

Comparison of Students' Satisfaction and Achievement at Secondary Level in Islamabad

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Abstract This study aims at investigating satisfaction level of students and their achievement in public and private secondary schools of Islamabad. The respondents of this study were 9th grade students and English teachers (98 students and 98 teachers) of public and private secondary schools of Islamabad. Questionnaire was used for information gathering about satisfaction level of students. The academic achievement was gauged by the result of English subject from the first term examination. Independent sample t-test was applied to investigate the effect of satisfaction level on students' achievement. The results of the study revealed that satisfaction level have a significant effect on students' overall academic achievement in the subject of English. From students' perspective, satisfaction level of private school students was lower but their achievement scores were higher than public school students. It is recommended that teachers should focus on teaching activities and instructional strategies that lead to higher level of satisfaction and academic achievement of students.

Keywords: *satisfaction level, achievement scores, public schools, private schools*

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1. Background

Education has achieved great importance in 21st century. It is being dealt with multifarious challenges and issues throughout the world especially in Pakistan. Pakistan has made development in the education sector and has expanded the number of educational institutions, but the standard of education and facilities are insufficient which affects students' level of satisfaction in class.

Positive feeling of students enhances confidence and engagement in learning. Effective educational context demands higher satisfaction level of students, teachers and the parents. Satisfaction is linked with the achievement. Many researchers have tried to link the satisfaction with the achievement.

Student satisfaction is their perception of how well a school atmosphere supports educational success. Strong satisfaction activates students' analytical reasoning and learning [8]. Students' achievement in their studies and contentment with their experience is their satisfaction. Student satisfaction influences their motivation which is an important psychological factor in their success [9].

All students are from different backgrounds. Their ideals, viewpoints and learning styles might show high and low levels of satisfaction with a subject. Low level of satisfaction shows imbalance and disparity between the challenges of the course and the student's abilities to meet these challenges; while high level of students' satisfaction enhances their learning [8]. Satisfied learners are more committed to their studies and keen to make more efforts than unsatisfied learners. They are hard working, attend

their classes regularly and complete their coursework than unsatisfied students [10]. Satisfaction of students is based on experiences associated with their learning. Educational experiences are the result of temporary attitude of students. These experiences also affect students' overall satisfaction with the school [7].

Tessema *et al* [10] examined the effects of many factors on student's satisfaction. The major factors were quality of instruction, major course content and grading in major courses. These factors were found to be significant and were positively correlated with satisfaction of students. Lo [8] indicated three major components of satisfaction that may predict the student's learning. Three factors namely teacher's performance, student's commitment and course policies. Higher satisfaction was reported by Lo [8] where teachers and students were equally motivated towards the teaching-learning process.

Academic achievement is good performance of students in class, in school and in co-curricular activities. It also includes excellence in sports, communication skills, regularity, self-reliance and arts [5]. Measurement of proficiency with material presented in school by course grades or standardized achievement test scores is academic achievement of students which can be attained only when the student has a well-adjusted personality [4].

Achievement tests are typically used to find out the level of proficiency of course content, subject matter or skillfulness. Achievement is the actual performance in particular test at a specified time. Achievement is having done something instead of in the progress of something. Achievement is a completion, an attainment, an accomplishment, a success, a conquest and even

recognition. Different aspects are involved in students' academic achievement such as students' varied intellectual capabilities, aptitudes, approaches towards learning, different interest and teaching techniques [6]. Lots of research work has been performed to find out level of satisfaction of students in academic and non-academic settings.

There are two types of school systems in Islamabad; public schools and private. Dar [3] asserted that after the downfall of the Zulfikar Ali Bhutto government in the mid of 1970s, various private schools, colleges and universities were established all over the country, out of which Beaconhouse School (1975), City School (1978), Fauji Education System (1982), Lahore University of Management Sciences (1985), Punjab Colleges (1985) and Roots School System (1988) are most distinguished. These institutions are most successful in providing education at different levels and having variety of quality standards.

Higher education has gained a lot of significance in the previous 20 years in Pakistan; but actual development has been made in primary and secondary education institutions. So this is a fact that a number of new private sector schools keeps increasing with every passing month.

The success of private schools is not just the failure of public sector schools, but also the failure of Pakistani curricula and examination boards. According to Bari (n.d) in recent times a wave of publications on education sector in Pakistan have highlighted the facts that

- a. Percentage of children going to private schools in Pakistan has risen quickly to about 1/3rd of total by now.
- b. Private schools are not just in urban areas but in rural areas as well, and
- c. Private schools are not only for the rich. The poor can also afford fees of Rs 50-100 per month.
- d. Quality of education is better in private schools than public.
- e. Cost of provision of this education, per child, is lower than in the public sector.

Public sector education system is considered underperforming by the society. Any comparison with the private schools shows that private schools are better. If a choice is given to the people, they will choose to send their children to private schools. So the case for rethinking the role of public sector in primary and secondary education becomes stronger. This issue is addressed publically in media by political influential personalities also. This shows the interest of different society personnel towards the improvement of public sector education system. Currently public sector education system is dysfunctional, mishandled, underfunded, has poor monitoring and evaluation system, patchy infrastructure, teachers working in the system have low spirits and there is common lack of management and motivation at all levels of education departments. Private sector education system should be allowed to develop and flourish but this should not be seen as an elixir for the problems being faced by public sector. So we have to get the public sector in order.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the possible relationship between public and private secondary school students' achievement and their level of satisfaction in a metropolitan city of Pakistan. The research compared satisfaction level and achievement

scores of public and private school students. A relationship of satisfaction level with achievement scores of public and private school students was also created.

The main objectives of the study were:

1. Comparison of satisfaction level of public and private school students.
2. Comparison of achievement scores of public and private school students.
3. Relationship of satisfaction level with achievement scores of public and private school students.

2. Statement of the Problem

Pakistan inherits many educational systems, but at present there are two dominant public funded by government and private major source of income is fee from students. Therefore there was a need to investigate the level of satisfaction of these two systems and its effect on students' achievement. Teacher, student and subject matter together make the triangle of teaching and learning process. Together they create a classroom climate where learning takes place. This climate is based on many factors, of which psychological climate is very important. Psychological climate further has many components. Satisfaction level of students is one of them. The researcher conducted this study entitled "Comparison of students' satisfaction and achievement at secondary level in Islamabad." The study investigated the satisfaction level, achievement scores, and relationship of satisfaction level with achievement scores of public and private secondary school students of Islamabad.

3. Method and Procedure

The study was correlational which was conducted to find out the relationship of satisfaction level of public and private secondary school students with their achievement. All the public and private secondary schools of Islamabad (urban area) constituted the population. For this study, 40 public and private schools were selected. The sample size for the study was 980 students and 98 teachers. 600 students and 60 teachers from cluster of 24 public secondary schools; and 380 students and 38 teachers from cluster of 16 private secondary schools were randomly selected as participants. The study was delimited to students of 9th grade and subject of English. Students' achievement was recorded on the basis of their scores in current classroom test of English.

Instrument was developed by Afzal [1] and its validity and reliability was assured. The responses were rated on 5 point Likert-Type Scale. The respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement with the statement in questionnaire. Researcher focused only on students' satisfaction and the data related to it was used in this study.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion

Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. The significant effect of level of satisfaction on students' achievement was explored by applying statistical operations. Independent Sample t-test was

employed for comparison of the satisfaction level with achievement scores of public and private school students.

Table 1. Comparison of Public and Private School Students' Responses on Level of Satisfaction with their Achievement Scores

Subscale	Category	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Satisfaction	Public	600	43.55	4.58	3.65	9.62	.000*
	Private	380	39.89	7.30			
Achievement score	Public	600	57.70	15.80	-10.95	-10.54	.000*
	Private	380	68.64	15.92			

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The Table 1 indicates significant difference between mean score (\bar{X} =43.55) of satisfaction of public school students and mean score (\bar{X} =39.89) of satisfaction of the private school students of Islamabad having $t(978) = 9.62$ at $\alpha=0.05$ and $p=0.00$. The mean difference (MD=3.65) was statistically significant.

Also significant difference was found between mean score (\bar{X} =57.70) of achievement of public school students and mean score (\bar{X} =68.64) of achievement of

the private school students of Islamabad having $t(978) = -10.54$ at $\alpha=0.05$ and $p=0.00$.

The satisfaction level (\bar{X} =43.55) of public school students was high but their achievement scores (\bar{X} =57.70) were low, while the satisfaction level (\bar{X} =39.89) of private school students was low but their achievement scores (\bar{X} =68.64) were high. This difference is further explained below with the help of a line graph.

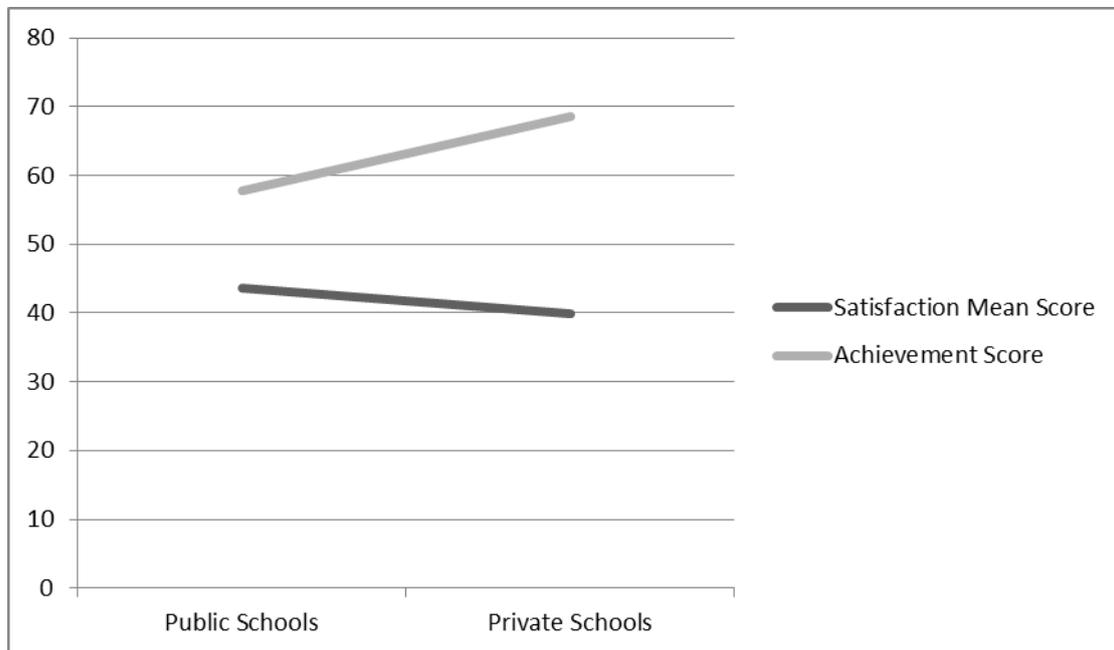


Figure 1. Mean Score Comparison of Satisfaction Level of Public and Private School Students

The inclination of the darker line in figure indicated higher satisfaction level of public school students whereas relatively fade line showed their less achievement scores as compared to private school students.

The findings of the study lead to the conclusion that according to the 9th grade students of private secondary schools of ICT, their satisfaction level was low but their achievement scores were high. But according to the 9th grade students of public secondary schools of ICT, their satisfaction level was high but their achievement scores were low.

Proper measures should be taken to improve public school education system, so that achievement scores of the students should get equally high as of private school students. Reasons of students' poor performance should be diagnosed and proper solutions should be sorted out. Similarly, satisfaction level of private school students should be increased and specific measures should be taken to attain this objective, so that satisfaction level of private school students should also as high as of their

achievement scores. Normally the satisfaction and the achievement scores are positively correlated [6,8,10] with each other, but the results of this study are slightly different in the case of private school students of Islamabad. The reason might be the higher level of fee that may create stress from the parents to students and may be the teachers of the private schools may be more demanding that lowered the satisfaction. But the question arises whether the lower satisfaction may lead to increased achievement scores; the future researchers may consider this while conducting research in this field.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

There are varieties of factors inside and outside a classroom which contribute in students' academic achievement. This study only focused on the level of satisfaction that impact student's achievement scores. The most important responsibility of the teacher is to teach

students efficiently and devotedly, so that they show best academic performance. To attain this goal teacher should understand all the contributing factors in this regard. It is not possible to determine all the influencing factors in single effort. It is a difficult and complicated job which needs a lot of time, hard work and resources to identify these factors.

1. Teachers should focus on teaching activities and instructional strategies that lead to higher level of satisfaction and academic achievement of students.
2. Low achievers of the public schools should be motivated using proper teaching techniques to investigate and involve in classroom activities.
3. Further research is needed to find out the similarity between the actual level of satisfaction in classroom and that conceptualized by the students.
4. Besides using quantitative methods, qualitative approaches should also be implemented to find out students' perceptions regarding satisfaction.
5. Further research is needed to explore the problem on different grades, class levels, larger sample, different population and other regions too.
6. Gender wise comparison can also be included in future research studies.

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