003, 1993a; Graewe, 2005; Briggs & Wohlstetter, 2003; Suwondo, 2002; Parker & Leithwood, 2000; Chrispeels, Castillo, & Brown, 2000). Moreover, over the past two decades, scholars found that SBM can empower schools in order to develop a better quality educational process, healthier teaching/learning environments, and improved student outcomes (Gamage, 2008, 2006b, 1998a, 1996a; Caldwell, 2008, 2005; Leroy, 2002; Sharpe, 1996; Dimmock, 1993). Similarly, an amalgamation of quantitative and qualitative studies by Hess (1999a) involving 14 public schools in Chicago demonstrated that Local School Councils (LSCs) doled out as the crucial points in pledging that critical reform activities that took place in the schools. He found that LSCs have served to facilitate accountability to assure that the principals tamper with the school improvement strategies annually and the use of discretionary funds and make those decisions public. He then concluded that the roles of LSCs have ensured that vibrant changes occurred in each Chicago school.

It is evidently seen that school councils are largely and somewhat effectively working in Punjab. The objectives of the proposed study were to examine the perception of head teachers of government schools about the impact of school councils on academic, administrative and financial matters of schools. Moreover the researchers attempted to explore the opinions of head teachers of the government schools where school council does not exist. The study was carried out through an in-depth survey to the number of public schools functioning school councils in district Lahore. The study is concerned with theory generation.

Methodology

This study was descriptive in nature and used survey methodology to uncover head teachers' perceptions regarding school councils working on administrative academic and financial matters of the schools in district Lahore.

Population and Sampling

The population comprised of public schools (primary, middle and high) of Lahore district. As the study was descriptive in nature therefore, it was not possible to access the whole of population. The researcher adopted the convenient sampling technique with a sample of 237 respondents.

Development of Research Instrument

Questionnaire was used as an instrument of the study. As a result of intensive literature review, the researcher developed a questionnaire to measure the perceptions of head teachers regarding school council.

- i. The questionnaire was constituted of 30 variables distributed among academic, administrative and financial matters of a school.
- ii. First sixteen items represented the administrative aspects, 7 items from 17 to 23 represented academic aspects whereas the others from 24 to 30 represented financial aspects.

To record responses, five point rating scale (range: 5= To a large extent, 4= To some extent, 3= A little, 2= Not at all, 1= I don't know), was used instead of dichotomous scale in the questionnaire which aimed at measuring support of head teachers towards items related to matters in school.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

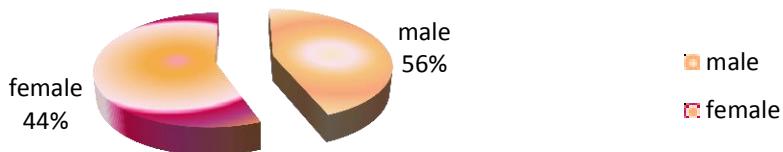
The instrument was validated through experts' opinions. After improving the instrument in terms of language, style, format, and content, 300 questionnaires were distributed among head teachers by the researchers through post. All the questionnaires (237) that were received from the respondents were examined. The data collected by questionnaires were analyzed by using statistical techniques. The frequency of responses and their percentages were tabulated and calculated.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of Demographic Information

The data was analyzed by using SPSS version 16. A total of 300 questionnaires were administered and 237 were received back; hence the overall response rate was 79% that was considered satisfactory on ground realities. The first part of the instruments contained the biographical information. As reflected in Figure 1, 56 % respondents were male and 44% female.

Figure 1. Sex Distribution of HTs'



Analysis of HTs' Perceptions regarding School Councils

The perceptions of HTs regarding School Council were measured using a questionnaire on five point rating scale. For data analysis, the statements in each section were classified under three types of matters related to the school: a) Administrative, b) Academic, and c) Financial. Fifteen items were related to administrative matters of the school, 7 to the academic matters of school and 8 were related to financial matters. Data for each section has been analyzed for the total respondents by gender. Responses of HTs are given in percentages.

HTs' Perceptions about Administrative Matters of the School

HTs' perceptions regarding School Council's support on administrative matters in school were elicited on a scale indicating the extent of their influence. Mean response values and standard deviation are also given.

HTs' Perceptions about Academic Matters of the School

HTs' perceptions regarding School Council's support on academic matters in school were elicited on a scale indicating the extent of their influence. Mean response values and standard deviation are also given.

Mean response values of all academic matters indicate that all head teacher feel that School Council would have impact to some extent on all academic matters of the schools. More than 70% of the head teachers think that School Council can have influence from some to a large extent on matters like improving students' achievement, instructional supervision and authority in selecting curricula. Overall total shows that 80% of the total head teachers feel that School Councils have influence from some to a large extent some impact on academic matters of the school from no to some extent.

Table No 1.

HTs' Perceptions regarding School Council's support on Administrative Matters of the School

Statement	I don't know	A little	To some extent	To medium extent	To a large extent	X Max. value=5	SD
Increasing enrolment	3	3	5	48	42	4.24	.872
Decrease student's absenteeism	6	22	5	38	28	3.60	1.280
Decrease teacher's absenteeism	4	14	8	41	33	3.84	1.152
Controlling student's dropout	13	17	5	42	24	3.46	1.358
Help in improving discipline in the school	10	6	10	28	45	3.92	1.311
Increasing the number of teachers	12	7	8	44	20	3.43	1.299
Maximizing head teacher's authority	4	10	10	34	41	3.98	1.142
Increasing head teachers accountability	4	13	8	36	40	3.96	1.153
Involving parents in the decision making regarding school matters	12	21	16	28	23	3.30	1.346
Contacting parents to get their children admitted in the school	10	8	8	56	18	3.64	1.169
Improving co-curricular activities in the school	19	23	6	27	25	3.17	1.490
Decreasing corporal punishment to children by teachers	11	8	7	35	39	3.85	1.309
Inculcating the sense of human rights among teachers	6	7	4	35	47	4.09	1.168
Controlling misuse of school premises (encroachers)	3	17	6	38	35	3.84	1.180
Supervision of developmental work in schools	6	12	14	26	42	3.85	1.260
Total	8	13	8	37	34	3.74	

Mean response values of all administrative matters indicate that all head teachers feel that School Councils would have impact to some extent on all administrative matters of the schools. Almost 80% of the head teachers think that School Councils can have influence from some to a large extent on matters like increasing enrollments and contacting parents to get their children admitted in the

school. Overall 80% of the total head teachers feel that School Councils have influence from some to a large extent on administrative matters of the school.

Table No 2.

HTs' Perceptions regarding School Council's support on Academic Matters of the School

Statement	I don't know	A little	To some extent	To medium extent	To a large extent	X Max. value=5	SD
Improving student's achievements	8	6	11	43	32	3.84	1.175
Improving instructional supervision	6	13	8	40	34	3.83	1.195
More authority in selecting the curricula	6	17	8	46	23	3.64	1.165
Betterment in teaching learning process	6	14	7	28	44	3.88	1.290
Helps in teachers professional development	1	7	6	40	46	4.24	.905
More opportunities of training in service teachers	15	19	12	46	7	3.12	1.236
Parents suggestions regarding inclusion of learning activities increases	11	29	12	35	14	3.14	1.272
Total	7	15	9	40	29	3.67	

HTs' Perceptions about Financial Matters of the School

HTs perceptions regarding School Council's support on financial matters in school were elicited on a scale indicating the extent to which they had influence. Mean response values and standard deviation are also given.

Mean values of HTs' responses in the above table show that head teachers think that School Council could be helpful in financial matters to some extent. More than 70% of the head teachers feel that School Councils can help in the increase in bursaries, financial accountability and transparency and streamlining budget. Overall total shows

that 70 % of HTs think that School Council may have some to large impact on financial matters of the school.

Table No 3.

HTs' Perceptions Regarding School Council's on Financial Matters of the School

Statement	I don't know	A little	To some extent	To medium extent	To a large extent	X Max. value=5	SD
Increasing school funds	23	23	10	30	14	2.90	1.418
Facilitating in utilization of funds	18	15	25	27	14	3.05	1.316
Bursaries increase due to school council	8	8	4	25	55	4.12	1.260
Financial accountability of school improves	5	8	12	49	27	3.85	1.053
Re appropriation of budget improves	22	21	12	39	5	2.85	1.298
Excess and surrenders in budget streamlines	10	17	10	20	44	3.70	1.423
Increase in non-monitory resources	9	20	7	38	26	3.51	1.314
Transparency in the use of school funds	15	12	6	41	26	3.53	1.371
Total	14	15	11	34	26	3.33	

The overall results and findings regarding comparison of perceptions of male and female respondents are summarized as under:

1. The school councils' effect on administrative role of HT's has a bit higher mean score ($M= 3.74$, $SD= 1.23$) than academic ($M= 3.67$, $SD= 1.17$) and financial ($M= 3.33$, $SD= 1.30$) ones.
2. Gender wise analysis of Head Teachers showed that male and female had almost equal mean scores in responding about the perception of School Council in education revealing the significant role of School Council in administrative, academic and financial matters of school ($t= .017$, $p=.05$).
3. Head Teachers thought that the role of School Council is significant in Administrative ($t= .004$, $p= .05$) and Financial matters ($t= .035$, $p= .05$) of schools,

4. While mean responses of Head Teachers indicated that the role of School Council is not significant in Academic matters of schools ($t=.56, p=.05$).

Discussion and Implications

The schema of School Council in Pakistan has a history of not before than implementation of Devolution Plan in Pakistan. Due to the scarcity in research studies on School Councils in Pakistan, the benefits of School Councils are yet to be discovered. This study intended to discover the perceptions of head teachers regarding School Councils. The result showed that almost 80% of the total head teachers in the sample think that establishing School Councils will bring benefits for academic, administrative and financial matters of the school. Head teachers were more advocating School Council in helpful in resolving administrative and financial matters than academic matters. Similarly significant gender wise and matter (administrative, academic and financial)wise mean difference was observed in the scores of head teachers. This study can urge researchers to discover the impacts of the School council on the quality of education.

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Assessing the Parental Involvement in Schooling of Children in Public /Private Schools, and its Impact on their Achievement at Elementary Level

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Abstract

Parental involvement is what parents do to improve their children's educational activities at home and emphasize the communication with teachers about their children's school success. The purpose of the research was to investigate the extent of parental involvement and its impact on their achievement at elementary level. The sample consisted of 600 parents of 600 class 8th children enrolled in public and private school systems in District Lahore. A survey was conducted by PIP Questionnaire(Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler, 2005). For achievement score PEC's results of class 8th were collected .The analysis was done by applying t- test and regression. The result of the study indicated the high involvement of parents in their children's education irrespective of school type but achievement scores of private school children were high. It is concluded that parental involvement with their children's schooling does impact positively on their academic achievement.

Keywords: Parental Involvement, Achievement, Public School, Private School, PEC

Introduction

Parental Involvement traditionally gained much consideration in education. In this contemporary era, as several school-improvement plans have pursued to increase student learning. As child moves from infant to toddler and then to pre-schooler, he/she learns to be able to read, write, listen and speak (Oludipe, 2009). The influence of Parental Involvement (PI) in a child's growth and development is generally accepted.

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According to No Child Left behind Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), “the participation of parents in regular, two- ways and meaningful communication involving academic learning and other school activities is called parental involvement”, endorsing:

“(i) a vital and fundamental role in facilitating the children learning is played by their parents.

(ii) Motivation should be there to involve parents actively in the schooling of children.

(iii) The parents equally share responsibility in their child’s education and are included, as rightly, in decision making and on advisory committees to assist in the education of their child”.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) stated that Parental Involvement consisted of two types of activities, home-based activities and school-based activities. Their model (2005) clearly pointed out that parents consider themselves in a difficult condition, when they recognized that schooling of their children is dependent upon the information, capabilities, and realization of security that they can be successful in school.

In Bouffard and Weiss (2008) views, Parental Involvement can be defined as direct effort provided by the parent, in order to surge educational outcomes of their children. This definition indirectly mentions an education production function, and makes parental involvement one of its points of view. The broad perspective embraced here reflects the meaning of family involvement by the Harvard Family Research Project, one of the renowned research groups. Their definition includes all activities by parents that are purposefully “linked to learning”. In Harvard family research project (Caspe, 2007) found out considerable result evidence has supported the importance of family involvement in the elementary school years, when this involvement is assessed, it has been demonstrated that family involvement can result in success at school. This can be further strengthened through family involvement, by matching the child’s developmental needs, the parent’s attitudes, conduct, school’s expectations and care. Christenson and Reschly (2010) discussed that there are four common types of PI which are related to “Parental Involvement in school, at home, Parental Involvement in school and learning, and Parent participation in school activities”.

According to Caspe, Lopez, and Wolos (2007) during elementary schooling children undergo important developmental changes like logical reasoning, adaptability to their environment, and mannerism. Adolescence is a transiting age; they are not yet an adult but also not a child. They have unique needs which must be met to ensure well-

being and success at school. (Hawes and Plourde, 2005). At elementary level, children develop their social understanding by incorporating their knowledge by relations with teachers, peers and families. Children also begin to develop proficiency in a variety of capacities. Elementary schools have duty to encourage these family involvement processes, and when they fulfill their duty, school can benefit from the outcomes. It was concluded by researcher like DeFraja (2010) that an association can be seen between children's performance and parents' struggle for facilitating their education. It has been found that those children work harder whose parents are intensely involved in their child's education and progress. Generally parents, school and child, is considered to be the accountable contributors – They stimulate each other. Likewise, the ability of children to perform better or to struggle for more is not dependent on their societal context. Children from better socioeconomic status prominence do not always try harder than those from less privileged upbringing.

Parental Involvement according to Bakker (2007) has been shown to have a significant effect on assessments, greater school participation in reading, spelling and mathematics, fewer learning difficulties, poorer degrees of grade retention, and fewer learning related behavior disorders. George and Mensah (2010) commented that PI encourages better cooperation between parents and school; it also helps parents and teachers to combine efforts to help the children and makes immense impact on their attitude and achievement. In Pakistan Parental Involvement is a very recent phenomenon and very less work has been done in this regard. According to Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS) Report 2007-2008, students' achievement is higher for the group who gets assistance from their parents. The extent of parent's interaction with students increases the achievement level of students. Atta and Jamil (2012) said "in Pakistan some parents participate in the educational activities of their children, in this way they can remove near about all the deficiencies of their children. Parent participation is highly correlated with the academic accomplishments of learners. The parental influence has strong effect on educational attainments of the students and helps shape their further improvement".

Almost all schools in country have the awareness about involving the children's parents but there is no mechanism existed in this regard. Only on the name of Parent Teacher conference (PTC), Education system, teachers and parents are being satisfied for years. However this effort seems to be fruitless as it doesn't have any impact on student learning and or on the improvement of school. Since independence of Pakistan, Public schools and colleges are managed by provincial governments or local bodies and Private schools are managed by charities/missionaries. All physical facilities in government sector are provided by the government itself, while in private sector owners of the school individually cannot provide these facilities up to that extant. Private

schools are relatively expensive so majority of the parents rush to the public schools and it is the cause of large classes in size which affects the teachers' performance. Andrabi, Das and Khawaj (2005) provide a related explanation for the growth of private schools in Pakistan. The authors note that past expansion of female education in Pakistan has largely relied on public schools. All private schools in Pakistan are mostly autonomous and free of government regulation in terms of ownership, management and finance (Andrabi, et.al. 2005).

The purpose of this study was to measure and describe the level extent of Parental Involvement in schooling from parents of Elementary public and private school children and its impact on their achievement at elementary level.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses have been formulated:

Part 1: Extent, Impact and difference in achievement of children

H_{o1} There is no significant difference in the extent of Parental Involvement in schooling of children at elementary level.

H_{o2} There is no significant difference of the impact of Parental Involvement on the achievements of children at elementary level.

H_{o3} There is no significant difference in achievement of children having Parental Involvement in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level.

Part 2: Hypotheses about Parental Involvement scales

H_{o4} There is no significant difference between Parent's Perceptions of Self-Efficacy for helping child succeed in school of public and private school children at elementary level.

H_{o5} There is no significant difference between Parental Role Construction in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level

H_{o6} There is no significant difference between Parental Encouragement in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level.

H_{o7} There is no significant difference between Parental Reinforcement in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level.

H_{o8} There is no significant difference between Parental Modeling in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level.

H_{o9} There is no significant difference between Parental Instruction in public and private school children at elementary level

H_{o10} There is no significant difference between Parental Perceptions of General Invitations for involvement from the schooling of public and private school children at elementary level.

Method and Procedure

In this research the survey method has been utilized to collect data about the Impact of Parental Involvement of public /private school children studying in class 8. For this purpose, an instrument Parental Involvement Questionnaire (PIP) was used and administered to the parents of 8 class children. The sampled schools were registered with Punjab Examination Commission (PEC), therefore standardized tests are conducted by PEC for class 8 every year in Punjab province. Scores of year 2011-2012 of class 8 were taken as the academic achievement of children. Independent sample t-test and regression was applied to interpret the results of the data. Ten Schools in total were selected from the five Towns of Lahore District randomly. Schools were selected from Public and private sectors. Five Public and five Private schools were drawn by giving equal representation. Average of 60 children selected out of class 8th randomly. The parents of selected children of 8th class were also being the part of sample. In total, 600 parents and 600 children constituted the sample.

Instrument

This was a survey research and adopted “Parental Involvement Questionnaire” (PIP). This instrument was selected because it includes all the basic Parental Involvement scales. The reliability of the instrument was 0.944 Cronbach’s Alpha.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire was distributed to six hundred respondents and the response rate was eighty nine percent. The data was analyzed through SPSS by applying statistical measures accordingly. The results were interpreted by comparing the means and by using the t-test and regression at $P < 0.05$, level of significance.

Findings and Results

Figure 1 showed that majority of the children 67.7% got low achievement level. While 25.4% children got high level achievement and just 6.9% children were in no achievement level. The result showed that children had low level of

achievement. According to Figure 2, remarkable majority (79.6%) of the respondent said there was high Parental Involvement in schooling of children and 20% respondents said low Parental Involvement and rest of respondents (0.4%) said no Parental Involvement. The results showed high Parental Involvement in schooling of children at elementary level.

Figure 1. Pie chart of achievement of children

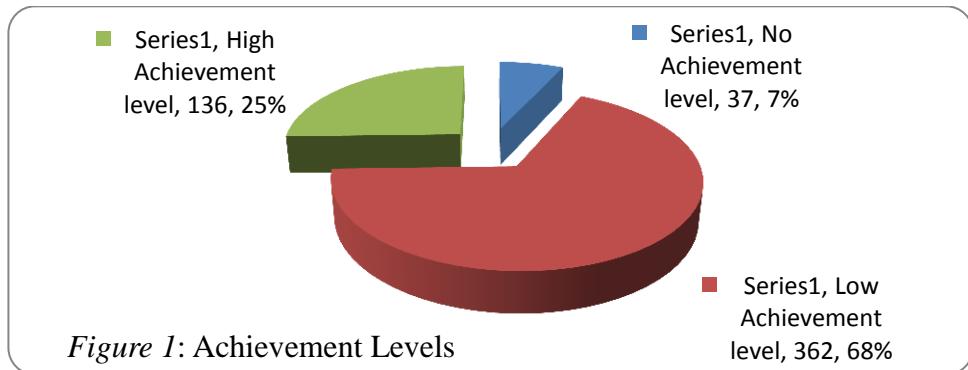
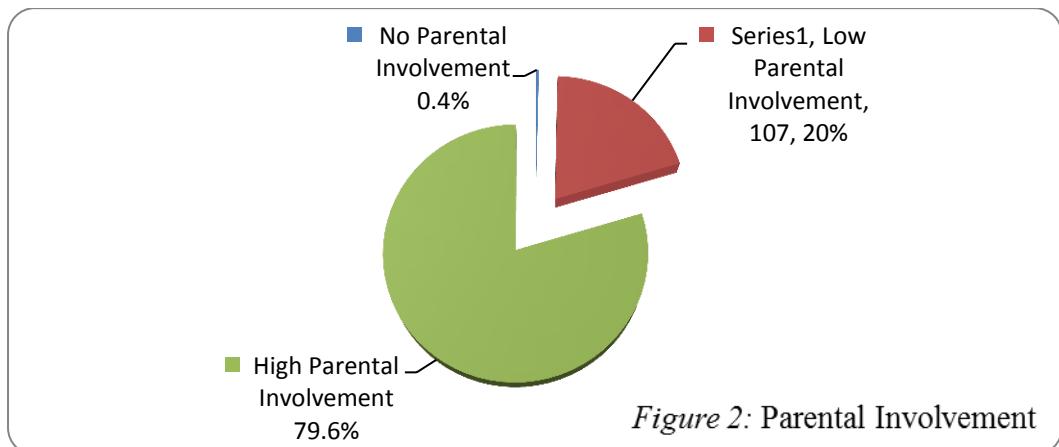


Figure 2.Pie chart of parental involvement Parental Involvement in schooling of children



Testing of Research Hypotheses:

Part 1: Extent, Impact and difference in achievement of children

Table 1: *Extent of Parental Involvement in Schooling of Children*

Type of school	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.(2 tailed)	Mean Diff.
Public	265	2.78	0.421				
				0.420	533	0.674	-.420
Private	270	2.80	0.410				

To find out difference in the extent of Parental Involvement in schooling of children at elementary level mean scores of respondents were compared by using independent sample t-test. The above table showed that the mean of public school children ($M=2.67$, $SD=0.421$) was less than mean of private school children ($M=2.86$, $SD=0.410$). Also "Levene's Test for Equality of Variances" was insignificant and variances were assumed homogeneous. So the result of t- test showed that there was no significant difference in the extent of Parental Involvement in schooling of children at elementary level $t(533) = 0.420$, $p = 0.674$ which was greater than alpha 0.05 so accept H_{01} .

Table 2: *Regression analysis for achievement of children (N=535)*

Variable	B	SE(B)	β	t	Sig.(p)
Parents Involvement	10.093	1.128	0.361	8.949	0.000

Note: a: Dependent Variable: achievement score

b: $r=0.361$

c: $R^2 = 0.129$

The above table shows that there was a positive relationship between Parental Involvement and achievement of students. But the value of correlation = 0.361 showed a weak relationship. The value of R^2 showed that only 12.9 % achievements of children depend on their parent's involvement. And the p value (0.000) was less than α (0.05) so H_{02} was rejected. It means that there was significant difference of the impact of Parental Involvement on the achievements of children at elementary level.

Table 3:*t-test between achievement of children having Parental Involvement in schooling of Public and private*

Type of school	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.(2 tailed)	Mean Diff.
Public	265	2.12	0.547				
Private	270	2.24	0.524	2.590	533	0.010	-.120

To compare difference in achievement of children having Parental Involvement in schooling of Public and private school children independent sample t test was conducted. "Levene's Test for Equality of Variances" was insignificant and variances were assumed homogeneous. So the result of t- test showed that there was significant difference in achievement of children having Parental Involvement in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level , $t(533) = 2.590$, $p = 0.010$ which was less than alpha 0.05 so rejected H_{03} . Achievements of children having Parental Involvement in public schools averaged 2.12 (SD=0.547) and achievements of children having Parental Involvement in private schools averaged 2.24(SD=.524)

To compare difference between Parental Involvement scales in schooling of public and private school children independent sample t- test was performed. The t value (1.118) was insignificant about Parent's Perceptions of Self-Efficacy for Helping Child Succeed in Schooling at $P < 0.05$. And its mean H_{04} was accepted and showed that there was insignificance difference between Parent's Perceptions of Self-Efficacy for Helping Child Succeed in Schooling of public and private school children at elementary level. The t (2.179) was insignificant about Parental Role Construction at $P < 0.05$. H_{05} was accepted and showed that there was insignificant difference between Parental Role Construction in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level. Also H_{06} was rejected with t value (2.179) and it's showed that there was significant difference between Parental Encouragement in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level. H_{07} with t (1.426) was accepted about Parental Reinforcement. Its showed that there was no significant difference between Parental Reinforcement in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level. Also the result of t-test showed that there was no significant difference between Parental Modeling in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level with t (0.698which was greater than alpha 0.05 so accepted H_{08} . H_{09} was accepted about Parental Instruction having t (0.996) and its showed that there was no significant difference between Parental Instruction in schooling of public and private school children at elementary level And last H_{010} was rejected and its showed that there was significant difference between Parent's Perceptions of General Invitations for

involvement from the schooling of public and private school children at elementary level with $t(898) = 3.224$.

Part 2: Hypotheses about Parental Involvement scales

Table 4: *t-test between public and private schools about Parental Involvement scales*

Parental Involvement scales	Mean public (265)	Mean private (270)	t- value	Sig.(2 tailed)
Parent's Perceptions of Self-Efficacy for Helping Child Succeed in School	18.78	18.39	1.118	0.264
Parental Role Construction	37.74	37.11	1.072	0.284
Parental Encouragement	55.63	57.86	2.179	0.030
Parental Reinforcement	62.49	63.87	1.426	0.155
Parental Modeling	42.23	42.70	0.698	0.485
Parental Instruction	70.40	270	0.996	0.320
Parent's Perceptions of General Invitations for Involvement from the School	111.86	117.71	-2.962	0.003

*Significant at $P < 0.05$ level of significance.

Results

The results of this study showed the extent of Parental Involvement in schooling of their children at elementary level. It was revealed that there was no significant difference in the extent of Parental Involvement of public and private school children. There was a positive relationship between Parental Involvement and achievement of children. But the value of correlation = 0.361 showed a weak relationship. The value of R^2 showed that only 12.9 % achievements of students depend on their Parental Involvement. And the p value (0.000) was less than α (0.05) so null hypothesis was rejected. There was significant difference of the impact of Parental Involvement on the achievements of children at elementary level. The result of t- test showed that there was significant difference in achievement of children having Parental Involvement in schooling of public and private school children.

Parental Involvement in children's homework appears to influence student outcomes because it offers Modeling, Reinforcement and Instruction that support the development of attitudes, knowledge and behaviors associated with successful school performance (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). The overall findings show that there was no significant difference between Parental Self-Efficacy, Parental Role Construction, Parental Reinforcement, Parental Modeling and Parental Instruction in schooling of public and private school children. Also the result of t-test showed that there was significant difference between Parental Encouragement and Parent's Perceptions of General Invitations for involvement from the schooling of public and private school children.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study surveyed the influences of seven main psychological constructs assumed to calculate Parental Involvement preferences. Results by parents of diverse set whose children were enrolled in district Lahore's public/private schools hypothesized an understanding what encourages parents' to involve in their children schooling at home and school. Recommending the significance of investigating the scale of "Parental Personal Beliefs and Perceptions of General' Invitations" show, both practices of involvement were anticipated by "Parents' Perceptions of General' Invitations, motivational beliefs, and perceived life perspective", accordingly. Specially, "Parental Involvement at home" was expected by "Perceptions of Specific Child Invitations, Self-Efficacy beliefs, and self-perceived time and energy for involvement". It is interesting to note that self-efficacy beliefs are a strong positive predictor of home-based involvement, but a small negative predictor of school-based involvement; this may be because parents who are strongly motivated to be involved but do not feel efficacious in their involvement efforts are likely to reach out to the school for assistance. Concisely, findings indicate that children are successful whose parents are actively involved in their schooling. Parents realized the importance of education for the bright future of their children and their involvement has great impact on their children academic achievement. It's the dream of all parents that their children must accomplish high academic standards and they express these hopes to their children.

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An Exploratory Study of the Relationship between Self-Esteem and Academic Performance of the Students

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance of 4th grade students by employing quantitative approach of research. Fourth grade students (N=305) in public schools (N=42) of Rawalpindi city were taken as the sample. For the purpose of data collection, a two-phase panel study was designed. The self-esteem of the students was measured through a standardized scale (BSCI-Y) after translating it into simple Urdu. Locally developed tests of the five subjects taught in grade four of the public schools of the Punjab were used to assess academic performance of the students. The multiple regression analysis revealed that the academic performance of 4th grade students had no significant impact on their self-esteem in the first phase of the study (before annual school examination), whereas, in the second phase, the academic performance was discovered as a significant predictor for the self-esteem of the students. It was concluded that the presence of a large number of repeaters in the second phase caused the discrepancy in the outcome of the same group in two phases.

Key words: Self-Esteem, Academic Performance, Grade Retention, Public Schools

The self-esteem of a person describes his/her feelings about him/herself. Mc Martin (1995) stated that “self-esteem is an important determinant of our behavior” (p.98). It is the “combination of both the consequence of the earlier experiences and the determinant of much of what is experienced later in the course of life” (Mischel, Shoda, & Smith, 2004, p.127).

Presently, the concept of self-esteem has gained significant position in educational theories. While narrating the social history of truth-making, Ward, (1996) described self-esteem as having “its origins in the fragile remarks of William James”

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(p.14). Similarly, Griffiths, (1993) endorsed in his study while discussing the origin of self-esteem as The idea of self-esteem has come into education through psychological theory, where there are two main influences: William James and Carl Rogers. William James' original proposal that self-esteem is the ratio of one's success to one's pretensions (1892, p. 187) Carl Rogers was one of those who developed James's work, but he also developed an alternative strand of self-esteem theory. He places emphasis both on the giving of 'unconditional regard' to individuals so that they may set their own goals in life, and on the role that individual empathy plays in the process, (p.301). The part of Rogers' views that has proved widely acceptable is that "a child's self-esteem is raised if he or she is loved and accepted by the teacher" (Griffiths, 1993, p.302).

Furthermore, research studies found that human behavior can be determined by the levels of self-esteem. Mosley, (2005) endorsed that "individuals with low self-esteem are likely to view themselves as useless, unlikeable and incompetent" (p.50). Consistent with this view, Mc Martin, (1995) pointed out that "children who become pregnant, dropout of school, or use drugs are commonly thought to do so, at least in large part, because they have low self-esteem" (p.98).

On the other hand, research studies revealed that high self-esteem enhances human abilities and he/she performs better in different situations. Gipps and Tunstall, (1998) were of the view that "individuals who have high self-esteem usually try harder and persist longer when faced with difficult or challenging tasks" (p.135). Similarly, Mosley, (2005) argued that "success is dependent upon a positive mental attitude because people who have high self-esteem are more likely to work hard and have confidence in their skills and competence" (p.50). Research evidence has also demonstrated that "students high in self-esteem interpreted the teacher's feedback more favorably than did students low in self-esteem" (Jussim, Coleman & Nassau, 1987, p.98).

Psychologists believe that self-esteem of a person fluctuates according to the situation he/she is facing. Robertson and Simons, (1989) endorsed in their study that "low self-esteem may not be a stable personality characteristic, the self-esteem of some individuals seems to dissipate more quickly in the face of stress than that of others" (p.135).

Self-Esteem and Academic Performance

Research evidence has revealed positive association between self-esteem and academic performance. Brooker (2005) was of the view that self-esteem and academic achievement are correlated. He further stated that "children's self-esteem is a key factor not only for their well-being but also for learning outcomes" (p.37). There are research studies which reveal that high self-esteem improves academic achievement and there

exist research evidence also that high academic achievement causes high self-esteem. Geisler-Brenstein, Schmeck and Hetherington, (1996) found in their study that “students' self-esteem as well as beliefs regarding their abilities and competencies play an important role in determining educational outcomes” (p.77).

In the same way, Powell and Arriola, (2003) studied the relationship between psychosocial factors and academic achievement among African American students and concluded that there was a strong negative association between the way the student copes with unfair treatment and GPA[†]. That association suggests that the “student who talks with others about being treated unfairly is more likely to have a higher GPA” (p.175).

Furthermore, Rothman and Cosden, (1995) investigated the relationship between self-perception of a learning disability (SPLD) and self-concept and social support. For the purpose of data collection, “Fifty-six third- through sixth-grade children with learning disabilities were administered Heyman's SPLD scale” (p.203). Results of this study revealed that “children with less negative perceptions of their learning disability had higher math achievement scores. Also, they perceived more positive global self-concept, more intellectual and behavioral competence, and more social acceptance” (p.203).

Research evidence has revealed that Burfeind and Bartusch, (2006) concluded in their study that “poor school performance leads to frustration and anger and subsequently to delinquent behavior” (p.320). Gipps and Tunstall, (1998) endorsed in their study that “a pupil's self-esteem is seen as influencing achievement outcomes through its effect on motivation” (p.151). They further added that the “development of a favorable self-concept in children is dependent upon perceiving themselves as successful, this in turn may depend on the way the child interprets the teachers' reaction to his/her performances” (p.151). Similarly, Chetcuti and Griffiths, (2002) stated that the “self-esteem of students is normally affected by their apparent ability, and especially as formalized from their test results or assessments” (p.544). Gonzalez-Pienda, Nunez, Gonzalez-Pumariega, Alvarez, Roces, and Garcia, (2002) also found that “students' self-concept has a powerful effect on academic achievement” (p.277).

Moreover, the findings of a study by Rosenberg,Schooler, Schoenbach, and Rosenberg, (1995) indicated that “self-esteem does affect school performance, but it must be the right kind of self-esteem, namely, specific self-esteem” (p.153). However, this study further added that “global self-esteem has very little effect on marks, whereas

[†] GPA=Grade Point Average

specific self-esteem (academic self-esteem) has a strong effect on school performance” (p.153).

Rosenberg, Schoeler and Schoenbach, (1989) indicated that the “well-established relationship between self-esteem and academic performance is primarily attributable to the effects of school marks on self-esteem rather than the reverse they further added that global self-esteem appears to have little or no effect in enhancing academic performance” (p.1014). The authors used a “panel of 1886 adolescent boys to explore the reciprocal relationships between self-esteem and poor school performance” (p.1004) and the findings showed that “school marks have a significant effect on self-esteem” (p.1015). Moreover, this study also revealed that the “relationship between self-esteem and school performance is primarily attributable to the effect of school performance on self-esteem” (p.1004). Similarly, the findings of another study by Rosenberg et al, (1995) indicated that the “degree to which specific academic self-esteem affects global self-esteem, particularly the positive component of global self-esteem, is a function of how highly academic performance is personally valued” (p.141).

Owens, (1994) used nonrecursive linear structural equation models and data from the Youth in Transition study, to compare the “reciprocal interrelations of self-deprecation (negative self-evaluations), positive self-worth (positive self- evaluations), and global self-esteem (which includes both positive and negative evaluations) on high school grades, depression, and delinquency” (p.391). The findings revealed that “negative self-feelings had a small but significant suppressive effect on grades” (p.403). Furthermore, the data indicated that “school achievement is important to adolescent self-worth, as theory suggests, and that it may foster positive feelings when grades are high and stimulate self-reproach when grades are low” (p.405).

On the basis of the above discussion, it is concluded that academic performance is an important indicator of self-esteem of students. As this problem is not still discussed in Pakistani context where most of the students belong to low socio-economic status, and the self-esteem level of majority of the population is low as the research evidence has demonstrated that poverty and economic hardships faced by the family are affected child's self-esteem. A research study by Whitbeck, Simons, Conger, Lorenz, Huck and Elder, (1991) found that “family economic hardship affects early adolescents' self-esteem indirectly by decreasing parental support and involvement” (p.353).

Therefore, the present study is designed to explore the relationship of self-esteem and academic performance of students of grade four in public schools of Pakistan. It is anticipated that this study would be helpful to pinpoint issues related to this relationship and to develop interventions to handle the problem effectively in the

primary education system of a developing country like Pakistan where the problem of dropout is still a big hurdle in the way of achieving the goal of universal primary education.

Method

The present study was descriptive in nature and quantitative techniques were applied to achieve the study objectives. The 4th grade students ($N = 346$) of the public schools ($N=42$) of Rawalpindi city was selected as the study sample. A two-phase panel study was designed to collect quantitative data. The sample included both poor performers and the normal students. After announcement of annual school result, this sample was divided into failed and successful students. The sample students (both promoted and failed) were reassessed by the same instruments in the second term of the successive academic year.

The situation analysis of the whole study sample in the next academic year is described as follows:

**Table 1 Detailed Account of the Original Sample of the Study
($N=346$)**

Successful	Failed	Left*	Remaining Sample
199 (57.5%)	147(42.5%)	41	305

Table 1 presents the detailed account of the original sample of the study. There were 199 promoted, 147 failed and 41 left cases. Due to left cases, the remaining sample of the study was reduced to 305.

**Table 2 Gender Description of the whole Study Sample
($N=346$)**

Category	Frequency	Left	Retained
Boys	148 (42.7%)	34 (22.9 %)	114 (77.1%)
Girls	198 (57.3%)	07 (3.6%)	191 (96.4%)

Table 2 presents the situation analysis of study sample on the basis of gender. There were total 148 (42.7 %) boys' sample, among them 34 (22.9 %) left the school and 114 (77 %) retained in school and continued their studies in the same school. There

* Here, left cases included both dropouts and left the sample school for carrying their studies in some other schools

were 198 (57.2 %) girls in the whole sample, 07 (3.5 %) left the school and 191 (96.4 %) remained in the same school and continued their studies.

Table 3 Sample Division (pass/fail) of the sample on the basis of Annual School Result (N=346)

Category	Frequency	Dropout/left	Retained
Successful	199(57.51%)	11 (5.5%)	188 (94.6 %)
Failed	147(42.48%)	30 (20.4%)	117 (79.6 %)

Table 3 presents the distribution of the whole study sample ($N=346$) on the basis of annual school results. Out of total 346 fourth grade students, 199 (57.51%) were declared successful in annual examination, among them 11(5.5%) were left the school and 188 (94.6%) remained in the same school and continued their education. There are 147 (42.48%) students who failed in annual examination, out of them, 30 (20.4%) were dropped out[‡] from school, whereas 117 (79.6%) continued their studies and repeated the same grade.

For the study of self-esteem of the students, “Beck Youth inventory[§] for self-concept (BSCI-Y)” was adapted (Steer, Kumar, Beck, & Beck, 2005). The Cronbach’s Alfa reliability of the Urdu version of this 20 item scale was measured by using SPSS^{**}13.0 with a sample of 48 students of age group 11 to 14 studying in grade four of the public schools of Rawalpindi city. The reliability level of .88 was attained that was quite near to the reliability (0.89 for girls and, 0.91 for boys) measured by the authors of the scale with a sample of 400 children (girls= 201 and boys=199) of age 7 to 10 (Steer, et al.,2005, p.39) The Urdu translation of the scale was administered to the sample students in the two phases. The self-esteem scale was administered to the sample at the start of last term in January of 2012. For the assessment of academic performance, the objective type tests had been developed locally for the subjects of English, Urdu, Mathematics, Social Studies and General Science, for grade four students. All tests had 20 multiple choice items. The content for the tests was taken from the syllabus of the Punjab Text Book Board Lahore that is officially recommended curriculum of all public schools in the Punjab.

[‡] As according the schools’ report, these students left school without taking school leaving certificate, so they considered as dropout.

[§] The Beck Youth Inventory for self-concept (BSCI-Y) used to assess self-concepts in children between the ages of 7 and 10 years old.

^{**} SPSS, Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

The process of quantitative data collection of the study was completed in two major phases.

Phase 1

The whole sample were delivered locally developed tests of the syllabus of grade four containing the subjects of English, Urdu, Mathematics, Social Studies and General Science and the self-esteem scale, during the last term of their academic session.

Phase 2

In the next academic session, after ten months of the phase 1, the whole sample was reassessed by the same instruments at the end of second term in the successive year.

Analysis of Results

For analysis purpose, the null hypothesis formulated at the start of the research is as follows:

There is no relationship between the academic performance and the self-esteem of the students of grade four.

In order to assess whether academic performance has an impact on self-esteem of the students of grade four, or is there some kind of relationship between the academic performance and the self-esteem of the students, the multiple regression analysis was employed on the whole sample of the students in both phases separately.

Table 4 Multiple Regression statistics of Academic Performance and Self-Esteem of the students (N=305) in phase 1

Predictor	Dependent variable	MR	R ²	Beta	t-value	t-sig.
Academic Performance	Self Esteem	.096	.009	.096	1.68	.09 ^{ns}

The multiple regression analysis of the whole study sample in the phase 1 presents in the Table 4. The analysis was employed on the two major variables, i.e. academic performance and self-esteem. The academic performance was taken as predictor and the self-esteem as independent variable of the study. Table 4 shows that academic performance had no significant impact on the self-esteem of 4th grade students in the first phase of the study (before annual school examination). In other words, there is no significant relationship between the academic performance and the self-esteem of the students.

Table 5 Multiple Regression statistics of Academic Performance and Self Esteem of the students (N=305) in phase 2

Predictor	Dependent variable	MR	R ²	Beta	t-value	t-sig.
Academic Performance	Self Esteem	.44	.19	.44	8.68	.000

Table 5 presents the multiple regression analysis of academic performance and self-esteem of the whole study sample in phase 2. The academic performance was taken as predictor and self-esteem as dependent variable. The analysis revealed that academic performance was a significant predictor for the self-esteem of the students in the second phase. Using the enter method, a significant model of one factor i.e. self-esteem emerged that explained 19 % of the variance ($R^2 = .19$) alone. The relationship of the academic performance and self-esteem of the students showed highly significant results. The t- value (8.68) was significant at .000 alpha.

The analysis presented in the Table 4 and 5 revealed that academic performance has no significant impact on self-esteem of the students in phase 1, whereas, a significant impact on the self-esteem of the students in phase 2. The difference in the findings of the two phases revealed that there could be a third factor which explains the association between the academic performance and self-esteem of the students of grade four. Here the grade retention is the third factor which causes the difference of findings of the same group in two phases. As depicted by the Table 1, 147(42.5%) students were failed in annual examination, and this phenomenon had a worse effect on their self-esteem, which in turn influences the results of the whole sample. In this way, there was no significant impact of academic performance seen on the self-esteem of the students of grade four in the first phase that was measured before examination but in the second phase, the repeaters' sample influenced the results of the whole sample.

Conclusion and Discussion

The main objective of the study was to explore the relationship between the self-esteem and the academic performance of the students of grade four. The self-esteem and academic performance of the students was measured quantitatively by the self-esteem scale and locally developed tests of five subjects taught at grade four of public schools respectively. The multiple regression analysis was employed on both variables. The academic performance was taken as predictor and the self-esteem as independent variable of the study. The analysis revealed that the academic performance had no significant impact on the self-esteem of 4th grade students in the first phase of the study (before annual school examination), whereas, the academic performance was revealed as a significant predictor for the self-esteem of the students in the second phase.

As discussed earlier while analyzing the quantitative data, the difference in the findings of the same sample in the two phases revealed that grade retention as a third factor explained the association between the academic performance and self-esteem of the students of grade four. The grade retention caused the discrepancy in the outcome of the same group in two phases. This conclusion is also supported by a number of research studies. Trethewey, (1999) affirmed that being rated as "unfit for promotion" at the end of a year frequently undermined a child's self-respect and confidence, (p.280). Similarly, Gomes-Neto and Hanushek, (1994) concluded that "repetition sufficiently lowers a student's self-esteem so as to negate any learning during the repeated year" (p.130). In the same way, Stearns, Moller, BlauandPotochnick, (2007) demonstrated in their study that "retained students have lower self-esteem than continuously promoted students", (p.231).

A research study by Pomplun, (1988) indicated that "students who were retained, displayed a significant decrease in self-concept" (p.285). Consistent with this view, Westbury, (1994) explored in her study that the "emotional strain attached to repeating a grade would lower self-esteem in repeaters" (p.248). Furthermore, Anderson, (2000) also endorsed in his study that "repetition has an effect on dropout statistics: it lowers self-esteem and isolates the student from his/her friends and peers" (p.121).

The findings of this study reveal that, the experience of academic failure affects them severely and they feel very disturbed and shocked. It was also found that 30 students left school after failure in annual examination without taking school leaving certificate^{††}. In this way, they dropped out from education system. Most of these students leave school in order to avoid expected insult by peers and teachers in the repeated year. It may be because of their limited financial resources as the entire sample schools were located in the economically deprived areas of Rawalpindi city.

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^{††} School leaving certificate is a necessary requirement for admission in other school.

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Voices of Inmates: What State Offers to Public Sector Shelter Homes in Pakistan?

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Abstract

According to UN, one in three women around the world has been abused in some way – most often by someone she knows. Violence against women is a global issue and has rendered many women helpless. Shelter homes serve as a support mechanism to help the destitute women in distress. Today, shelter home provides a plethora of services ranging from vocational and rehabilitation centers for women to day care centers for their children. Pakistan being a member of international community and a signatory of many international commitments addressing violence against women is committed to follow international standards set for functioning of shelter homes. There is a widespread notion that services provided by state-run-shelter homes in Pakistan are inadequate and insufficient. The research explored the services provided in public shelter homes of Pakistan. Darul Aman Nawan Kot was selected as a sample. In-depth interviews of twenty inmates were done. The findings confirmed improvement in the services provided; however, “follow-up mechanism” and “social mobility” of women need to be addressed.

Key Words: Shelter homes, Darul Aman, Violence against women, Pakistan.

Introduction

Gender based violence is a violation of human rights and has a very negative effect on the lives of women and girls as it erodes their basic rights to life, health, and security (Garcia, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2005, Crittle, 2012). One way of

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giving protection against various types of gender based violence is through shelter homes. Shelter homes are the support structures safe homes in which battered women and their children can stay in protection. In addition, legal assistance and vocational skills are provided to the women. Shelters homes are in real sense an affirmative action measure for women's protection and empowering them. It is an indispensable component of a protection system (Social Welfare Department, 2002).

Background of Women Shelter Homes

The concept of shelter homes to provide refuge to women escaping violence could be traced back to Japan. However, some researchers believed that the first shelter homes were established in Medieval Europe (Totman, 2005). The next trails were found in Italy during the sixteenth century (Cohen, 1995). Feminist movements in the seventh and eighteenth centuries played a vital role in the development of women shelter homes. In the mid nineteenth century, feminists transformed the idea of women shelter homes from a refuge to a remedial support mechanism. This transformation was made possible only after the global recognition of violence as a global issue and a systematic approach towards women shelters established both at Beijing Platform of Action and United Nation's Declaration of Violence. The Beijing Platform for Action declared violence against women as an obstacle for achieving equality, development and peace (Beijing, 1995). The recognition of this issue triggered a new era of legislations aimed to protect violence stricken women by developing support structures. Hence, in 1998, the General Assembly declared a need for improved standards for women shelter homes across the globe. In affirmative, Global Network of Women Shelter (GNWS) was formed in 2009 to ensure that the services provided by women shelter homes are delivered in coherence to the needs of women.

The International Standards

The Global Network of Women's Shelter's (GNWS) in 2009 proposed to unite the women's shelter movement globally to end violence against women and their children. The Network aims to promote effective policies and their implementation in order to prevent violence and protect and empower women and children. The Global Network of Women Shelters suggests that all women shelter homes should be registered with the Department of Social Development under the applicable laws of respective countries. The Network also emphasized the assurance of the 24/7 availability of services by the women shelter homes in all the member states. The International standards proposed by GNWS demand the shelter homes to follow the following protocols:

- Shelter homes should be registered;
- Safe and secure housing facility;

- Proper food and clothing;
- Health facilities;
- Legal advice along with a lawyer;
- Social and psychological support for women and their children;
- Child care facility;
- Money support for recreational and other activities;
- Educational and Vocational Training opportunities;
- Employment assistance;
- Follow-up mechanism for women's inclusion in a society as productive citizens.

Situation in Pakistan

Pakistan has made many national and international commitments to address the issue of violence against women. Pakistan being an active member of Global Network of Women Shelters and also signatory of many International Declarations and Treaties like International Declaration of Human Rights, Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Convention on the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is expected to build up an effective mechanism for the development of shelter homes. The MDG's also obliges Pakistan to protect women and their rights (Khan, 2009). The Constitution of Pakistan also safeguards the rights of women when it states "All citizens are equal before [the] law and are entitled to equal protection of law. . . . There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone" (Constitution of Pakistan, 1973). But, inspite of all these and other commitments Pakistan ranks 145th out of 187 countries on HDI index and 135th country out of a total of 136 countries on the GDI index (Human Development Report, 2013). This indicates a high rate of violence and discrimination against women in Pakistan. However, after the establishment of GNWS in 2009 and its ratification by Pakistan, steps have been taken by the government to ascertain that these support structures are compatible to the set international standards but there is dire need to establish an effective system of state built women shelter homes to help the women facing violence. At present, there are three types of shelter homes funtional in Pakistan: state-run public sector shelter homes, private-sector shelter homes established by private organizations and civil society and Religious-shelter homes run by religious groups. Darul Amans or Public sector shelter homes are established in every province of the country under the Social Welfare Departments. These shelter homes are supposed to provide immediate boarding and lodging, medical and counseling/guidance facilities for runaway/disadvantaged women/ girls in distress; and to impart training in marketable skills to the inmates to enable them to engage themselves in self employment after their release from shelter homes (Social Welfare Department, 2002).

In Pakistan, the first women shelter home was established in 1960's. The Government planned to take steps for women development in various dimensions and it was felt that there was an immediate need to provide safe shelter homes for the women. Thus, thirteen DarulAmans were established in the public sector and six in the private sector throughout Pakistan (Zaidi, 2002). With the passage of time, the number of shelter homes increased and now there are 35 shelter homes in Punjab only. Most of the Darul Amans are over crowded as violence and discrimination against women is widespread in the society. For example, Dural Aman in Multan has a capacity for 30 women but there are more than 80 women living there and in Sahiwal also in a space for 15, 35 women are residing (Munaza, 2009). Another major disadvantage of shelter homes in general is poor infrastructure and no proper recreational and rehabilitation facilities available to women (Bari, 1998). Jahangir (2000) concluded that DarulAmans functions like prison houses by controlling inmates' freedom of movement. These facts show that although women shelter homes are providing a refugee to the violent stricken women in but they are unfortunately failing to accommodate the greater need of women which would help them to overcome the traumatic phase of their life and would also support them to become useful member of the society.

Objectives of the Study

The present study focuses on the state run women shelter homes in Pakistan. It explores the services provided in these shelter homes. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. Identify services offered at women shelter homes through the perspective of inmates;
2. Analyze how these services are in compliance with the international commitments of Pakistan.

Methodology

The study was qualitative in nature and inductive method was used to record the opinions of inmates in identifying the services of public sector women shelter homes. Twenty inmates were selected using convenient sampling technique from the Darul Aman Nawan Kot, Lahore. In addition to the interviews of inmates, an interview of Superintendent of the Darul Aman was also done. The purpose was to record the point of view of the management of the Darul Aman. Initial gatekeeper was the Superintendent of Darul Aman. Access to initial gate keeper was attained through personal contacts. To get maximum output the researchers assured that the selected women had been living in the shelter home for at least two months so they could

identify the services and can categorize their affectivity. Pictorial evidence was also collected with the institutional consent to analyze the quality of service provided at the Darul Aman. A semi structure interview guide was used as a tool of data collection. An interview took about 40 to 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded with the institutional and individual consent. In-depth interviews were recorded digitally and transcribed later on. Afterwards data was categorized based on themes which arose from the responses, similar phrases and concepts to identify the services and their efficiency. To further ensure the trustworthiness of the research, triangulation method was used i.e. findings from the in-depth interviews, personal observations and institutional documentation such as brochures and manual were put together to reach at the final conclusions. Keeping in mind, the traumatic condition of women, extra care was taken during re-building to ensure that this professional relationship does not change into friendship so as to ease the process of detachment (Anjum, 2006).

Findings

Organizational Structure

The Darul Aman Nawani Kot, Lahore was established in 2003 under the Department of Social Welfare, Women Development and Bait ul Mall, Govt. of Punjab. The DarulAman has the capacity to facilitate 50 women. The guidelines for the standard services are uniform throughout the Punjab. Recently, new guidelines have been developed with the assistance of GTZ, Health Department, Police, lawyers and NGOs like Aurat Foundation, ShirkatGah, Dastak and MDM. These guidelines have been developed keeping in view the international standards of services to be provided at the Shelter Homes.

Physical Structure

The DarulAman has a well-constructed building comprising of two floors. The offices, classes for vocational training courses, religious classes, doctor's room, kitchen and a well-furnished dining room are on the ground floor while rooms for the inmates are on the second floor. There are many verandas for the women to sit during the hours of load shedding on the second floor covered by nets. There are net doors on the stairs and between the rooms. Each room can accommodate 6 to 8 women but in case of over crowdedness the number increases even up to 10. There is an open play area for children. The infrastructure of the DarulAman has greatly improved due to the financial assistance by the German agency.

Mission

The DarulAman aims to provide immediate boarding and lodging, medical and counseling/guidance facilities for runaway/disadvantaged women/ girls in distress; and

to impart training in marketable skills to the inmates to enable them to engage themselves in self employment after their release from shelter homes. Previously women were admitted in the Darul Aman only at the order from the court but recently due to change in the policy self- referrals are also considered.

Admission Policy

Freedom of movement is totally restricted in DarulAman and women can only leave for their cases and for this purpose transport is provided by the DarulAman. A woman usually can stay about 3 months in the shelter home; however, in special circumstances it can be extended.

Accommodation

According to International standards, the provision of safe housing includes 24/7 availability of services with peace, dignity and security. However, the practice in Pakistan is different. Although the services are provided round the clock, but no admission or departure could be done on Sunday. Hence, the shelter home actually works for six days. There are proper security arrangements. The inmates feel that the environment of DarulAman is very comfortable and clean. "*I am happy to be in a place like this.....*" (*Najma, a resident*). It is duty of the resident women to maintain cleanliness in the Darul Aman (rooms, toilets, kitchen, courtyard etc.). The DarulAman was over-crowded. At the time of visit to the Darul Aman, there were 80 women residing whereas accommodation facilities were for 50 women only.

Food and Clothing

Sufficient availability, equal accessibility, and balanced diet are the basic needs of the inmates which must be catered in the women shelter homes as per various international conventions and declarations. The administration of DarulAman stressed that there is enough food available to meet the need of residents. However, the women interviewed didn't agree with this stand by the administration. "*The food is given according to the set standard by the administration....whenever we ask for something more, the reply is 'it's finished'".... (Sabira)*. According to another woman, "*impressive food menus for the whole week are displayed but they are not followed properly..... There is nobody to ask them why the menus are not followed"..... (Razia)*. The researchers also noted that women having children as well as pregnant women were also not satisfied with the availability of food. "*I have a seven months baby and he is on mother feed....but I'm unable to satisfy the baby as I'm not getting proper balanced diet.... (Nasreen)*. *I'm pregnant....it is my sixth month; I'm not given any fruits or milk..... (Saima)*. The clothes are not given to each woman but only provided when women don't had proper clothes.

Health Services

Again the International standards demand a 24 hour doctor along with a psychologist (visiting basis) at the shelter home. And also Shelter homes should have regular contact with the hospitals in cases of any emergency. The researchers found that the doctor was not available round the clock at the DarulAman. Only in case of need she is called. However, the Superintendent claimed that "*The doctor is available on just a call....she is in regular contact with us and personally knows each of the resident medical history*". The DarulAman was found in regular with two local hospitals namely, MianMunshi and Ganga Ram hospital. The inmates however, believed that it is merely a formality as they are not allowed to visit any hospital. "*....the women living here are not allowed to visit any hospital in case of need on personal basis nor are provided with any transport facility for the purpose....*" (Najma). "*The medical room here is only a show piece as women are bound to buy their own medicines...(Syeeda)*". The Superintendent told the researchers that a female psychologist visits DarulAman twice a week for the counseling of the women. "*I'm living here for more a month, but never got a chance to meet the psychiatrist.....(Munaza)*". Another resident (Sonia) told that, "*.... there is no facility of individual counseling*".

Legal Aid

As per International standards for shelter homes, it is their prime duty to provide free legal aid and assistance to all the residing women from the time of admission till their departure from the DarulAman. At the DarulAman Nawan Kot, free legal aid is only provided to the women who cannot afford a lawyer. "*The women living here are mostly referred by the Court and they have their own lawyers..... (Saima)*". The researchers found that the DarulAman has a panel of 10 lawyers announced for a year and is revised annually. "*Weekly awareness sessions are arranged to guide women on legal matters*"(Superintendent, DarulAman).

Recreational Activities

The purpose of recreational activities is to help the destitute women from social isolation and involve them in normal social life. Social mobility is a dream for these women as they are not allowed to go out except for their court hearings and that too is guided. The National days like Independence Day, Quaid Day etc. and also the religious festivals like Eid, Shabarat etc. are celebrated at the DarulAman. Special gifts and presents are given to the women and children on Eid.

Facilities For Children

The Global Network of Women's Shelter requires that children of the women residing in the shelter homes must be accommodated both physically and psychologically.

Mental growth assistance should be provided to them for overcoming their traumatic past. The researchers found few children living with their children at the DarulAman. An informal school is also found providing basic educational skills to the children. A proper play area has been built; however, there was no special area or room allocated for indoor games. *"I have a two-and-half years girl child.....there is nothing she can do all the day.....further, she is not given proper diet, milk etc.....(JamilaBibi).*

Rehabilitation Programs

There were not serious efforts found for the rehabilitation of inmates. There was no arrangement for the education of the residents as their stay is very temporary and mostly for few months. *"A teacher comes twice a week and women take sessions with her..... but 'yes', there is no formal educational set up for the women here.... (Superintendent).* Further, no steps could be seen for the economic empowerment of women and making them able to live their own living. *"The women here sit all the day idle.... They are not involved in any productive activity..... Nobody thinks about us..... after leaving from here, what could we do.... I don't want to go back from where I came..... but I'm helpless.....I don't know what will I do....where will I live..... "(Gulm Fatima).*

Follow-Up Mechanism

There was no follow-up mechanism developed in the DarulAman. *"It is beyond our scope of work to keep follow up of the women residents.....there are hundreds of women who stayed at the DarulAman..... (Senior Admin Officer, DarulAman). "We don't have any budget for such activity.....(Superintendent).*

Staff and Management

In accordance with CEDAW, shelter homes must have a gender sensitized management. The DarulAman was found giving training to the staff in compliance with the international standards in collaboration with the International and National NGOs. Recently, short courses were offered to the management of the DarulAman on gender sensitization, domestic violence, legal literacy, family laws, and coping strategies for psychological distress.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the DarulAman is done by the Advisory Committee notified by the Director General of the Social Welfare Department, Government of Punjab. However, the researchers found that it is not done on regular terms.

Discussion

A shelter home is considered as a heaven on the earth by the destitute women. The underlying principle of the present research was to identify the services of public sector shelter homes in Pakistan in the light of in-depth interviews with the women residing there. The study further probed the compliance of the services and facilities provided at the state run shelter homes with the international standards set by GNWS. The findings give a fresh and new dimension in understanding the condition of DarulAmans in Pakistan.

Crittle (2012) has concluded that the public sector shelter homes in Pakistan are like sub-jails and have maintained their mechanism as family patriarchs. However, as observed by the researches, there is change in the policies after the rejuvenation of State run DarulAmans by the Social Welfare Departments in close collaboration with the international donor agencies. The interviews with the women residents show that DarulAmans are easily accessible and more approachable now. There are restrictions on the mobility of the women, but, it is mostly for the protection of the women. The family members or other people were following the women and looking for a chance to attack them. And also there still exists stigmas associated with women shelter homes in Pakistan. There is a possibility to develop close liaison between DarulAmans and Crisis Center. Admission, departure and Mulaqats can take place at these Centers keeping the location of DarulAmans in secret. This step can evade security issues which DarulAmans are facing at present and would also ensure the freedom of movement to the inmates.

The compliance of the State run shelter homes with the international standards is found to be on deficient side. Although the services have improved over the time but some of the much needed steps such as follow-up mechanism of the destitute women is totally absent. Financial constraints in a developing country like Pakistan are understandable but the importance of follow up mechanism cannot be denied. Further, the functioning of DarulAmans for six days and treating Sunday as a holiday is in contrast with the International Standards. Any woman seeking help on Sunday can't be refused just because it is a holiday. Similarly, availability of proper nutritional diet is also found not in compliance with the International standards particularly in case of pregnant women and children.

The negligence towards the rehabilitation of women and equipping them with economic self-independence is a major drawback of the state run shelter homes in Pakistan. The temporary stay of women at the DarulAman and their stand and struggle against violence go waste, when they are not provided with alternative mechanisms. There is dire need to address this issue at the DarulAmans and proper technical and financial arrangements to be made by the Govt. on priority basis.

Recommendations

- ❖ Women shelter homes in Pakistan should develop a plan, covering at least five years, giving an outline of the implementation of the International Standards. The plan can also be part of Plan of Action on Violence against Women and/or Gender Equality.
- ❖ Women shelter homes should undertake an audit of existing service provisions and need assessment identification as foremost step towards implementation of International Standards.
- ❖ An efficient follow-up system should be introduced to ensure the normal integration of women in the society.
- ❖ Government should initiate awareness programs for masses in order to end the stigma of the inmates after seeking protection in women shelter homes. These awareness programs should be initiated through print and electronic media of Pakistan.
- ❖ Shelter homes should be connected to Crisis Centers. This will not only help in the 24/7 provision of services but will also protect the residents of the shelter home.
- ❖ Foreign and local donor agencies and NGO's should work in collaboration with shelter homes to improve the standard of services in Pakistan.
- ❖ Future researches should be conducted on the follow-up mechanism and freedom of movement of the inmates in the shelter homes.

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Difficulties Encountered by Students with Visual Impairment in Inclusive Education at Higher Education Level

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Abstract

The focus of this quantitative study was on identifying difficulties being faced by students with visual impairment in inclusive education at higher education institutions. A self-developed and validated questionnaire (Cronbach alpha: 0.879) was employed for data collection from a sample of seventy (70) graduate and continuing students with visual impairment (males=48, females=22) from colleges and universities of Pakistan. Data were analyzed by using SPSS. Frequencies were run to have an overall picture of their difficulties. Major findings revealed that students with visual impairment were encountering problems in orientation & mobility, transportation, academics, modes of examination and in use of information technology etc. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

Key words: Students with visual impairment, Difficulties, Inclusive education, Higher education level

Introduction

Inclusive education is an educational methodology and philosophical mindset that gives all students an ownership of community and higher level of chances for

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academic progress and social integration. It gives students confidence of being greeted, applauded and graced (nypie.org/inclusive.html). Proponents of inclusion argue that separate classes, special schooling, and other ways of keeping children with special needs away from the general classrooms should take place only when the child is having that profound level of disability which cannot be catered in a regular classroom even with the provision of services according to his disability (Ajuwon, 2008).

Armstrong is of the view that inclusive education is not only supposed as including students with special needs but it is also related with all at risk students who can be excluded on social political and economic basis. Inclusion is also fundamentally concerned with philosophies of setting and community and is sensitive to schools how they react towards variety and change locally and nationally.

The Government of Pakistan is committed to fulfill the requirements of all children without any partiality and will continue to revise its policies and plans to mainstream all children with special needs having mild level of disabilities (Government of Pakistan, 2008). To implement National Policy for Persons with Disabilities 2002, National Plan of Action was formulated in 2006. The major recommendation of this plan focuses on paying attention to all areas (social, educational, emotional and physical etc.) of a child's development without being biased towards multiple requirements, abilities, disabilities and families. Curriculum, assessment and evaluation procedures for children with disabilities should be malleable to motivate rather than to generate an obstacle to learning, improvement and involvement (Government of Pakistan, 2006). According to Haider (2008), Pakistani teachers have positive inclination towards inclusion. They agree that inclusive education increases social integration and decreases negative attitude towards students with disabilities. A strong coordination between regular school teachers and special school teachers is mandatory. Clear and lucid parameters are required for successful implementation of inclusive education.

Persons with visual impairment do face many challenges and barriers in society. Visual impairment may cause isolation, may create hurdle in acquisition of degrees leading towards unemployment. Research indicates that visual impairment in itself does not cause problem but illiteracy and low self-esteem makes it difficult for persons with visual impairment to find jobs. In 1990s and 2000s, many legal initiatives and programs on providing assistance to persons with disabilities were started but their effect was not on a large scale (Rodney, nd). Haugann (1987) conducted a study to identify problems of visually handicapped students in institutions of higher education. Major findings of study included unavailability of services of counseling and guidance, shortage of Braille printed books and visual readers, problem in adjustment with

university environment, teachers' ignorant behavior towards disabilities, difficulties in taking exams and problems in transportation etc.

Fuller, Healey, Bradley & Hall (2004) also identified difficulties encountered by the handicapped students at higher education level. The study showed many problems such as the teachers' delivery of lectures in fast speed, problem in taking part in discussions and giving answers to questions. It was also identified that some of the teachers felt reluctance in getting their lectures recorded on audio tape. It was also observed that educational institutions were not accessible. There was also shortage of computer programs and softwares suitable to the disability of visual impairment.

In Pakistani cultural context in past times, no serious attempts have been made to explore the difficulties and problems regarding visually impaired students in inclusion at higher education level. Although Shahzadi (1992) explored the perception of parents and teachers about the handicapped and Rashid (1991) examined the attitude of people towards the handicapped, it was imperative to investigate the difficulties of students with visual impairment in inclusive class room at higher education level.

Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To find out academic problems faced by students with visual impairment in inclusion at higher education level.
2. To explore difficulties of students with visual impairment in taking examination.
3. To investigate the problems encountered by students with visual impairment in the use of information technology.
4. To find out problems of students with visual impairment in interaction with their sighted peers and teachers.

Methodology

Population of the study consisted of all graduate and continuing students with visual impairment from colleges and universities of Pakistan. The sample of seventy (70) graduate and continuing students with visual impairment (males=48, females=22) was conveniently selected from colleges and universities of Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan, Khyber Pukhtoon Kha, Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Islamabad. These colleges and universities were located in twelve cities (Lahore, Islamabad, Multan, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Okara, Gujrat, Karachi, Larkana, Quetta, Peshawar, Mirpur) of Pakistan.

The qualifications of respondents ranged between Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) to Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.). Their age ranged between 19-40 years.

Instrument of the Study

After reviewing the related literature and consulting with eminent persons with visual impairment, a questionnaire containing forty seven (47) questions with three (3) options (Yes, No, To some extent) was developed. The questionnaire was validated by persons with visual impairment. The questions were related to difficulties faced by students with visual impairment in academics, orientation & mobility, information technology, transportation, interaction with peers and teachers, modes of taking examinations, provision of material in Braille and provision of assistive devices etc. The reliability of the instrument was 0.879 (Cronbach alpha).

Data Collection and Analysis

First of all, the telephone numbers of graduate and continuing students with visual impairment were gathered with the help of some motivated persons with visual impairment. The questionnaires were filled up in person from 15 subjects belonging to Lahore. Then telephonic contacts were made with other subjects belonging to other cities of all provinces. They were informed about the purpose of telephonic call. They were requested to spare 15 to 20 minutes for filling up the questionnaire. They were assured that confidentiality and anonymity will strictly be observed. Data were analyzed by running frequencies.

Major Findings

In the context of information given in Table 1, fooling findings are drawn:

1. (57.1%) students with visual impairment reported that they could not use transport provided by their institution.
2. (67.1%) persons with visual impairment responded that they were fully oriented with their institution and its surroundings.
3. A large number of students with visual impairment (87.1%) opined that teachers did not use mike for audio recording in the classroom.
4. (91.4%) students with visual impairment were of the view that their institutions were not providing them with lecture notes in Braille.
5. A vast majority of students with visual impairment (67.1%) answered that their institutions did not make any arrangements for letting them know about information displayed on notice board.
6. Almost (63%) students with visual impairment expressed their reservations regarding non cooperative behavior of drivers and conductors of the shuttle bus service of their institution.

7. Almost all of the students with visual impairment reported that they could independently move in their institution.
8. A vast number of students with visual impairment (95.7%) reported that they were not being provided with audio books by their institutions.
9. (78.5%) students with visual impairment expressed their concern about non availability of JAWS software on library computers in their institutions.
10. A large number of students with visual impairment (70%) responded that they had to seek assistance of their fellows for drawing graphs and pictures for their course assignments.
11. (58.6%) students with visual impairment were of the view that their institutions had not made arrangements for easy access to toilets.
12. (55.7%) students with visual impairment reported that their institutions had not provided them with facility of internet.
13. A vast majority of students with visual impairment (83%) reported that their institutions were not providing them with audio cassettes.
14. A large number of students with visual impairment (83%) were of the view that similarity existed between lectures of the teachers and handouts.
15. Most of the students with visual impairment (93%) responded that note takers had not been appointed for their assistance in classroom.
16. Majority of students with visual impairment (77.2%) expressed their grievance on facing problems in getting their notes recorded.
17. (60%) students with visual impairment complained about non cooperative behavior of computer lab assistants.
18. (67.2%) students with visual impairment were of the view that their institutions were not providing them with Perkin Braillers.
19. (93%) students with visual impairment reported that their institutions had not had Braille embossers.
20. A large number of students with visual impairment (71.5%) responded that their institutions had no arrangements for taking examination through audio recording.

21. (83%) students with visual impairment reported that they could take examination with the assistance of a writer.
22. (78.6%) students with visual impairment responded that they could not take examination in Braille in their institutions.
23. (96.7%) students with visual impairment opined that they could not take examination on computer in their institutions.
24. (90%) students with visual impairment were of the view that their class fellows helped them in their studies.
25. Majority of students with visual impairment (86%) reported that special facilities were not being provided to them in canteens of their institutions.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Responses

S. No.	Statements	Frequency Yes	Frequency No	Frequency To some extent
1	Can you use transport provided by your institution?	29 41.4%	30 42.8	10 14.3%
2	Are you fully oriented with your institution and its surroundings?	47 67.1%	6 8.6	17 24.3%
3	Do the teachers use mike for audio recording in the classroom?	5 7.1%	61 87.1	4 5.7%
4	Are you provided with lecture notes in Braille?	2 2.9%	64 91.4	4 5.7%
5	Does your institution make any arrangement for letting you know about the information displayed on the notice board?	8 11.4%	47 67.1	15 21.4%
6	Do the drivers and conductors of the shuttle service cooperate with you?	25 35.7%	20 28.6	24 34.3%
7	Can you move independently in your institution?	55 78.6%	4 5.7	11 15.7%
8	Are you provided with audio books by your institution?	3 4.3%	61 87.1	6 8.6%
9	Has JAWS software been installed on library computers in your institution?	15 21.4%	50 71.4	5 7.1%
10	Do you seek help of others for drawing graphs and pictures for your class assignments?	1349 70%	8 11.4	13 18.6%
11	Has the institution made arrangements for easy access to toilets?	28 40%	30 42.9	11 15.7%
12	Has your institution provided you with facility of internet?	31 44.3%	33 47.1	6 8.6%
13	Does your institution provide you audio cassettes?	12 17.1%	55 78.6	3 4.3%
14	Does similarity exist between lecture of the teacher and handouts?	45 64.3%	12 17.1	13 18.6%

15	Is there any note taker in the classroom for your assistance?	5 7.1%	63 90	2 2.9%
16	Do barriers installed in your institution create problem for you?	22 31.4%	34 48.6	13 18.6%
17	Do you face difficulty in getting your notes recorded?	37 52.9%	15 21.4	17 24.3%
18	Does computer lab assistant help you when you ask for his help?	26 37.1%	38 54.3	4 5.7%
19	Does your institution provide Perkin Braillers?	22 31.4%	44 62.9	3 4.3%
20	Does your institution have Braille embossers?	5 7.1%	64 91.4	1 1.4%
21	Can you take examination through audio recording in your institution?	20 28.6%	48 68.6	2 2.9%
22	Can you take examination through a writer in your institution?	56 80%	12 17.1	2 2.9%
24	Can you take examination in Braille in your institution?	18 25.7%	48 68.6	7 10%
25	Can you take examination on computer in your institution?	3 4.3%	61 87.1	6 8.6
26	Do your class fellows help you in studies?	538 75.7%	8 12.9	9 14.3
27	Are you provided with special facilities at the canteen of your institution?	10 14.3%	40 57.1	20 28.6
28	Are you provided with opportunities of taking part in sports and games?	10 14.3%	44 62.9	16 22.9
29	Are you given any training for personal grooming in your institution?	5 7.1%	62 88.6	3 4.3
30	Do you have good interaction with your teachers?	37 52.9%	14 20	19 27.1
31	Can you go to the offices of your teachers without any hesitation?	55 78.6%	6 8.6	9 12.9
32	Do you face difficulty in moving within your department?	16 22.9%	37 52.9	17 24.3
33	Do your teachers give special attention to you during lectures?	14 20%	46 65.7	10 14.3

34	Do all teachers allow you to record their lectures?	8 12.4%	48 68.6	14 20
35	Do all people help you in your institution?	20 28.6%	42 60	8 11.4
36	Does your institution provide you with white cane and other assistive devices?	5 7.1%	59 84.3	6 8.6
37	Have your institution provided prospectus and other documents in Braille?	1 1.4%	67 95.2	1 1.4
38	Have you provided with library codes at home?	1 1.4%	50 71.4	19 27.1
39	Is time table of the institution prepared keeping in view your disability?	7 10%	50 71.4	13 18.6
40	Are you given special assistance in the use of audio visual aids?	5 7.1%	53 75.7	12 17.4
41	Does your institution provide material in soft form?	4 5.7%	58 82.9	8 11.4
42	Does your institution provide text books in Braille?	3 4.3%	59 84.3	8 11.4
43	Has your institution make any policy regarding exams?	11 15.7%	33 47.1	26 37.1
44	Are you being awarded any scholarship on the basis of disability?	2 2.9%	47 67.1%	21 30
45	Is your fee a hurdle in your education?	6 8.6%	52 74.3%	12 17.1
46	Does your institution facilitate persons with low vision in taking exams according to their requirement?	7 10%	38 54.3%	24 34.3

26. (86%) students with visual impairment responded that their institutions were not providing them with opportunities of taking part in sports and games.
27. (93%) students with visual impairment reported that their institutions were not providing them with training regarding their personal grooming.
28. A large number of students with visual impairment (80%) were of the view that they had good interaction with their teachers.

29. (91.5%) students with visual impairment spoke out that they could go to the offices of their teachers without any hesitation.
30. A vast majority of students with visual impairment (80%) complained that their teachers did not give special attention to them during lectures.
31. (89%) students with visual impairment reported that their teachers did not allow them to record their lectures.
32. (71.4%) students with visual impairment reported that all people in their institution did help them.
33. (93%) students with visual impairment were of the view that their institutions were not providing them with white canes and other assistive devices.
34. (96.6%) students with visual impairment reported that they were not being provided with prospectus and other documents in Braille by their institutions.
35. A vast majority of students with visual impairment complained about the non-availability of reading material in soft form.
36. (96%) students with visual impairment responded that their institutions were not providing them with text books in Braille.
37. (97%) students with visual impairment answered that they were not being awarded any scholarship on the basis of disability.
38. A large number of persons with visual impairment (88.6%) reported that their institutions were not facilitating persons with low vision in taking examination.

Discussion and Recommendations

This study was carried out to examine the difficulties encountered by students with visual impairment at higher education level. One major focus was on the opinion of visually impaired persons regarding social and institutional support. The results are in agreement with what Hodge and Keller (1999) and Hougann (1987) discovered in their studies. Hodges & Keller (1999) conducted a study aimed at recognizing the extent to which students perceive the process of inclusion of the handicapped students in the university. The results indicated that there were many problems that visually impaired students were facing..Haugann (1987) conducted a study to identify the problems of visually handicapped students in higher educational institutions. The results indicated many different problems; for example the absence of counseling services, few numbers of Braille printed books, lack of visual readers, the difficulty of adjustment with the university life, teachers' neglect of their special needs, and the problem of taking exams and transport etc.

The following recommendations are made on the basis of results of this study:

1. Students with visual impairment are in great trouble due to unavailability of reading material, so it is strongly recommended that text books in Braille,

- material in soft form (text and audio form) and audio recorded books should be provided to them at higher education level as early as possible.
- 2. The organizations which are working in audio recording of books may be contacted. Government can purchase recorded material from them and send it to all libraries.
 - 3. Transport facility should be provided to all students with disabilities in general and to students with visual impairment in particular at higher education level.
 - 4. Note taking assistance in classrooms should be ensured.
 - 5. Facility for taking exams in audio recording, in Braille and on computer should be started at all institutions.
 - 6. All recommendations of various educational policies on Special Education must be implemented in letter & spirit.
 - 7. Books can also be scanned.
 - 8. In all buildings, ramps should be constructed which may help blind, persons with physical disabilities, heart patients, old people, children etc.
 - 9. Extra time 15 minutes/ hour should be given.
 - 10. Students with low vision should be treated according to the level of their problem. Rules should be formulated.
 - 11. Urdu Screen Reader Software has not still been made available. JAWS software is available in English, Persian, Hindi and many other languages. It can enable a blind person to study independently.

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