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Role of District Education Authorities (DEAs) to Enhance the Quality of Education in Pakistan

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Abstract

The current paper studies the role of District Education Authorities (DEAs) basic job in the arrangement of advanced education in Pakistan. The objectives of the study were to (a) study the role of District Education Authorities (DAEs) in improving quality education in Pakistan; (b) roles and responsibilities of DEAs under a system of education that is decentralized, such as the one in Pakistan; and (C) recommend suitable measures how to make the effective role of DAE in improving quality education in Pakistan. The nature of the study was descriptive while a survey was used to collect information from 104 teachers of district Lodhran. The DEA is perceived positively in certain areas, such as quality improvement and administrative authority, but significant challenges remain, particularly in financial management, resource provision, and consistent policy implementation.

Key Words: Quality Enhancement, District Education Authorities (DEA), Quality Education

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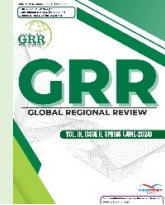
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Cite Us



Title

Role of District Education Authorities (DEAs) to Enhance the Quality of Education in Pakistan

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Abstract

The current paper studies the role of District Education Authorities (DEAs) basic job in the arrangement of advanced education in Pakistan. The objectives of the study were to (a) study the role of District Education Authorities (DAEs) in improving quality education in Pakistan; (b) roles and responsibilities of DEAs under a system of education that is decentralized, such as the one in Pakistan; and (C) recommend suitable measures how to make the effective role of DAE in improving quality education in Pakistan. The nature of the study was descriptive while a survey was used to collect information from 104 teachers of district Lodhran. The DEA is perceived positively in certain areas, such as quality improvement and administrative authority, but significant challenges remain, particularly in financial management, resource provision, and consistent policy implementation.

Keywords: [Quality Enhancement](#), [District Education Authorities \(DEA\)](#), [Quality Education](#)

Introduction

In Pakistan, education standards have been a long-standing problem for most of its inhabitants, given the country's vast cultural differences. The government and other interested parties have tried to close this huge disparity in educational standards across the various areas and districts. Therefore, it is important to critically analyze the role of District

Education Authorities in reshaping as well as improving education systems.

The roots of Pakistan's education system can be traced back to its inception in 1947 when the country gained independence. The education system has over the years undergone numerous reforms in the face of changing political, social, and economic paradigms. In many cases, the overriding



objective has always been access and quality to the masses. However, persistent challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, shortage of teachers, and socio-economic disparities have continued to frustrate the realization of the stated objective (Ngwenya, [2015](#)). Recently, the government over the last few decades has initiated several policies to intervene in these challenges (Majone, [1997](#)). The National Education Policy (NEP) is a policy document that provides guidance, laying down the vision and goals for education in Pakistan. However, quality education still faces a big challenge; there are colossal variations district-wise (Ahsan, [2022](#)).

An honest look at the current state of education in the country reveals a host of issues that act as constraints to any quality education endeavor (Bozkurt et al., [2020](#)). One of the major issues is the divide between urban and rural, where urban areas usually have better educational facilities, qualified teachers, and resources compared to those in their rural areas. This division tends to worsen already high socio-economic inequalities and present a constraint on education for children within such rural areas. Moreover, one of the serious issues related to teaching quality is. There is often a lack of qualified teachers in many places, and those available are often not well-trained and professionalized. This directly influences the results of student learning, making subpar education just a cycle away. The curriculum could also be outdated regarding present needs and global standards, which additionally discourages the learners from applying critical thinking and practical skills toward knowledge or theory comprehension (Noddings, [2007](#)).

The DEAs emerge as key players in the educational ecosystem in the quest for improved education quality. They serve as a bridge between the provincial education departments and local schools; thus, they ensure the implementation of policies that are attuned to specific district-level needs (Darling-Hammond et al., [2017](#)). As a result, DEAs act independently for the local problems of each district and can plan interventions at large that work toward the national and provincial educational targets (Malik & Bari, [2022](#)). Infrastructure development and resource allocation are areas where DEAs can contribute substantially. DEAs can determine the needs that call for immediate attention, be it the construction of schools in new areas, the provision of learning

material, or training programs for teachers. They can also be advocates for higher levels of budgetary allocation for education at district levels and guarantee those allocations are spent on programs directly related to the quality of education (Shams, [2017](#)).

DEAs can likewise team up with instructive foundation projects to foster educational programs that can be utilized to further develop teachers' showing abilities and open them to new strategies and instructing advances. Educational plan improvement and change are important elements in working on educational quality (Creemers & Kyriakides, [2012](#)). The DEA, as a team with experts and partners in training, should have the option to make the educational plan locally important, while as yet guaranteeing that understudies know about worldwide norms to guarantee their transformation to the world the normal framework (Khattak, 2019). Also, DEAs can go about as motivations to further develop local area promise and increment parental contribution in the educational program. By creating a feeling of pride and obligation locally, DEAs can establish a strong climate for understudies, empowering standard participation and dynamic cooperation in their schooling (Ahmad, Ali, Gul, & Ali, [2019](#)). Further developing training in Pakistan is a confusing test that requires a multi-pronged procedure. District Education Authorities (DEAs) play a critical part in overcoming any issues between public schooling strategy and its powerful implementation at the grassroots level. To address difficulties at the regional level, DEAs can further develop their dispersal systems and local area commitment to achieve positive change. In this way, policymakers, teachers, stakeholders, and networks should meet up to recognize the significance of the DEA in Pakistan (Parveen, Phuc, Shafiq, & Wei, [2021](#)).

This collaborative approach, embedded with evidence-based policy and continuous investment, will pave the way for an education system that is more equitable and one of high quality, thereby empowering the generations of the future in their development of the country.

The present study explored the role of the district Education Authority in improving the Quality of Education. It discovered the roles and responsibilities of district education authorities and also discussed the dimensions of quality of

education. It further links the perception of head teachers about the role of DEA in the improvement of the quality of education. Therefore, the statement of the problem was: "Perceptions of Teacher and Head Teachers about the Role of District Education Authority (DEA) for Improving Quality of Education in High Schools of District Lodhran (Khan, Mustafa, & Nawaz, 2021)."

Study Objectives

The comprehensive nature of this study aims to give an in-depth analysis of the important role DEAs play in upgrading education standards in Pakistan. Its objectives are articulated with emphasis so that through their attainment, the problems that the system of education is facing and the specific contribution that DEAs can make in reducing these problems are understood quite well. The objectives of the study were to (a) study the role of District Education Authorities (DAEs) in improving quality education in Pakistan; (b) roles and responsibilities of DEAs under a system of education that is decentralized, such as the one in Pakistan; and (C) recommend suitable measures how to make the effective role of DAE in improving quality education in Pakistan.

Research Methodology and Procedure

This study outlines the methodology and procedures adopted to explore the perceptions of teachers and head teachers regarding the District Education Authority. The research was descriptive in nature, employing a survey method to collect data from the selected sample. The population targeted for the study consisted of secondary school teachers and head teachers in the district of Lodhran. The population was categorized as follows: a total of 104 teachers and head teachers were selected as the study sample, with an equal distribution of male and female participants from urban areas. The sample was chosen using a random sampling technique.

Variables of the Study

This study explores the role of DEA in improving the quality of education by using the perception of teachers and head teachers of district Lodhran (male and female) high and higher secondary schools. There are two variables the first one is the role of the district education authority of district Bahawalpur and the other one is the quality of education of high and higher secondary schools of district Bahawalpur. The relationship of variables is as follows:

Figure 1



As the study was descriptive and the survey was used to gather the relevant information from the participants so questionnaire was considered the appropriate tool to gather information. The questionnaire was designed on a five-point Likert scale which focused on the role of the district education authority in improving the quality of education in district Lodhran specifically and generally in Punjab. Further, this questionnaire focused on the initiatives taken by the district education authority to improve the quality of education for teachers and students. The researcher developed a healthy and positive relationship with the respondents of the study with the help of local leaders and personal relations before starting data collection and a proper appointment-taking

procedure was adopted to collect the information within the research ethics. The researcher personally visited the respondents and built a level of confidence to get the real picture and took additional notes as well. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze data by using statistical formulas i.e. percentage, frequency, mean score, Standard deviation, and significance.

Results of the Study

The researcher personally visited the respondents and built a level of confidence to get the real picture and took additional notes as well. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyze data by using statistical formulas i.e.

percentage, frequency, mean score, Standard deviation, and significance.

Table 1

Role of District Education Authorities (DEAs) to enhance the quality of education

Sr.	Statement	SDA%	DA%	N%	A%	SA%	Mean	S.D
1	Improve the quality of school education	15.4	10.6	3.8	50.0	20.2	3.49	1.344
2	DEA has the authority to issue the NOC for further study	7.7	22.1	7.7	34.6	27.9	3.566	1.314
3	DEA has the authority to issue the study leave.	7.7	23.1	6.67	38.5	24.5	3.48	1.292
4	DEA uses the power of direct removal from the service.	9.6	24.0	19.2	29.8	17.3	3.21	1.259
5	DEA allocates the budget to make the learning environment better.	4.8	16.3	26.9	37.5	14.4	3.40	1.075
6	DEA has a stricter monitoring system than the old system.	1.9	18.3	20.2	45.2	14.4	3.52	1.014
7	DEA provides sufficient facilities for the improvement of quality education.	6.7	18.3	26.9	33.7	14.4	3.31	1.133
8	DEA plays an effective role in solving the problems of teachers.	11.5	21.2	22.8	29.8	8.7	3.03	1.153
9	DEA resolves the pay issues of the teachers and staff effectively.	16.3	19.2	29.8	26.0	8.7	2.91	1.208
10	DEA has equal checks and balances for both public and private schools	7.7	28.8	16.3	38.5	8.7	3.12	1.152
11	Education Authority has special powers to enroll and transfer teachers.	1.9	22.1	30.8	33.7	11.5	3.31	1.006
12	Education authority deals with issues like Pay adjustments.	4.8	18.3	36.5	29.8	10.6	3.23	1.026
13	Education authority deals with issues like pensions.	2.9	16.3	44.2	26.0	10.6	3.25	0.953
14	Education authority deals with issues like a merger of schools.	2.9	22.1	34.6	33.7	6.7	3.19	0.956
15	DEA properly constitutes school management councils to monitor academic activities	4.8	20.2	28.8	38.5	7.7	3.24	1.019

Table 1 describes a detailed statistical analysis of various statements related to the authority and effectiveness of the District Education Authority (DEA) in improving the quality of school education in district Lodhran. Data in the table presented that 70.2% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that the DEA improves the quality of school education, reflecting a high mean score of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 1.344. Similarly, a substantial 62.5% of respondents affirm the DEA's authority to issue NOCs for further study, resulting in a mean score of 3.566 and a standard deviation

of 1.314. The DEA's authority to issue study leave is supported by 63% of respondents, leading to a mean score of 3.48 and a standard deviation of 1.292. However, the authority's use of power for direct removal from service shows a more divided opinion, with a mean score of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 1.259, indicating some concerns among respondents. Budget allocation for improving the learning environment and strict monitoring by the DEA are perceived positively, with mean scores of 3.40 and 3.52, respectively. The provision of facilities for quality education improvement, the

DEA's role in solving teacher problems, and resolving pay issues have lower mean scores of 3.31, 3.03, and 2.91, respectively, suggesting room for improvement. Perceptions of testing balance in public and private schools are moderate, with an average score of 3.12. Information on the authority of the DEA to register and transfer teachers, salary adjustments, and pensions shows a range of responses, with mean scores ranging from 3.19 to 3.31. Finally, support for DEA activities in the

formation of school management councils to regulate academic activities, there is minimal support, with a mean score of 3.24. While the DEA appears to be having a positive impact on some aspects of school education, in particular, resolving salary issues and providing adequate facilities are areas in need of improvement. Responses reflect different perspectives on the complexity and effectiveness of DEA activity.

Table 2

Perceptions of the District Education Authority's (DEA) effectiveness across various responsibilities

Sr.	Statement	SDA%	DA%	N%	A%	SA%	Mean	S.D
16	DEA plays an effective role in the approval/re-appropriation of the budget.	4.8	22.1	36.5	30.8	5.8	3.11	0.975
17	Education Authority plays an effective role in the execution of development schemes	3.8	24.0	28.8	33.7	9.6	3.21	1.040
18	DEA plans and finances the maintenance of school, and supports enrolment and retention.	9.6	21.2	25.0	40.4	3.8	3.08	1.077
19	DEA monitors the teaching activities in the school properly	1.9	30.8	33.7	23.1	10.6	3.10	1.019
20	DEA ensures student safety and hygiene standards.	9.6	24.0	31.7	30.8	3.8	2.95	1.046
21	DEA has decentralized the power.	3.8	31.7	39.4	20.2	4.8	2.9	0.930
22	DEA implements policies and directions of the Government including achievement of KPIs set by the Government for education	8.7	25.0	36.5	23.1	6.7	2.94	1.050
23	DEA undertakes students' assessments and examinations.	4.8	26.9	34.6	28.8	4.8	3.02	0.975
24	DEA undertakes the ranking of schools on terminal examination results and targets	7.7	21.2	30.8	29.8	10.6	3.14	1.110
25	DEA helps to Promote co-curricular activities (sports, scouting, girl guide, Red Crescent)	4.8	26.9	28.8	25.0	14.4	3.17	1.127
26	DEA helps to constitute school management councils to monitor academic activities.	10.6	26.9	24.0	26.9	11.5	3.02	1.199
27	DEA takes steps for professional development of teachers to improve the quality of education.	3.8	30.8	26.0	31.7	7.7	3.09	1.044
28	DEA ensures quality content for learning.	5.8	29.8	38.5	18.3	7.7	2.92	1.012

Sr.	Statement	SDA%	DA%	N%	A%	SA%	Mean	S.D
29	DEA increases/Revisions in the scale of teachers reduce the turnover ratio of the school staff.	9.6	22.1	34.6	26.0	7.7	3.00	1.088
30	DEA support empowers both teachers and students through the democratic process.	5.8	34.6	35.6	19.2	4.8	2.83	0.970

Table 2 describes perceptions of the District Education Authority's (DEA) effectiveness across various responsibilities, based on responses measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SDA) to Strongly Agree (SA). The responses are summarized with mean scores and standard deviations (S.D), indicating the overall sentiment and variability among the respondents. A significant portion of respondents are neutral (36.5%) or agree (30.8%) that the DEA plays an effective role in budget approval and re-appropriation. Mean: 3.11, S.D: 0.975, indicating moderate agreement with some variability in responses. Most respondents are neutral (28.8%) or agree (33.7%) that the Education Authority effectively executes development schemes. Mean: 3.21, S.D: 1.040, reflecting a slightly higher agreement and variability. A large portion agrees (40.4%) that DEA supports school maintenance and enrolment, though a notable percentage is neutral (25.0%) or disagrees (21.2%). Mean: 3.08, S.D: 1.077, showing moderate agreement with considerable variability. Responses are mixed, with a significant portion neutral (33.7%) and some disagreement (30.8%). Mean: 3.10, S.D: 1.019, indicating moderate agreement with diverse opinions. Opinions are divided, with neutrality (31.7%) and agreement (30.8%) being prominent, alongside a notable percentage of disagreement (24.0%). Mean: 2.95, S.D: 1.046, reflecting a tendency towards neutrality. Many respondents are neutral (39.4%) or disagree (31.7%) about the DEA's decentralization of power. Mean: 2.9, S.D: 0.930, indicating slight disagreement with low variability. The majority are neutral (36.5%) or disagree (25.0%) with the DEA's implementation of government policies and achievement of KPIs. Mean: 2.94, S.D: 1.050, showing moderate neutrality with some disagreement. Many respondents are neutral (34.6%) or agree (28.8%) that DEA undertakes student assessment and examination effectively. Mean: 3.02, S.D: 0.975, indicating moderate agreement with low variability.

Responses are split between neutrality (30.8%) and agreement (29.8%), along with a notable percentage strongly agreeing (10.6%). Mean: 3.14, S.D: 1.110, reflecting moderate agreement with high variability. Opinions vary, with some agreement (25.0%) and neutrality (28.8%), and a significant percentage strongly agreeing (14.4%). Mean: 3.17, S.D: 1.127, indicating moderate agreement with high variability. Mixed feelings are evident with neutrality (24.0%) agreement (26.9%), and some disagreement (26.9%). Mean: 3.02, S.D: 1.199, indicating moderate agreement with high variability. A significant portion agrees (31.7%) or is neutral (26.0%) about the DEA's efforts in teacher development. Mean: 3.09, S.D: 1.044, reflecting moderate agreement with moderate variability. Many respondents are neutral (38.5%) or disagree (29.8%) about DEA ensuring quality content. Mean: 2.92, S.D: 1.012, indicating moderate neutrality with some disagreement. Responses show neutrality (34.6%) and slight agreement (26.0%) on the DEA's role in revising teacher scales to reduce turnover. Mean: 3.00, S.D: 1.088, indicating moderate agreement with moderate variability. Many are neutral (35.6%) or disagree (34.6%) about the DEA's support in empowering teachers and students through democratic processes. Mean: 2.83, S.D: 0.970, reflecting slight disagreement with low variability. The data suggests that while there is some agreement on the DEA's effectiveness in various roles, significant neutrality and disagreement indicate areas where improvement is needed. The evaluation of the two tables presents a complete view of the perceptions concerning the effectiveness of the District Education Authority (DEA) in diverse aspects of school schooling. Here, we speak about the findings with references to preceding studies and contextual insights.

Discussion of the Study

Table 1 suggests a sturdy agreement (70.2%) that

the DEA improves the pleasantness of school schooling, with a high suggest score of three. Forty-nine. This aligns with the findings by means of (Harris & Jones, 2017), who endorse that nearby schooling government can significantly impact educational excellence through effective policy implementation and useful resource allocation. However, the high widespread deviation (1.344) suggests varying ranges of pleasure amongst respondents, indicating that at the same time as many perceive fine impacts, others can also see room for development or face exclusive contextual demanding situations. Statements regarding the DEA's authority to trouble NOCs for similar studies (imply = three. 566) and examine go away (suggest = three.48) also display giant agreement. This is consistent with studies highlighting the importance of local educational authorities in providing necessary administrative support to educators (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012). Conversely, the DEA's power of direct removal from service received a lower mean score (3.21), reflecting mixed feelings about this authority's fairness or effectiveness. The DEA's role in budget allocation and strict monitoring is viewed positively, with mean scores of 3.40 and 3.52, respectively. This supports the idea that effective budget management and oversight are crucial for educational improvements (Odden & Picus, 2014). However, perceptions about the DEA providing sufficient facilities (mean = 3.31) and resolving teacher problems (mean = 3.03) suggest moderate satisfaction, indicating areas needing further enhancement. Resolving pay issues of teachers has a relatively low mean score of 2.91, implying significant dissatisfaction. This issue is critical as financial stability directly impacts teacher motivation and retention (Ingersoll, 2001). The moderate agreement on the DEA's role in resolving pension and pay adjustments further underscores the need for improved financial management practices within the authority. Table 2 reveals mixed perceptions about the DEA's decentralization of power (mean = 2.9) and its role in implementing government policies (mean = 2.94) (Moronfoye, 2023). These findings suggest that while decentralization can theoretically enhance responsiveness and local relevance (Bray, 1996), its effectiveness depends heavily on execution and clarity in role delineation. Similarly, the moderate agreement on the DEA's implementation of policies indicates that while efforts are recognized, there is

significant scope for better alignment with broader educational goals and key performance indicators (KPIs). The DEA's monitoring of teaching activities (mean = 3.10) and student assessment (mean = 3.02) show moderate agreement, suggesting that while systems are in place, their effectiveness might be inconsistent. Effective monitoring and assessment are critical for maintaining educational standards and fostering continuous improvement (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Responses regarding the DEA's role in professional development (mean = 3.09) and empowerment through democratic processes (mean = 2.83) indicate that while there is some recognition of these efforts, more robust and consistent initiatives are needed. Professional development is vital for equipping teachers with updated skills and methodologies (Desimone, 2009), and empowerment through democratic processes can enhance engagement and ownership among educators and students (Davis & Darling-Hammond, 2012)

Conclusion

The analysis underscores that while the DEA is perceived positively in certain areas, such as quality improvement and administrative authority, significant challenges remain, particularly in financial management, resource provision, and consistent policy implementation. The variability in responses highlights the need for tailored strategies that address specific local contexts and stakeholder needs. Future efforts should focus on enhancing financial stability for teachers, improving resource allocation, and ensuring that decentralized powers are effectively managed to align with broader educational objectives.

Recommendations

Improving the nature of schooling in Pakistan is a diverse test that requires an extensive and cooperative methodology. DEAs assume an essential part in carrying out and supervising schooling strategies at the neighborhood level. The following are five suggestions to upgrade the nature of training in Pakistan through the successful working of DEAs:

- Put resources into preparing programs for DEA authorities to upgrade their abilities in instructive administration, strategy execution, and checking and assessment.

- Give specific preparation on present-day showing approaches, educational program advancement, and evaluation strategies to guarantee DEAs are furnished with the most recent instructive practices.
- Team up with legitimate instructive establishments and global associations to work with limit-building drives.
- Advance people group inclusion by laying out school the board councils including guardians, educators, and nearby local area individuals.
- Encourage cooperation between DEAs, nearby NGOs, and local area-based associations to address explicit instructive difficulties and advance neighborhood arrangements.
- Support standard gatherings and criticism meetings among DEAs and local area partners to guarantee straightforwardness and inclusivity in dynamic cycles.
- Advocate for expanded spending plan designations to training at the local level, guaranteeing that assets are dispensed in light of the particular necessities and needs of each region.
- Carry out straightforward monetary administration frameworks inside DEAs to follow and improve the use of assets.
- Lay out an energetic information assortment and the executive framework to screen key instructive markers like understudy enlistment, participation, and scholastic implementation.

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