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## Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Schools of Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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**Abstract:** This is a comparative study of public and private schools in the town of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Worldwide the private sectors are more efficient and perform better than the public sector. Our education system is also suffering from this dilemma. The research paper highlights various reasons why public schools lag behind private schools. The challenges that public school students and teachers face are also discussed here. Despite having more budget and salaries, why public schools can't achieve the progress level of private schools? What efforts are the government putting to induce betterment in public institutes? Comparison from various aspects like teacher's behaviour, parent's interest, the financial status of the pupil, study hours, the role of extracurricular activities and the pupil's performance. The study aims to know why public schools lag behind private schools in performance. What challenges do public schools faces which hinder them from achieving good results? To make the public schools aware of the efforts of the private sector. The private sector is making strategies to improve its performance. Despite having intelligent students, public schools cannot compete with private schools.

**Key Words:** Comparison, Private Schools, Public Schools, Performance, Challenges

### Introduction

Education plays a fundamental role in the advancement of society and the progress of a nation. In the era of digitalisation the world, education is the only route towards success. Primary education is the building block of the education system. It is the foremost and basic right of every human being. Primary schooling is widely accepted as a priority in waging the war against poverty (Alderman, 2001). The literacy rate is also checked through primary and secondary education rates. The division of educational institutes into private and public worldwide has put men in a dilemma about the quality of education. Private institutes are supposed to be prosperous in teaching students on some empirical basis.

Enrollment in public schools decreased over the years (public and private school comparison) (ratio of U.S. schools).

Table 1.

Years	No of Students
2005	47.9 million
2016	47.3 million

In contrast, the number of students enrolled in private schools has increased through the years (National household Education survey, 1993 (school safety and discipline)).

Table 2.

Years	No of Students
1999	1.2 million
2015	1.4 million

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Generally, public schools tend to have more student strength than private schools because of easily available to people who belong to the middle and lower class (schools choice in U.S., [2019](#). Comparison of public and private schools). According to a National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test, students of private schools in grades 4,8 and 12 consistently performed and scored above the national average level (public and private school comparison). To pursue higher studies, 88% of private high school students and only 57% of public high school students apply for colleges yearly, indicating that private school students have performed well. It has also been shown through assessment of American students' knowledge in various subjects that private school students performed better than public school students in all major subjects, including mathematics and sciences (Tooley, 2005).

Despite having less salaries, private school teachers are 36% satisfied with their work; on the other hand, public school teachers are only 11% satisfied. More satisfied teachers perform well. Especially at the kindergarten level, private school teachers are more confident than public school teachers. (E.C.papanastasiou, 2005) Parent's involvement with their children's studies is about 28:4 for private and public schools, respectively. Besides, private schools are comparatively good at teaching ethics and moral codes (susan p.choy, uly [1997](#)). A survey conducted in Nigeria shows that 75% of students are enrolled in private schools because teacher activities are higher (Tooley, 2005).

The nationalization of education by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1972 has largely increased the variance between private and public institutes. Out of 47.5% school going children in Pakistan, 42% attend private schools. In Pakistan, there are about 38% of private schools and the opening of new private schools is growing. Since 1990 generally in urban areas and particularly in rural areas (Razzaque, [2021](#)). Private schools are making admirable influences in promoting quality education in Pakistan, especially since the low literacy rate has been recognized and the government budget fell short of meeting the educational standards.

Education in K.P. (55%) (Areej, 2022) is neglected compared to Punjab (64%). However, Sindh (57%) is also better in literacy rate but still considered to be a stimulated region to Baluchistan (40%) and G.B (The News [2020](#)). K.P. managed the highest literacy rate growth among all other provinces in Pakistan Economic Survey (P.E.S.) 2021-22 that is 52.4% in FY2018-FY2019 to 55.1% in FY2020-FY2021 (Baig, June 10, 2022).

Charsadda is a rural-urban district of the Peshawar division of K.P. In Charsadda, about 1.6 million people live, and around 150,000 are enrolled in schools aged around 5-16 years. To gather, Charsadda has 1001 primary, 105 middle and 94 secondary schools. Apart from public schooling, Charsadda is also known for its best private school education. In Charsadda, there are about 178 private schools. The literacy rate in Charsadda is 31.7%, which is lower than the national and provincial levels due to a lack of facilities (Areej ([n.d](#)), KPK Shows the highest literacy growth rates in PES 2021-22). Charsadda lies in 7th position, carrying 96.78% in primary education scoring while tank scored 98.45% in 1<sup>st</sup> position (Pakistan district education rankings, 2018). The first study was on the district level, i.e. Charsadda. Thus, this paper is designed to aware the higher education department of K.P. about the challenges and struggles of public as well as private institutes of K.P (Ashfaq, 15 Nov, [2016](#)).

## Methodology

Both primary and secondary sources are used for the research study. Two public and two private schools in Charsadda are taken as samples. Most of the information mentioned here is descriptive; hence qualitative analysis is upheld.

## Primary Sources

Four schools of district Charsadda are visited, their head/ directors are interviewed (face-to-face interaction) and certain questions are asked about the concerned school's performance, efforts and achievements. A questionnaire was also provided to the staff teacher, which consisted of 15-17 questions. The questions were pretty decent in

evaluating the difference from many aspects between public and private schools.

Some data was also gathered through personal visits, which include the keen observation of the visitor.

### **Secondary Sources**

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Specific research papers regarding the topic were studied. Reports from the National Centre of education statistics and different surveys conducted by the education department of the U.S were consulted.

### **Literature Review**

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Various research conducted by the National Center of Education Statistics (U.S department of education office of educational research and improvement) states that the comparison of public and private schools is based on different aspects like school climate and discipline, under which teaching and learning take place. The organization and management of the school make them diverse, affecting their performance and achievements. It is proved from various studies that the students of private schools are more facilitated than public schools. Thus, the teaching activities are higher in private schools comparatively.

Previous studies show that the administration of private schools is more interested in keeping their student's records than public schools, which helps the schools progress through the years. The Council for American Private Education (CAPE 2006) shed light on the academic excellence and achievements of the U.S. In a report, and they highlighted that public school students are more prone to criminal acts and less safe than private school students. Religious and spiritual development in private schools can be seen more.

Different surveys conducted on the current topic, e.g. National Household Education Survey (NHES), show that private school students' parents are more satisfied with their children's safety. Charsadda is one of the popular districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The people of Charsadda are very talented and hard-working and believe in improving their lives

through modern education. For many years, Charsadda has achieved good positions in the top 20 BISP results. Its students have been part of the top colleges and universities of Peshawer. Although students of both public and private institutes are struggling to make good grades but most prominently, the private institutes outweighed due to the following reasons:

### **Class Discrimination**

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Only 10% of students in public schools belong to financially stable families and the remaining 90% belong to the poor class; on the other hand, in private institutes most of the students belong to the middle or upper class and only 2% belong to lower category which is most of the time surviving on scholarships in private schools. The remaining belong to middle-class families. Thus, public school students are suffering from financial instability and struggling for their academic needs, affecting their studies. The arrangement of books and stationery is the major issue of the poor class.

### **Students Attendance**

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Public school students are allowed two days of absence per month and teachers are allowed to charge only 1 rupee fine per day absentee through an official notice from the government, which gives a free hand to the students to get absent for a long time without informing the school. Teachers are not allowed to strike off irregular students. Private school students are also allowed only two absentees per month but after two days of absence, they have to show the medical paper to get more off days. After getting absent without informing the school, the authorities can strike off the students. Private school students also charge a heavy fine, which helps them attain full Attendance and positively impact their studies.

### **Teachers Attendance**

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In public schools, teachers were showing irregularity without any genuine reason but now the government has introduced a monitoring system. If any teacher is caught absent by monitoring staff without taking leave from D.E.O. or informing the school,

they should repent in the form of 1500-2000 R.S. deduction from salary. The outcomes of this system are quite satisfying. In severe cases of absence, the teacher is called by D.E.O. to their office. Private schools also adopted the policy of a 300-500 deduction per day absentee or according to their salaries. The authorities struck off the teacher in case of a week or two-week absence. Thus in private school, the fear of losing a job is more, which help the teachers to get regular.

### **Students Preparation for Final Exams**

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Public schools have two term examinations in a year and late completion of the syllabus because of a lack of curriculum planning, thus only one-time revision. In private schools, there are three-term examinations, early completion of syllabus and more than twice revision. Besides, regular weekly and monthly tests are also taken. Oral and written tests. Dictation for lower classes.

### **School Timings ( Study Hours)**

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In public schools, the school timing is specified by governments as 7:00 pm-1:30 pm in summer and they are supposed to take 6-7 periods per day. In private schools, the school timings are 7:00 pm-2:00 pm, or in some schools, the off timing is 2:30 pm. Private schools are supposed to take eight periods per day. The study duration creates a difference of 30 min or 1hr between public and private schools, which affects the study.

### **Teachers Behavior/Response Towards Students**

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In public schools, the range of the teacher's age lies between 28-50 years, which highly affects the teachers' response. Teachers who are selected through NTS are energetic and perform well. Senior teachers are characterized by static nature and use hard language with students. In private schools teacher's age lies between 21-35 years. They perform actively and are soft-spoken, available every time for the students.

### **Academic Qualification of Teachers**

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In public schools the majority of high school teachers are M. A or B. A pass, primary school teachers are under matric and F.A degree.

Those who are selected through NTS have a degree of B.S and M.Phil. Along with the professional degree of B.Ed. and M.Ed. while in private schools, most teachers were new B.S and M.S graduates. They were aware of modern education and were good at teaching advanced curricula introduced by governments.

### **Parents Interest in Children Studies**

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According to the collected data, only 5-50% of public school parents take an interest in their children's studies and 70-90% of private school parents try to know about their children's studies. In private schools, at the end of the session a parent-teacher meeting is held in which the progress level and behaviour of the student in the class and at home are under discussion. Homework diaries are also a way to keep parents updated about children's studies in private schools. A Diary system is not yet introduced in public schools.

### **Check and Balance on Teachers**

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Even though public school teachers' salaries range from 30,000-120,000 rupees, the teacher's performance is not good because of the lack of strong checks and balances and strict authority. On the other hand, private schools' salaries are 8,000-15,000 but they perform actively because of the strict eye of head and coordinators.

### **Motivation of Students and Teachers**

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At the end of the session awarding students with prizes for their good results is still not very common but highly depending on the P.T.C. fund if they are having enough budget they held an award ceremony. In contrast, in private schools, annually, a grand function is held to which position-holder students and their parents are invited, and a well known personality as a chief guest is invited who glorifies the grandeur of the ceremony. Students are given awards with their names and institution names, which motivate them to achieve outstanding results. To appreciate the teachers in public schools C.D.P. (collaborative degree program) and I.P. (individualized plan) certificates are awarded. In private schools to appreciate their

teachers, they ceremonially announce the best teacher award for teachers, which has a positive impact on teacher's performance (Ashfaq, 15 Nov, 2016).

### **Acute Shortage of Teaching staff in Public schools**

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Some public schools are non-functioned due to the lack of teaching staff. Still, single-teacher schools exist in the region, making teaching awful. The teacher has to administer the school and teach the different subjects to different classes from nursery to fifth at least. The single teacher is answerable to the high authorities about the funds or any happening or result of the school. Instead of providing staff, the high authority is backing them not to attend the P.D. day or other meetings held for Headteachers. In most cases, the single teacher is unwilling to participate in the school due to its location in an extremely rural region. In turn, the teacher performs services in any nearest school. The students in these areas suffer the most because, officially, they are admitted to the school or promoted by the teacher but do not get a proper education.

### **Private School Teachers have more Autonomy in the class**

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Teachers in private schools have more control over determining homework, checking on student progress, grading students and selecting teaching techniques. This highly does not signify that there is no check and balance over them but providing some liberty means to take the assistance of the creative mind of the teacher in selecting topics, content and skills to be taught. Observing the student-teacher relationship, it is believed that there are certain obstacles that a head or principal cannot cover but a teacher can do better.

### **Private Schools Teachers are more Creative than Public school Teachers**

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Private school teachers are more likely to be young and energetic though less experienced. Due to their vast connection with modern technology, they are supposed to use modern teaching techniques in their classes besides

being fortunate enough to be provided with multimedia and a large screen inside the class. These facilities efficiently compel students to study in different ways, like entertaining quizzes, indoor games and amusing competitions.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

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In this modern era, public schools are trying hard to participate but due to insufficient budgets, they can't meet the needs. They take part in competitions held at the union and district levels. They play games like javelin throwing, badminton, volleyball and jumping sack, etc., and Bazm-e-Adab, Eid Milad-u-Nabi is celebrated. Students deliver speeches, Milli Nagma, Naat and Qirat but most of the time, kindergartens suffer from a lack of enough play areas; they are deprived of playing equipment such as sea saws, slides, swings and monkey bars. On the other hand, private schools extend their budget according to the needs and refreshments of their students. They provide all the playing materials to their nursery school. Besides, high school students celebrate independence day, defence day with complete preparation.

### **Annual Results**

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According to the collected data, only 10% of Public school students can achieve 80% or more than 80% grades. Besides, the government forbade them to fail the weak students, negatively impacting results in higher classes. In private schools, 30%-40% of students achieved 80% or above 80% grades, and only 10% carry below-average grades.

In S.S.C. examinations, private schools dominated. They easily crossed the 1000 marks barrier, and even in the 2020 examinations, one private school student achieved 1080 out of 1100 marks and got a position in BISP. While on the other side, public school students hardly achieve grades above 1000 and 970 is the highest scoring of the suggested schools till now (Awan, 2008).

### **Challenges Face by Public Schools**

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1. Undergraduate and under-senior matric teachers cannot teach the advanced curriculum.



2. Married teachers (female) bring their children along with them, due to which teachers and students cannot give proper attention to their studies.
3. P.T.C. funds are not enough to meet the school's needs.
4. Insufficient teacher staff for overloaded schools. In some schools, teachers attend more than one class.
5. Overloaded classes in public schools are an appalling issue. In some sections, there are about 100 students per section because of a deficiency of rooms in a school.
6. Lack of incentives and counselling in public schools.

### Improvement in Public Schools

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28% of parents shifted their children from private school to government because public schools education is going towards betterment in the past. With time and the shifting of governments, the education sector has also undergone various changes. Back then, students of Public schools were seen to be roaming outside the school to bring brunch for the teachers, but now that culture has vanished. Recently PM Imran Khan introduced the same curriculum in public and private schools, which could bring equality to the education system. The monitoring system introduced by the PTI government has outweighed the efficiency of the schools and the staff.

### Strategies of Private Schools for Good Performance

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1. Private schools are introducing fully and partially funded scholarships to attract brilliant and talented poor students to their institutes.
2. Private schools hesitate to hire married teachers because of their complicated schedules.
3. To attain good results in S.S.C. examinations, private schools collect brilliant and creamy students from every school section and gather them under one plate form. To give them extra guidance, arrange extra study hours for them, provide the best

teachers, and arrange extra exams for them to sharpen their study skills.

4. Private school teachers make separate notes for their students to maintain variation in board exams.
5. Private schools actively celebrate special days and events. They focus on extracurricular activities which freshen up the students for further studies.

### Critical Analysis

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After nationalizing all the education institutes Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the main aim was to lessen education expenses on the lower class, but unfortunately, the policy didn't attain its objective. The main reason is the lack of strict checks and balances. Despite having large salaries, the teacher's performance is not satisfactory. Besides, public school students are also known for their ill behavior and lack of manners. Fighting and threatening are also found in public schools.

Most of them belong to the lower class and are struggling for their basic needs, thus less focused on their studies. Parents of these students are illiterate and don't know the importance of education, thus showing no interest in their children's studies. Extracurricular activities are important to build confidence in students, but in public schools, a shortage of enough budget is equal to non. Public schools have crowded classes and insufficient staff to attend to the students (Zainab Qureshi, 2021).

Although the students of private schools are more facilitated and have proper early guidance, students of public schools are more intelligent and talented. Low financial conditions, ignorance and lack of early guidance deprived them of quality education. When these students get the opportunity to sit on the same benches as private school students and get quality education, they can easily hit the progress level of private school teachers because they are more loyal to their studies and passionate about achieving something significant in their lives.

As per the DAWN report, the government allocated Rs326.86bn for education in the 2022-23 budget, initially Rs292.639bn in previous government to advance the education sector. Increasing the

share of education means succeeding in competition with private schools. Each Public school receives a P.T.C. fund annually, which is 11,000-15,000 per classroom. However, private school data proposed that per year school expenses cost 2-5 lakh highly depending on the school's infrastructure (school and staff survey, 1990-91 (teacher demands and shortage questionnaire) and NCEE, a nation at risk 1983).

## **Conclusion**

Education plays a crucial role in the development of society and a country's economy. On one side where the government is struggling to provide free education to all the citizens of Pakistan; on the other hand, due to improper management, lack of strict checks and balances and shortage of budget, the public education institutes are suffering from low performance. Although teachers and administrative staff of public sectors enjoy high salaries, allowances and a free working environment, the students suffer from an irregularity of teachers, lack of subject specialists, non-availability of playing equipment, and not getting proper attention from teachers.

Public high schools are unable to compete with private schools. People related high scoring in S.S.C. exams with private schools. Private schools are making strategies to induce betterment by appointing young teachers and attracting brilliant students through scholarships, thus becoming a hub of quality education. Annually S.S.C. top positions are occupied by Private schools. The major finding of the above study is that the main reason behind the ill performance of public students is the lack of skilled teaching staff and inadequate infrastructure of the educational institute. The teaching staff should be made accountable and addressed for major reorganizations. The government need to bring reforms in the education sector as it is exceedingly related to the country's economy.

The government has brought many reforms like PD-day, monitoring system, scholarships for primary and high school students, circle meetings, Headteacher

meetings, checks on the P.T.C. fund e.t.c to provide quality education to the lower class.

## **Recommendations; The Way Forward**

Generally, both public and private schools are passing through certain challenges but comparatively, public schools are always lagging behind private schools in performance and progress.

The following recommendations could be helpful:

1. Government should appoint young teachers as early as possible through the national testing service or federal public service commission; the process should be direct, authentic, and legal. During this process, the evils of nepotism, favouritism and bribery should be strictly eliminated. Merit should be promoted.
2. The age limit for retirement should be decreased.
3. Government should establish small nurseries to facilitate married teachers (female).
4. Government should pass a bill against low salaries of private school teachers.
5. New budget policies should be made to establish laboratories, libraries and provide playing equipment in high and primary schools.
6. Workshops or training should be conducted where public and private school teachers would interact with each other. It will help them exchange ideas about effective teaching, and subject notes can benefit public school students.
7. To encourage free education, the government should facilitate the poor class by providing them with free uniforms, stationery and other school accessories.
8. Textbook availability should be unrestricted and quantity should be maintained vast.
9. Free extra coaching institutes for public school students should be polished in the hands of energetic and expert teachers.
10. The infrastructure of schools should be highly focused. New buildings should

be made with many rooms and playgrounds to divide the crowded classes.

11. Some primary schools are still deprived of furniture and sitting on mats which reflects the worst image of public schools. Government should immediately provide them with enough budget for furniture so that class distinction between the upper and lower class should be diminished.
12. Teachers of public schools should provide coaching to use soft language

humble attitude towards their students.

13. The optimum use of assets by staff.
14. Both public and private school students should be brought on the same platform through quizzes and tests to encourage the public sector to compete.
15. Funds should be raised for the education sector to make it more competitive.



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