

Comparative Study of Teaching Approaches in Public and Private Schools of Tehsil Sargodha

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Abstract

This study set out to explore the teaching methods employed by primary school teachers in both public and private schools within Tehsil Sargodha. The research encompassed the entire population of primary school teachers, spanning across private and public educational institutions within Tehsil Sargodha. A total of forty (40) private schools and sixty (60) public schools were selected randomly for inclusion in the study. The questionnaire used for data collection was a self-developed tool that had undergone validation by experts and a pilot testing. The internal consistency of the questionnaire, as measured by Cronbach's Alpha, yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.947. For data analysis, mean scores, standard deviations, and t-tests were employed. The findings of this research indicated that the teaching practices employed by primary teachers in both private and public schools were found to be equivalent. Furthermore, the study revealed that there was no significant difference in teaching practices between male and female primary teachers in both private and public schools. In light of these results, it is recommended that head teachers maintain a consistent vigilance over the teaching strategies utilized by their staff and actively guide them toward the adoption of more effective teaching methods.

Key Words: Teaching practices, Primary Teachers, Public & Private Schools

Introduction

Education plays a pivotal role in the development of a country, and ensuring that children receive the best possible education during their primary years is of utmost importance. In Pakistan, the primary education system is rich and diverse, with various types of schools catering to the needs of the populace. These educational institutions include both public and private schools, encompassing elite and low-cost institutions, as well as public schools under the Federal and Provincial Governments, Garrison Institutes, Missionary Schools, and Madrassas. According to the Government of Pakistan (2000), the government's role in education is not just that of a provider

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but also an enabler and facilitator. Public schools offer free education, and textbooks are supplied to students. While public school teachers are generally more highly qualified and receive better salaries compared to their private school counterparts, there is room for improvement in the quality of public-school teachers (Ali, 2011). Quality education hinges on the adherence of teachers to established standards (Amanullah & Adeeb, 2014). The importance of public education cannot be overstated. Government involvement in public schools is essential to achieve educational objectives. As Goodlad (2004) pointed out, a great nation's purpose is rooted in democracy, which can be nurtured through education in public schools. Public schools are designed to cater to all children, ensuring they receive an education that equips them for a livelihood and active citizenship in a democratic society (Barber, 2004).

In Pakistan, the Education Departments are actively working to enhance the quality of teaching in public schools. The National Education Policy (1998-2010) concentrated on increased budget allocation and quality enhancement to boost enrollment in public schools. Making primary education available to all children is imperative for societal progress and development. The Constitution of Pakistan, under Article 25-A, acknowledges the state's obligation to provide compulsory and free education to all children (Malik, 2011). To fulfill this commitment, the Government of Punjab has implemented initiatives such as the School Reforms Roadmap, aimed at providing equitable and accessible quality education across the province. This has led to the establishment of programs like the Punjab Education Endowment Fund (PEEF), Daanish Schools, Punjab Education Sector Reforms Programme (PESRP), and the Punjab Education Foundation (PEF) (Zakar, et al., 2013). Additionally, it is important to note that while the number of private schools is on the rise in Pakistan, a significant portion of parents cannot afford to send their children to these private institutions (UNESCO, 2011).

Parents often choose to send their children to private schools with the belief that they offer a higher quality of education. Buchmann, DiPrete, and McDaniel (2008) conducted a study that revealed a direct link between parental perceptions of education quality and school enrollment rates. They suggested that setting high educational standards and making education more accessible can lead to increased enrollment rates (UNICEF, ILO, & UNESCO, 2008). However, as noted by Amjad and Macleod (2012), enrollment rates in public schools are declining over time. This calls for a reevaluation of government educational policies to ensure improved quality in public schools. They emphasized the need for both public and private education sectors to find ways to enhance learning outcomes. Zakar et al. (2013) recommended that government intervention, such as providing free education and meals during school hours, can boost public school enrollment rates. Private schools, often managed by individuals, organizations, philanthropists, or NGOs, finance their operations by charging tuition fees. In Pakistan, the number of private schools is steadily increasing, as parents are drawn to them for the promise of quality education. Iqbal (2012) highlighted that private schools excel in teaching practices compared to public schools, with teachers meticulously preparing and planning lessons before delivering them.

Goyal and Pandey (2009) argued that private schools are generally perceived as more accountable and providers of better-quality education. This makes them a preferred choice for parents. Conn-Powers (2009) pointed out that private schools serve as an alternative for parents dissatisfied with public schools or those with different motivations for choosing them, such as proximity, regularity of teachers, and better educational standards (Ahmed, Amjad, Habib & Shah, 2013). Teachers in private schools claim to provide more individualized attention to students, even though they are often paid less and have fewer qualifications, as noted by Wilkinson and Yussof (2005). Overall, private schools are seen as offering a somewhat higher standard of education

(Andrabi, Khan, Khan & Naseer, 2012). Lubienski and Lubienski (2006) found that, on standardized tests, students in private schools tend to achieve higher results compared to their public school counterparts.

Teachers play a pivotal role in students' learning experiences, and their varied strategies are essential in addressing the complex challenges of education in the developing world, as noted by Winthrop and Smith (2012). Conn-Powers (2009) emphasized the importance of using innovative teaching strategies when students struggle to grasp the content. Furthermore, primary teachers must receive proper training in these strategies to achieve better results. Appropriate teaching strategies foster an effective learning environment for students, and their use plays a key role in creating a better classroom atmosphere (Volkwein & Cabrera, 1998). The increasing number of private schools in Pakistan can be attributed to the perceived subpar education in public schools. Barber (2011) pointed out that parents often have negative experiences with the learning outcomes in public schools, which diminishes their enthusiasm for them. It is essential to compare the teaching practices of teachers in both private and public schools to address these concerns. Muzaffar and Bari (2010) stressed the need to focus on the factors contributing to the success of any educational sector rather than debating which is superior. Amjad et al. (2012) also emphasized the importance of both sectors collaborating to meet the challenges of the modern world.

Teachers play a pivotal role in the classroom, serving as the driving force behind a school's educational mission. Their level of preparation directly influences the quality of education students receive. This importance is particularly pronounced in the early years of primary school, where the foundations of a student's educational journey are laid. The outcomes during these formative years profoundly impact a student's future educational achievement. Given the significance of the primary school phase, it is imperative for teachers to be well-prepared and employ suitable teaching practices. The teaching methods applied at this stage are crucial since children build the cornerstones of their educational lives during these years. Furthermore, public and private schools operate within distinct environments, necessitating different teaching strategies. As a result, it is essential for teachers to be aware of and adapt to the specific needs of their students.

The quality of education cannot be elevated without a concurrent enhancement of teaching strategies in both public and private school settings. Awan & Zia (2015) have highlighted the direct relationship between teaching methods and the quality of education. Therefore, teachers must employ appropriate teaching strategies to foster engaging learning experiences for students, sparking their natural curiosity and expanding their horizons (Nasrullah, Fatima & Nayab, 2021). Notably, public and private schools offer varying atmospheres for students from diverse backgrounds. Teachers must tailor their teaching strategies to suit the unique characteristics of their students' environments. Several factors, such as the school's nature and atmosphere, student motivation, family backgrounds, demographics, and social context, significantly influence students' learning at the primary level. Thus, teachers must employ a range of suitable teaching strategies to effectively address these factors and determine the students' academic success.

Private and public schools operate with different administrative structures, goals, and environments. Consequently, teachers in these settings often utilize distinct teaching practices. In light of these differences, this study aims to analyze and compare the teaching practices of teachers in private and public schools, acknowledging the impact of these strategies on the quality of education (Zuckerman, 2007).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To compare teaching practices of teachers of public and private schools of Tehsil Sargodha.
- ii. To find out the areas addressed during teaching by the teachers of Tehsil Sargodha.

Hypotheses

To find out the difference of teaching practices between teachers of public and private schools following hypothesis was tested.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between teaching practices of primary teachers of private and public schools.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the teaching practices of male primary teachers in private and public schools.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the teaching practices used by female primary teachers in private and public schools.

Methodology

The present study was confined to primary school teachers employed in Sargodha City within the Punjab province. In this exploratory study, a survey method was used to find the current status of teaching practices among primary-level teachers in Tehsil Sargodha. The survey approach was chosen for its efficiency, scalability, standardization, cost-effectiveness, and its capacity to gather data on various aspects simultaneously. This method also allows for anonymous and candid responses, which is crucial for a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter.

Population and Sampling

Sargodha Tehsil was chosen as the data source due to its significant number of private and public schools. The study encompassed all primary teachers in both private and public schools across Tehsil Sargodha. A list of public primary schools was obtained from the Punjab School Education Department, while a list of private primary schools was acquired from the EDO information cell, District Sargodha.

Using a simple random sampling technique, 40 private primary schools and 60 public primary schools from Tehsil Sargodha were selected. Two teachers from each school were randomly chosen, resulting in a total of 200 primary teachers, comprising 80 from private schools and 120 from public schools.

Instrumentation

The research instrument employed in this study was a self-developed questionnaire. It encompassed nine factors recommended by Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan & Brown (2012), which included lesson planning, interaction between teacher and students, motivational techniques, assessment, effective feedback, ethical and moral developmental techniques, classroom management and discipline, student-student cooperation, and teacher's self-satisfaction (Rashtchi & Jabalameli, 2012). The questionnaire was designed as a five-point rating scale and was bilingual. To ensure its validity and suitability in the local context, as well as to assess its difficulty level, it was validated by five experts.

Following the incorporation of their suggestions, the questionnaire was pilot-tested with 50 primary teachers (25 male and 25 female). The data collected were then analyzed to determine the questionnaire's reliability coefficient, which was found to be 0.947, indicating an acceptable level of reliability.

Data Collection and Analysis

Every possible effort was made to collect data directly from the respondents. However, in the case of male institutions, the presence of the religious and cultural Parda system in girls' schools necessitated the deployment of a trained research assistant. A total of 200 questionnaires were received, resulting in a 100% response rate. To analyze the data collected through the questionnaire, response options were weighted as follows: Always = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Seldom = 2, and Never = 1. Mean scores, standard deviation, and t-tests were then utilized for data analysis.

Results

The results of the study are as follows:

Table 1

Comparison of teaching practices of teachers of private and public schools

S#	Factor	Teacher	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
1	Lesson Planning	Public school	45.02	6.98	2.12	198	.035
		Private school	46.87	5.33			
2	Teacher-Student Interaction	Public school	37.34	5.98	-.726	198	.469
		Private school	37.88	4.56			
3	Motivational Techniques	Public school	18.82	3.63	-.821	198	.413
		Private school	19.19	2.68			
4	Assessment	Public school	19.55	3.04	1.25	198	.214
		Private school	19.05	2.64			
5	Effective feedback	Public school	19.39	3.34	-.102	198	.919
		Private school	19.43	2.92			
6	Ethical & moral development	Public school	32.54	4.59	1.40	198	.163
		Private school	31.63	4.48			
7	Classroom management & discipline	Public school	15.42	2.59	-.457	198	.648
		Private school	15.58	2.53			
8	Student-student interaction	Public school	16.48	2.56	3.17	198	.002
		Private school	15.35	2.37			
9	Teacher's self-satisfaction	Public school	11.87	2.24	.216	198	.829
		Private school	11.81	1.87			
10	Total	Public school	216.45	28.22	-.099	198	.921

Private school	216.82	23.01
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Table 1 reveals significant differences in two key areas: lesson planning and student-student interaction, when comparing public and private school teachers. Specifically, in the context of lesson planning, there is a significant difference (t-value = -2.12, p-value = 0.035 < 0.05 with df = 198). Private school teachers exhibit a higher mean score of 46.87 with a standard deviation of 5.33, indicating superior performance in lesson planning compared to public school teachers (M = 45.02 & SD = 6.9). Conversely, when it comes to student-student interaction, public primary school teachers outperform private school teachers, with a lower t-value of -3.17 and a p-value of 0.002 < 0.05 (with df = 198). The mean for public school teachers in this area is 16.48 with a standard deviation of 2.56, while private school teachers have a mean of 15.35 with a standard deviation of 2.37.

However, there are no significant differences observed between private and public school teachers in the remaining seven factors, including Teacher-Student Interaction (t-value = -0.726, df = 198 & p-value = 0.469 > 0.05), Motivational Techniques (t-value = -0.726, df = 198 & p-value = 0.469 > 0.05), Assessment (t-value = -0.821, df = 198 & p-value = 0.413 > 0.05), Effective Feedback (t-value = -0.102, df = 198 & p-value = 0.919 > 0.05), Ethical & Moral Development (t-value = 1.40, df = 198 & p-value = 0.163 > 0.05), and Teacher’s Self-Satisfaction (t-value = 0.216, df = 198 & p-value = 0.829 > 0.05).

In the broader context, when we consider all these factors collectively to gauge the overall difference in teaching practices between private and public-school teachers, we find that the difference is not statistically significant. The t-value for this overall analysis is -0.099, and the p-value is 0.921, which is greater than 0.05 (with df = 198). Consequently, we accept the null hypothesis (H₀₁) indicating that the teaching practices of both private and public primary school teachers are, on the whole, equivalent.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between the teaching strategies of male primary teachers of private and public schools.

Table 2

Comparison of the teaching practices of male primary teachers in private and public schools

School	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Private School	40	225.22	32.81	.559	98	.578
Public School	60	222.18	21.66			

Table 2 demonstrates that there is no statistically significant difference in teaching practices among male teachers working in private and public schools. This is evident from the t-value of 0.559, with 98 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.578, which exceeds the threshold of 0.05. Consequently, we accept the null hypothesis H₀₂, suggesting that the teaching practices of male primary school teachers in both public and private schools are comparable.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between the teaching practices of female primary teachers in private and public schools.

Table 3

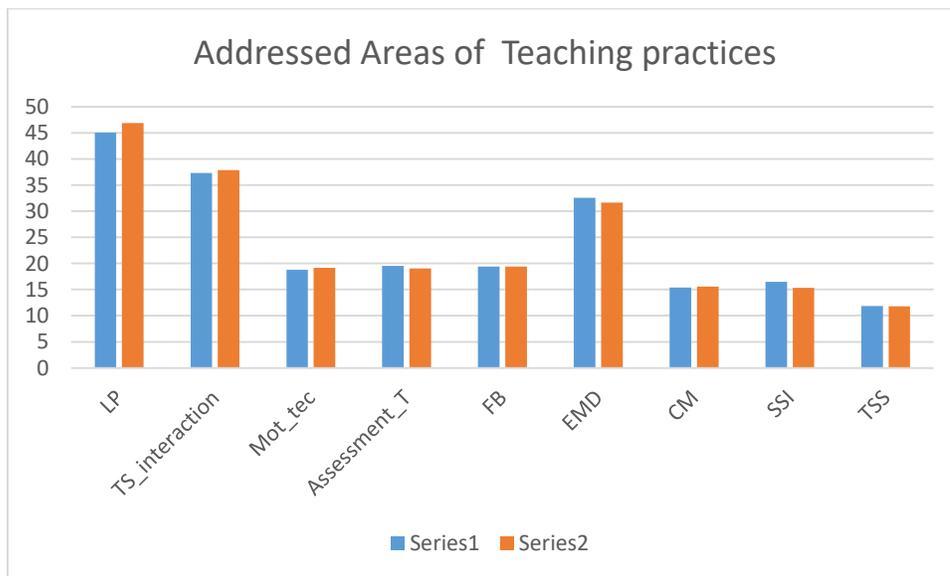
Comparison of the teaching practices of female primary teachers in private and public schools.

School	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Private School	40	207.46	19.13	.915	98	.363
Public School	60	211.54	23.25			

Table 3 shows that there is no statistically significant difference in teaching practices between female teachers in private and public schools. This conclusion is supported by the t-value of -0.915, 98 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.363, which exceeds the significance threshold of 0.05. As a result, we accept the null hypothesis H₀₃, indicating that the teaching practices of female primary school teachers in both public and private schools are alike.

Fig. 1

Addressed Areas of Teaching practices



In Figure 1, the blue bars represent public schools, while the red bars represent private schools. The graph reveals that primary school teachers from both public and private schools primarily focus on three key areas: lesson planning (LP), teacher-student interaction (TS-Interaction), and ethical and moral development (EMD) of students. Moderately addressed areas include motivational techniques (Moi-tech), assessment techniques (Assessment-tech), and effective feedback (FB). In contrast, classroom management and discipline (CM), student-student interaction (SSI), and teacher's self-satisfaction (TSS) are the areas that receive comparatively less attention from these teachers.

Conclusions and Discussion

On the basis of above findings it can be concluded that the overall difference in teaching practices between public and private school teachers is consistent across seven factors: teacher-student interaction, motivational techniques, assessment, effective feedback, ethical and moral development, and teacher's self-satisfaction. However, when it comes to primary teachers in private schools, they excel in lesson planning compared to their counterparts in public schools. On the other hand, primary teachers in public schools demonstrate superior student-student interaction. These findings contradict the results of Amjad and MacLeod (2012) and Lin and Chang (2010), who suggested that private schools generally exhibit better teaching effectiveness and teacher quality. The possible explanation for this inconsistency is that both public and private schools tend to recruit teachers from the same pool of traditionally trained educators.

Teaching practices of both female and male primary teachers in public and private schools are on par. This conclusion stands in contrast to the findings of Lin et al. (2010), who reported that female teachers outperform male teachers in teaching performance. The difference in these results may stem from the fact that teachers in both categories are predominantly trained in traditional methods, which may be less effective. Among primary school teachers in both public and private schools, certain areas receive more attention than others. These include lesson planning (LP), teacher-student interaction (TS-Interaction), and the ethical and moral development (EMD) of students. Moderately addressed areas encompass motivational techniques (Moi-tech), assessment techniques (Assessment-tech), and effective feedback (FB). In contrast, classroom management and discipline (CM), student-student interaction (SSI), and teacher's self-satisfaction (TSS) are the less attended-to areas. It is clear that all aspects of teachers' practices are crucial for student learning and personality development. However, the neglect of significant areas such as classroom management and discipline, student-student interaction, and teacher's self-satisfaction might be contributing to an ineffective teaching and learning process in both types of schools.

Recommendations

In the light of findings of the study, following recommendations were made:

1. Consistent monitoring of teaching strategies by head teachers is recommended, along with providing guidance to improve the quality of teaching.
2. Both public and private school teachers may prioritize organizing regular teacher training programs to enhance their performance.
3. Encourage the sharing of best practices among teachers in public and private schools to foster professional growth.
4. Invest in modern teaching resources and technology to aid educators in delivering more effective lessons.
5. Create opportunities for collaborative lesson planning and assessment development among teachers in both public and private schools.

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