



A Comparative Study of Teachers' Academic & Professional Qualifications in Public and Private Secondary Schools in Malakand Division

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Abstract: *Quality education comprises of so many factors, such as teachers' professional and academic qualifications. This study deals with the quantitative part of a larger study that looks at factors that influence the quality of education in private schools as well as in public schools in the Malakand Division. The study's sample consisted of four hundred and eighty teachers from forty-eight randomly selected schools (fifty percent public and fifty percent private sector) in Malakand. A survey questionnaire technique was used for the collection of data, which was then analyzed using inferential statistics and descriptive statistics. Results indicate that teachers at public secondary schools had higher academic qualifications, more teaching experience and were on average older in comparison to private school teachers. In light of the recruitment guidelines of the National Education Policy (2017), the paper recommended that teachers in both public and private schools improve their professional qualifications as well as academic qualifications.*

Key Words: Quality Education, Teachers' Education, Academic and Professional Qualifications, Teachers' Ages and Teaching Experiences

Introduction

Teaching is a very sacred, noble and prophetic profession wherein the accumulated knowledge, skills and values are transmitted from one generation to another in an organized and systematic way. In the teaching-learning process, we cannot ignore the teachers' role. Their product's quality can be determined by the quality of their instructions. Hence it is necessary that a teacher should be equipped with certain qualities and qualifications. [Dilshad \(2009\)](#) maintains that in order to improve the quality of teachers in any country, teacher education must be improved as these are interdependent. Teachers need academic and professional qualifications to work in a formal educational environment. [Stephen \(2003\)](#) says that the educational and pedagogical skills of teachers have a significant impact on students' learning.

Quality education is an issue of significant interest in the academic world. Defining quality education is as complex as the term 'quality' itself.

Pounder (1999) comments that quality is a "notoriously ambiguous term". Adam (2003) argues that "defining quality is ultimately linked to diversity, conflicts and divisions of society" (p.25). Students, their parents, school management, their teachers, local administration, ministry of education and government all have different viewpoints on the definition of educational quality. If we try to find out a singular criterion for assessing quality in education, it is, therefore, necessary to understand all these different perspectives of quality which show the preferences of so many different stakeholders. However, there is a universal agreement that quality education is largely dependent upon quality teachers. Only academically sound and professionally competent teachers can prove the catalyst in the process of quality education. They are the driving force behind the whole teaching-learning processes from an elementary school to a university.

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According to the Higher Education Commission, Pakistan's National Qualifications Framework (2015, p.6) defines eight levels of education. The Pre-Primary, as well as the Primary stages, make up Level One. On the other hand, the second level is Middle School, and level three is Secondary School. Level four covers Higher Secondary education, and level five encompasses Associate Degree and Ordinary Bachelor programmes. Level six consists of Bachelor (Honors) and level seven master's degree programmes. Level eight is the final stage which is the Doctoral programme.

National Education Policy (NEP) (2009) stipulated the basic requirements of academic and professional qualification for induction of teachers, which are described below:

“For teaching at the elementary level, teachers must possess a bachelor's degree plus B.Ed as it will be the pre requisition for the same post. By 2018, a master's level for secondary and higher secondary education with a B.Ed. It will be necessary. PTC and CT will be eliminated, and new hiring of employees will be made on the basis of the expanded standard.” (p.42).

It was also admitted in the National Education Policy (2017) that though policies are made in all provinces for the hiring of teachers, these policies are violated in most of the private and public-private partnership schools because of low salary as they induct untrained and unqualified staff. The induction criteria for teachers were raised in National Education Policy (2017), which entails:

“For teaching at the elementary level, teachers must possess BA/BSc or 4 years B.Ed.(Hons) while at the Secondary or intermediate level, a 16 years (Master) qualification in a subject plus B.Ed. or five years B.Ed. (Hons) shall be required” (p.63).

Quality education is directly linked with the quality of teaching being imparted in educational institutions. [Stephen \(2003\)](#) points out that ““At the moment, critical research into improving the quality of learning outcomes is focused on pedagogy, or the teaching-learning process.” (p.18). Teachers' qualification has a direct bearing upon the academic achievements of students as evidenced by [Santos \(2007\)](#) when he concludes that qualification of teachers has been found an important variable in improving student's scores most frequently. As far as teaching experience is

concerned, Santos (2007) upholds that “The experience of the teacher has a major and constructive effect on the grades of the students.” (p.8). Sharma (1997) describes (as cited in [Dilshad, 2009](#)), that teachers' education quality is basically determined by three major aspects: their professional excellence, the quality of their education, and their personality traits. The standard of education is directly affected by the quality of teachers, who are highly reliant on their general and technical credentials, which they achieve before entering the teaching profession, and how much they have progressed during their time on the job.

The aim of this paper was to compare and contrast the quality and standard of private secondary schools and public secondary schools in terms of their teachers. Four variables of private and teachers of public secondary schools were compared; names of variables are their professional credentials, academic qualifications, their ages, and teaching experiences (length of service). All academic and professional qualifications of secondary schools' teachers in private and public schools were considered in line with levels of education spelt out in the National Qualifications Framework (2015) as pronounced by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this research study are mentioned below:

- To compare teachers' academic qualifications teaching in private and public secondary schools.
- To compare teachers' professional qualifications teaching in private and public secondary schools.
- To compare teachers' ages and teaching experiences teaching in private and public secondary schools.

Delimitations of the Study

The research study was delimited to the following areas: -

- Teachers are teaching in Private and Public secondary schools of Malakand Division.
- In the event of multiple horizontal qualifications of a respondent (e.g., double graduation, double masters etc.), only the highest academic qualification has been considered.

- In the case of multiple professional qualifications (PTC/CT/B.Ed./M.Ed.), the highest vertical professional qualification (M.Ed.) has been considered only.
- Experience in months (e.g., eight months, nine months) has been rounded off to a complete year, while less than a year experience has been rounded off to one complete year.

Literature Review

Quality education is defined by five quality dimensions which include excellence of learners, excellence of learning environments, excellence of contents, excellence of processes and excellence of outcomes (UNICEF 2000). The quality of processes encompasses teachers, supervision and support. Pigozzi (2004) points out that "Quality instructional processes necessitate well-trained teachers who are capable of using learner-centred teaching and learning techniques as well as life skill approaches." (p.5). The role of teachers is very crucial and decisive in the overall performance of any educational system. There are many factors which collectively contribute towards quality education. A general misperception exists that only teachers are responsible for education and the standard or quality which it carries. As stated by Sallis (2002), that "too frequently, teachers are used as the scapegoats for educational system failures." (p.40). In fact, many stakeholders are involved in the education system, and teachers are only responsible for the instructions which they impart in the educational institutions. Quality is a multidimensional phenomenon, and there are many other contributory factors towards quality education; however, the scope of the paper is confined to teachers and those issues which are directly related to teachers.

Unfortunately, in Pakistan, the teaching profession, being the noblest and most sacred of all professions, is the least preferred due to many obvious reasons of their own, but the major reason attributed in National Education Policy (2017) is that "Because of the low market value, teaching isn't a career of preference and choice." (p.62). The majority of the educated youth join other professions which offer high economic prospects, accelerated promotions, social status, perks and privileges and other inherent administrative powers and material gains. However, the NEP (2017) makes a tall

commitment to "make teaching a desirable career for talented young people" (p.63).

Shortage of teachers in a school has adverse and very negative effects on the students' progress, content assimilation, academic achievements and overall performance of students (Santos 2007). One of the biggest hurdles towards quality education in the public sector schools is un-filled posts, while in private schools, the major issue is un-trained teachers. After conducting an in-depth analysis of the Pakistan National Education Census in lieu of UNESCO Islamabad, Lynd (2007) highlighted that:

"Both vacant teaching positions and inexperienced teachers have an effect on educational efficiency. In public schools, the majority of teachers had undergone advanced training (only 5% were untrained). In contrast, more than half of teachers in private schools had received no formal education." (p.8).

Pre-service and in-service training of teachers is another important issue towards quality education. Pigozzi (2004) argues that the manner in which understanding, competencies and, values are passed on to students is just as critical as the manner in which they were learned by their teachers. The grey areas in teachers' training programmes have been criticized time and again and highlighted in all educational policies. The National Education Policy (1998) pointed out clearly that quality in teachers' education has got little attention and resultantly has produced a large number of teachers having a low understanding of teaching skills and subject matter. A similar resonance was echoed in all the policies, especially in the National Education Policy (2009) when it stated that "Mutations in administration, outdated pre-service training structure and low standards in-service training regime are all to blame for the system's poor product quality in significant numbers." (p.42). These admitted failures and optimistic claims in the current National Education Policy (2017) have been made by setting Vision 2025 with a renewed commitment that: -

"Intensive and careful preparation is needed to create an efficient and productive system with a sufficient number of teachers and educators who are properly educated, sufficiently recruited, encouraged, inspired, and assisted in helping children achieve prescribed mastering effects."(p.61).

Stressing on the quality of teachers' education, [Stephen \(2003\)](#) evidenced that "It is the consistency of teacher education and the interaction between pre-service and in-service preparation that has a positive effect on learning outcomes" (p.4). Feeling the dire need for reforms in teachers' education, [Stephen \(2003\)](#) argues, "latest research into teacher education shows that pre-service teacher preparation is a significant field for change and innovation. Most teacher education colleges are now run more like high schools and have weak pedagogy and children's learning instruction." (p.21). Teachers' education, like quality education, is a universal problem, and Pakistan is no exception to this global issue. [Dilshad \(2010\)](#) points out that: -

"In Pakistan, concerned constituencies have challenged and criticized the standard of teacher education. Teacher education has expanded significantly in quantity to meet the growing needs of teachers at different levels; however, the standards of teacher training have been overlooked and compromised." (p.86)

In Pakistan, the education department is the most vulnerable department to political and other undue interferences. There is frequent meddling from different quarters which/ who do not know the nuts and bolts of the education system. [Noureen and Kakar \(2018\)](#) recommend that political interference should be discouraged in this regard. Another reason for the neglect of teachers' education is lack of financial resources and separate funding, as pointed out in the National Education Policy (2017):

"At the moment, the Higher Education Commission does not place sufficient emphasis on funding teacher education because it distributes funds to universities on formula factors: "1" for arts, humanities, and social sciences, which includes teacher education; "2" for sciences/ agriculture; and "3" for Engineering/Medical and Veterinary Medicine".(p.62)

Since teachers' academic and professional qualifications have a direct bearing on their instructions being imparted in the educational institutions, therefore, it becomes essential to

enhance the quality of teachers' qualifications. The National Education Policy (2017) has outlined some major steps in this direction such as (p.63):

- Determine the minimum common requirements for academic qualifications and pre-service teachers' qualifications for the recruitment of teachers in public and private schools and joint public and private institutions.
- Developing links between in-service teacher preparation services and pre-service/initial induction programmes.
- Making continuous professional development a regular element relating to teachers' promotion and advancement.
- Determining the minimum wage / BPS for teachers at different levels of public and private schools, as well as schools with a public-private partnership.

Research Methodology

In view of the objectives of the study, a quantitative method was used for the research study. All public and private secondary schools of the Malakand division were the populations of this study. Forty eighty (48) secondary schools (fifty % from each public and private sector) were randomly chosen from four districts (Upper Dir, Malakand, Swat and Lower Dir) as a sample of the study. Ten teachers were chosen at random from each sample school to participate in the study. Male and female teachers from both types of educational institutions had equal representation. A close-ended survey questionnaire was employed to collect data from four hundred and eighty (480) secondary schools' teachers. Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected data were organized, tabulated and analyzed. For analysis of data, the researcher applied SPSS version 17.0 and used mean, percentages, frequency counts, *t*-test as well as standard deviation.

Table 1. Comparison of Teachers' Academic Qualifications teaching in private and public Secondary Schools

Category of School	Academic Qualifications					
	BA/BSc	BS	BS (Hons)	MA/MSc	MS/MPhil	PhD
Public (N=240)	10	3	15	176	35	1

Category of School	Academic Qualifications					
	BA/BSc	BS	BS (Hons)	MA/MSc	MS/MPhil	PhD
Percentage (%)	4.16	1.25	6.25	73.33	15.58	0.41
Private (N=240)	31	9	29	146	25	0
Percentage (%)	12.91	3.75	12.08	60.83	10.41	0

Table 1 shows the comparative record of teachers' academic qualifications teaching in private and public secondary schools. The table reveals that out of 240 respondents of public schools, 10 (4.16 %) were BA/BSc, 3 (1.25 %) were BS, 15 (6.25 %) were BS (Hons), 176 (73.33 %) were MA/ MSc, 35 (15.58 %) were MS/ MPhil and 1 (0.41 %) was PhD degree holder teacher. On the other side, out of 240 respondents of private schools, 31 (12.91 %) were BA/BSc, 9 (3.75 %) were BS, 29 (12.08 %) were BS (Hons), 146 (60.83 %) were MA/ MSc, 25 (10.41 %) were MS/ MPhil, and none of them was PhD

qualified degree holder teacher. The analysis clearly shows that public schools teachers are academically more qualified than teachers of private schools as evidenced by the higher number of Master's degree holder teachers of public schools, i.e. 211 (MA/MSc= 176 and MS/ MPhil= 35) as compared to 171 Master's degree holder teachers of private schools (MA/MSc= 146 and MS/ MPhil= 25). Moreover, in public sector schools, there is one PhD teacher, the highest degree as per the National Qualification Framework of Pakistan, while in private sector schools, there is none.

Table 2. Comparison of Professional Qualifications of Public and Private Secondary Schools' Teachers

Category of School	Professional Qualifications						Total
	PTC/CT	ADE	Any Other	B.Ed	M.Ed	Nil	
Public (N=240)	5	0	0	80	142	13	240
Percentage (%)	2.08	0	0	33.33	59.17	5.42	100
Private (N=240)	38	4	1	81	43	73	240
Percentage (%)	15.83	1.67	0.41	33.75	17.92	30.42	100

Table 2 shows the comparative records of the professional qualifications of public and private secondary schools' teachers, which brings out that out of 240 respondents of public schools, 5 (2.08 %) were PTCs/CTs, none of them was ADE or having any other certificate or degree, 13 (5.42 %) teachers were without any professional degrees or certificates, 80 (33.33 %) were B. Ed and 142 (59.17 %) were M.Ed. On the other side, out of 240 respondents of private schools, 38 (15.83 %) were PTCs/CTs, 4 (1.67 %) were ADE, 1 (0.41 %) teacher had Certificate in *Shadatuaalami*, 73 (30.42 %) teachers were without any professional certificates or degrees, 81 (33.75 %) were B.Ed, and 43 (17.92 %) teachers were M.Ed. The analysis of data indicates

that teachers of public secondary schools are also professionally better qualified than teachers teaching in private secondary schools in many areas. The much higher number of 'Master of Education' degree holders (142) as compared to 43 'Master of Education' degree holders in private schools validates this point. Similarly, the total number of teachers without any professional certificates or degrees in public sector schools is only 13 against 73 of private schools' teachers, which show a marked difference. Moreover, the lower degree/ certificate holder teachers (PTC/CT) in public sector schools is only 5 against 43 (PTC/CT= 38, ADE= 4, other= 1) teachers of private sector schools.

Table 3. Age-wise Comparison between Teachers Teaching in private and Public Secondary Schools

Statistics	Public Schools (N=240)	Private Schools (N=240)
Mean	38.2208	28.4417
Variance	75.9217	40.2058
Standard Deviation	8.7133	6.3408
t		14.0585
dof		478

Statistics	Public Schools (N=240)	Private Schools (N=240)
Critical Value		1.968
p-Value		< .00001

Table 3 shows the comparative ages of public and private secondary school teachers. The mean age of teachers teaching in public secondary schools is 38.22, and the standard deviation is 8.71. Whereas the mean age of private secondary school teachers is 28.44 and moreover the standard deviation is (6.34). Since the value of the calculated (t) is much more than the (critical value), which is (14.0585>1.972) therefore, the means are quite

significantly different at 0.05 level. This means that there is a significant age gap between teachers in private and public secondary schools. The statistical analysis indicates that teachers who are teaching in public secondary schools are quite senior in age as compared to the teachers teaching in private secondary schools, who are quite young in age.

Table 4. Comparative records of Teacher' Teaching Experiences Teaching in Public and Private Secondary Schools

Statistics	Public Schools (N=240)	Private Schools (N=240)
Mean	12.925	5.3208
Variance	95.601	19.4991
Standard Deviation	9.7776	4.4158
t		10.9804
Dof		478
Critical Value		1.968
p-Value		< .00001

Table 4 shows comparative records of teacher' teaching experiences in public and private secondary schools. The mean teaching experience of public schools' teachers is (12.92); moreover, the standard deviation is (9.78). While the mean teaching experience of private schools teachers is (5.32) and moreover, the standard deviation is (4.42). As the value of the calculated (t) is more

than the critical value, which is (10.9804>1.972) so the means are significantly different at (0.05) level, which implies that the difference between the mean teaching experiences of public and private schools' teachers is quite high. Teachers of public schools have comparatively more teaching experience than teachers of private schools

Results and Discussions

The analyzed data shows that teachers teaching at public secondary schools are academically more qualified than teachers teaching at private schools. The ten simple graduate teachers are very senior teachers who are near their retirement age, while three BS and 15 BS (Hons) are fresh entrants in the profession (Table 1). Out of 240 teachers, the remaining 211 are Master in arts or Science (16 years of education), Master of Science/ Master of Philosophy (18 years of education), and one is PhD degree holder. While in private schools, out of 240 teachers, 40 are graduates (BA/BSc/BS), 29 are BS (Hons), and the remaining 171 are Masters of Arts or Science (16 years of education), Master of Science/ Master of Philosophy (18 years of education). These results are in consonance with the findings of [Andrabi, Das and Khwaja \(2006\)](#),

who maintain that "Public sector teachers are more educated than teachers of the private sector" (p.15). [Iqbal \(2012\)](#) also concluded that teachers at public schools are highly qualified than teachers at private schools.

Similarly, teachers at public secondary schools hold more professional qualifications as compared to teachers at private sector schools. Out of 240 teachers, only five teachers have PTC/CT qualification, and 13 are without any professional certificates or degrees in education (Table 2). Eighty are Bachelors of Education, and 142 are Master of Education degree holders. Whereas in the private sector, out of 240 teachers, 38 teachers have PTC/CT qualifications, four have Associate Degrees in Education, one is *Shadatualami* Certificate holder, and 73 are without any professional certificates or degrees in

education (Table 2). 81 are Bachelors of Education, and 43 are Master of Education degree holders. These results are supported by [Iqbal \(2012\)](#), who found that teachers of public schools are permanent and highly trained than teachers of private schools. [Lynd \(2007\)](#) also substantiates the findings when he reported that More than half of teachers in private schools lacked technical credentials and were listed as untrained, whereas only 5 % of teachers in the public sector schools were without professional qualifications. These results are also in agreement with the results of [Imran \(2008\)](#), who concluded that "Teachers teaching in public secondary schools were academically and technically trained, with more experience than teachers teaching in private secondary schools." (pp.146-147).

Teachers teaching in public schools are on average 38.2 years old, while teachers teaching in private schools are on average 28.4 years old. (Table 3). There is a significant difference between the average ages of teachers of public and private schools, which points out that teachers of public schools are quite adult, well-matured and seasoned, while teachers of private schools are mostly adolescents, young and immature who are probably still students themselves so as to sustain their own studies by doing jobs or they are fresh graduates who quit their studies for employment due to self-sustenance or supporting their families. The results are evidenced by [Andrabi, Das and Khwaja \(2006\)](#) when they found in their study that "Private schools employ female teachers (76 percent vs 43 percent in public schools) who are significantly younger (25 years for the private sector versus 38 for public school teachers), mostly un-married and less educated." (p.14).

Similarly, the teaching experience of teachers in public schools is much higher as compared to teachers in private schools. The mean teaching experience (12.92) of public schools' teachers is more than twice the mean teaching experience (5.32) of private schools' teachers, as exhibited in Table 4. Has teaching experience any impact on the performance of students? [Santos \(2007\)](#) comments that "Teacher experience has inconclusive evidence, while teacher education is more commonly identified as a significant variable enhancing students' grades." (p.7). [Habib \(2003\)](#) found in his study that "Students who were taught by teachers with 1-5 years experience achieved

highest grades followed by those who were taught by teachers with 16 years or above teaching experience; therefore, teachers were successful either in the first five years of their service or after 16 years of their service" (p.47).

Conclusions and Recommendations

In the context of quality education, four variables of public and private secondary schools' teachers were compared, i.e., academic and professional qualifications, ages and teaching experiences. The study revealed that teachers at public schools were academically and professionally more qualified than teachers at private schools. As pointed out by [Andrabi, Das and Khwaja \(2006\)](#), "Private school teachers are disproportionately female and have a lower level of education than public school teachers." (p.16). This point was also resonated in National Education Policy (2017) which highlighted that "Recruitment laws do not apply in private and public-private partnerships schools, which often hire non-qualified teachers for wages that are less than half of per capita GDP." (p.61).

The majority of public schools' teachers were adult, mature, seasoned and more experienced, while the majority of private schools' teachers were young, fresh graduates and inexperienced in the profession. The difference between the mean ages of public and private schools' teachers points out this imbalance which is heavily tilted towards public sector schools. [Andrabi, Das and Khwaja \(2006\)](#) comment that "In the private schools, experience is not compensated at the same amount as compared to the public school sector, and female teachers are paid far less." (p.15). However, teaching experience has any contributing impact on the students' performance, and quality of education is subject to further investigation. This will require more research as there is a general perception that private schools have outperformed public schools, particularly in the last two decades.

The findings of this study revealed that teachers teaching at public secondary schools were performing better than teachers at private schools when gauged on the four variables, and the logical conclusion must come out that the performance of the public sector should also be better than the private sector, which is generally vice versa. As stated earlier, that quality education has many facets, and as per UNICEF Quality Framework (2000), there are at least five

dimensions of quality education. The teacher is only part of one quality dimension (quality of processes). Hence, it is concluded that the private school system is better than the public sector in other quality dimensions, fewer teachers.

When data was analyzed, and results and conclusions are drawn, based on findings, the following recommendations were made:

- To uplift the quality of education, there is a dire need to increase the academic and professional qualifications of both public as well as private schools' teachers, particularly private sector schools.
- Recruitment rules should be implemented in the private sector as admitted in National Education Policy (2017).
- Job security and BPS should be ensured in private sector schools as promised in National Education Policy (2017). [Dilshad \(2009\)](#) highlights that teachers of any educational institution are the most decisive factor towards quality education.
- Promotions should be based on attaining a sequential training regime wherein a logical connection in each training course should be there in contents, substance, human, managerial and administrative skills. Teachers' training programmes should be revisited and thoroughly revised in line with the dictates of present-day requirements. [Noureen and Kakar \(2018\)](#) also recommend a close association between both the training programmes: pre-service as well as in-service training programmes.
- Financial allocation to education universally and particularly teachers' education should be enhanced to meet the global competitive challenges of the 21st century. The private sector should also be incorporated in resource allotment. [Bashir \(2011\)](#) suggests that, as recommended by the United Nations, at least 4% of GDP should be allocated to education.
- Teachers should be empowered and practically involved in all major policies and decisions making, being experts and specialists in the field of education. Teachers should be empowered with their leadership role in education ([Sallis, 2002](#)). The National Education Policy (2017) itself proclaims that there is an absence of teachers' participation in all decision-making policies.
- To uplift the quality of education, we should not put the whole burden on teachers only, as there are many other contributory factors as well towards quality education that are beyond the mandate and domain of teachers. The Federal, provincial and local governments, along with their educational hierarchies at different tiers, parents and community as a whole, must take collective responsibility for this gigantic task.

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