

EDUCATION UNDER DEVOLUTION PLAN AND IT'S IMPACT ON GOVERNANCE

*Kamleshwer Lohana
Prof. Dr Abida Tahirani
Prof. Ghulam Hussain Khaskhelly*

ABSTRACT

This research study explores the process of governance of the education system under devolution of Power Plan. This research explains the process of decision-making at local level. This study also highlights the functions and responsibilities of local government with regard education. Furthermore, this investigation shows whether the present plan of governance is effective. This paper analyses the importance of local government system with reference to innovation process. This process help us to understand the importance of devolution of Power Plan at three stages; which include the creation of ideas, the public acceptance and implementation at each level of education management.

This research will help in comprehending why, despite the increased expenditure, Pakistan is nowhere near achieving the objectives committed to in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Dakar conference. The research paper also explores a range of challenges and opportunities associated within the governance mechanism of the education department at the district level.

Key words: Devolution plan, Governance, Education, Innovation, School Management Committees (SMCs)

INTRODUCTION

In developed countries including United States, United Kingdom; the devolution of power plans has successfully improved the quality of health and education. Unfortunately, in Pakistan the plan did not bring significant improvement in education. Pakistan is one of the most populated countries in the world. According to United Nations Development Program [UNDP] (2013) World Development Report Education Index, Pakistan ranks 146th of 187 ranked countries. According to the ‘out of school children’: South Asian regional study (UNICEF, 2014), in 2009, in Pakistan, there were 6.6 million school-age children out-of school and of these over three million are girls who are out of school. To address the issue of the lack of access to

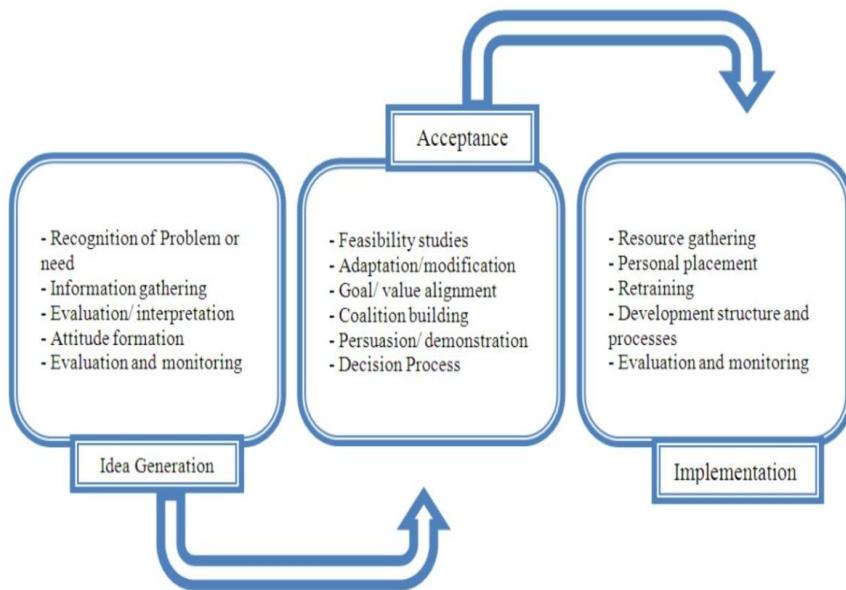
education, achieving quality education for children, during the implementation of the innovative concept of devolution plan of the country the government of Pakistan introduced changes in the Constitution. The devolution of Power Plan introduced a major change in the education sector. The major responsibilities were shifted from provincial government to district government. The local government was empowered to recruit, pay and manage staff. Nevertheless, public sector education required high quality governance, mechanisms to promote transparency, accountability and vision for the people of Pakistan. Furthermore, mechanisms need to innovate at all levels of governance.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Concept of innovation represents an effective completion of three steps (generation of an idea, acceptance and implementation) of the process, as shown in Figure-1 (Shepard, 1967). The process of innovation provides a framework showing how innovation is created, its progress and nurture, or termination over time (Van de Ven *et.al.*, 2000).

The creation of ideas is made by different professionals or initiated through the stimulation of the environment. In this situation a number of individuals play a variety of leadership roles from initiation to implementation. For example, a new concept like devolution of power plan was introduced to address issues in education. In this regard, necessary information is gathered, analyzed and evaluated for making certain policies and taking decisions. In this process, a range of stakeholders are involved to modify newly generated concepts for consensus building and to reject or accept the policy decisions. The consensus-building process can be made through stakeholder consultation, coalition building and the perusal of the decision making process. After the acceptance phase, human and material resources are organized for effective implementation (Bland, Bruk, Kim & Lee, 2010).

FIGURE-1
THE PROCESS AND ACTIVITIES OF INNOVATION IN ITS STAGES



Source: (Bland, Bruk, Kim & Lee, 2010). Adapted by Lohana, K.

In order to understand the conceptual framework of innovation in a simple way, it is presented in a linear manner. However in this model, a range of activities overlap and merge with each other at different stages in a dynamic way (Shepard, 1967; Van de Ven, 1986). If this process is to achieve its desired outcomes, public officials have to manage the change, implement the process of innovation and deal with a range of problems that the public foresee.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The research explores the elements that work in the governance of the education system under the devolution plan and it explains why this system is not successful in providing significant education facilities for the children and in showing progress towards Education For All (EFA), and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) targets with reference to marginalized children.

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

The main objectives of this research are:

- To review the devolution plan with regards to education and its governance,
- To compare devolution in the education system of Pakistan with those of other developing countries,
- To evaluate the impact of prioritization of education and its implementation,
- To examine the perception of people (parents, teachers and children) of the governance of the devolution plan regarding education,
- To suggest / recommend various steps / by which the governance regarding education can be improved.

HYPOTHESIS OF RESEARCH STUDY

The following research hypotheses are proposed for this research studies that:

- The devolution plan has not been able to contribute to the Education System,
- Leadership in education relates to improvement in the quality of education,
- Good Governance of the education sector relates to sustainable improvement in education,
- The overall participation of communities in public sector institutions is declining.

SELECTION OF AREA FOR RESEARCH

The research is conducted in district Khairpur, which is located in the northern part of Sindh Province Pakistan. The district Khairpur was selected because population-wise it is a big district and there are various interventions of district government as well as CSOs. Whole District Initiatives (WDI) were undertaken and a range of development intervention were implemented (USIAD Pakistan, 2007). Khairpur district has high Human Development Indicators (HDI). Additionally, in this district, the difference between urban and rural literacy rate is less than 15 percent (PBS, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Half of the world's illiterate population and 60 percent of the world's population live in Asia (UNESCO, 2012; UNESCO, 2014). For this reason, education is of paramount importance in this region. The United Nations MDGs have had a positive effect on the fragile South

Asian region. South Asia's Net Enrolment Rate (NER) rose from 75 per cent in the year 2000 to 85 per cent in 2010 (Dundar, Beteille, Riboud & Deolalikar, 2014:1). However, Pakistan is not doing well in improving the region's literacy statistics.

According to UNICEF three out of every ten children aged 5-9 years in Pakistan do not go to school. Three out of every five children aged 10-19 years never see the inside of a classroom. Once in school, the dropout rate is very high and of those children who enroll, only one out of two reach grade 5 (UNICEF, 2014).

Countries that have invested a higher proportion of national income on education have experienced faster educational progress than those who have invested less, and they produce a great number of people with skills who are able to contribute to the development of the community. Additionally, they have examined the process of devolution and the effects it has on the sectors, at the grassroots level and its outcomes. Whilst implementing decentralization reforms, the Government has not followed the appropriate process of innovation, instead, adopting an eclectic mix of influence, consultation and cruelty. This lack of adaptation to the innovation model has resulted in the public not knowing whether the reforms have been carried out for the public good, or to give legitimacy to military rule.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology consists of a literature review, which includes adoption of conceptual models of innovation referring two journal articles studies, international analytical reports, regarding governance, and policy documents associated with devolution of education in Pakistan and Sindh Local Government Ordinance (SLGO) 2001. Both qualitative (open ended) and quantitative (closed ended) data is collected, and this is known as the convergent parallel mixed-method design (Creswell, 2014). These two separate forms of data were collected and analysed separately and compared to see if the findings confirm / deny each other (Creswell, 2014). According to Creswell (2014), the results collected from both methods verified each other's findings. These methods were applied to establish what works in the governance of the education system under the innovative model of devolution plan and why this system is not delivering the desired results. Both methods determined what the barriers are to making educational institutions and their mechanisms of governance work effectively and to identify ways of creating engagement of

communities to work in the spirit of the devolution plan. The data collection process was initiated in the district Khairpur during 2010 and 2011. With regards to the quantitative method, primary data was collected through household survey questionnaires responded by SMC stakeholders (students' response over school condition, response of school staff and admin, response from teachers and response from parents/community and secondary reviews). Firstly, a total sample of 256 household was selected from four selected taulkas of Khairpur district, at first stage of sampling. As shown in table 1, multistage sampling method was employed for the selection of households. In the second stage, four union councils were selected from each selected four taulkas. In the third stage four villages were selected from each four taulkas. Lastly, four household were selected from each selected village. This method was a help in collecting comprehensive information from targeted stakeholders. A range of secondary data was collected from provincial and district level public-sector organizations. The data includes annual budget books, annual expenditure statements and their official websites.

TABLE-1
SAMPLE SIZE OF COMMUNITY

	District	Stages						Total
		Taulka	First	Selected Taulka	Number of Taulkas	Second	Third	
Khairpur	Khairpur Gambat Sobhodero Kot Diji Kingri Thari Mirwah Faiz Gunj Nara	Khairpur Gambat Sobhodero Kot Diji	4	4	4	4	4	256
							Total	256

Source: Field work.

Collected data was tabulated analyzed by applying two-way Chi-Square goodness of fit test. Qualitative data was collected through focused group discussion, in-depth interviews at district level involving key stakeholders to foster and deepen the discussion on governance of education. This helped to arrive at an in-depth understanding of behavioural patterns and the reasons that govern them. The general methodology was interviews with the key people in the district Khairpur including the district Nazim, Executive District Officer- Education and his team, teachers and community activists. By combining both forms of databases that is the qualitative and the quantitative, the researcher analyzed and compared them to facilitate the understanding of the changes needed for the marginalized communities currently not engaged in the devolved education system of governance. The researcher has combined both forms of data collected through qualitative and quantitative method to explore the policy paradigm with reference to the devolution plan and its implementation in the education system.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Quantitative Data Analysis: This analysis outlines the understanding that the community and the school have of the devolved education plan, and explains how this system of governance is working, or the necessity for a complete re-evaluation of this system that it needs in order to produce optimal results. The sample for quantitative data is taken from the survey questionnaire of 256 households of the Khairpur district. In this research study the selection area is formed, completely in the vicinity of primary schools of urban and rural distribution. The data is tabulated according to statistical software, SPSS. It shows that half of the sample of respondents is female because they have a good understanding of the reasons for the education of their children.

Research Question 1: Does the devolution plan not succeed in improving the quality of education?

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There are an equal numbers of people who are aware as are unaware of the devolution plan

Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): There are an unequal numbers of people who are aware as are unaware of the devolution plan

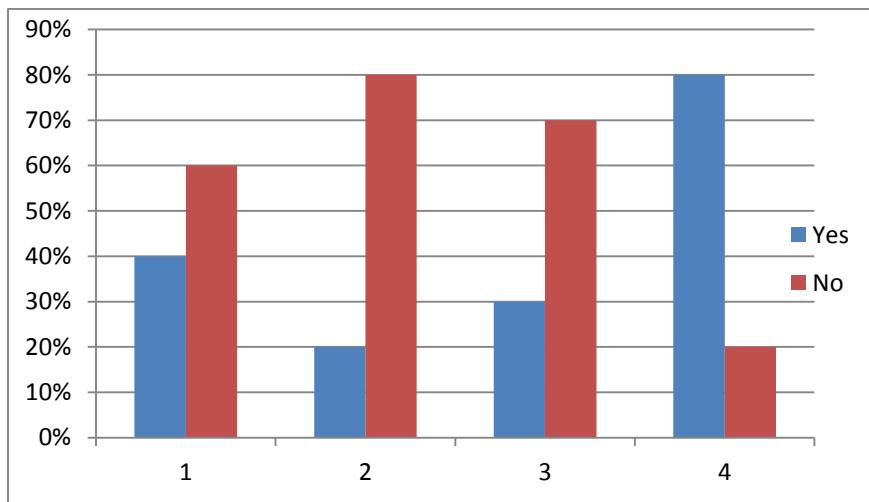
In this research, according to survey data 2010, Figure-2, from 70 schools, a sample of 256 community representatives were asked

whether the school and community representatives are aware of the devolution plan ($f_{\text{aware}} = 109$) as compared with the number of community representatives, who are not aware of the devolution plan ($f_{\text{unaware}} = 147$). The data was analyzed using Chi Square ‘Goodness-of-Fit Test’. The null hypothesis is rejected,

$$\chi^2(1) = 1455.124, p < 0.05$$

More than half of the schools and community representatives do not know about devolution plan at district Khairpur.

**FIGURE-2
KNOWLEDGE ABOUT DEVOLUTION PLAN**



Yes	40%	20%	30%	80%
No	60%	80%	70%	20%

Source: Survey Data, 2010.

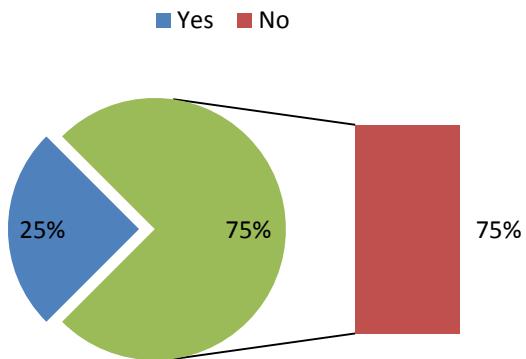
Hypothesis I: The devolution plan has not been able to contribute to the development of the Education System.

Outcome: On the basis of responses of stakeholders, Figure-2 and 3, Table-2 shows that majority of parents and teachers were not aware of the devolution plan. Research Hypothesis I was tested by

conducting a statistical test, namely a Chi-Square ‘Goodness-of-Fit Test’. The null hypothesis is rejected.

TABLE-2 PARENTS & TEACHERS KNOWLEDGE ABOUT DEVOLUTION PLAN AND & ITS EFFECTIVENESS COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS SYSTEM	
Yes	No
25%	75%

Figure. 3: Awareness about Devolution Plan



Research Question 2: Are parents, Head Teachers and UC level Representatives included in making decisions for the betterment of education at school level in the Khairpur district?

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There are an equal number of respondents involved in decision-making as is not included.

Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): There are an unequal number of respondents involved in decision making as is not included.

In this research, taken from 70 schools, a sample of 256 parents, head teachers and union council representatives and were asked whether they are involved in decision making at the school. The Number of respondents who are involved in decision-making ($f_{involved} = 77$) was fewer than the number not involved in decision

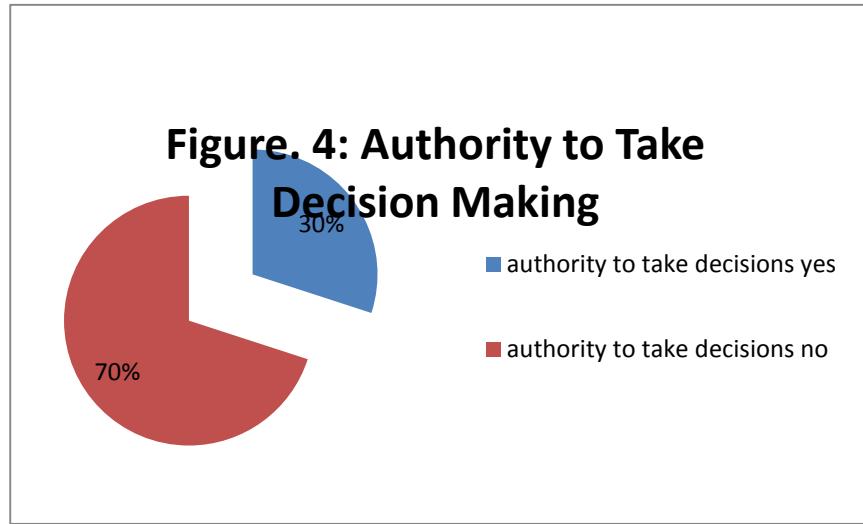
making ($f_{not\ involved} = 179$). The data was analyzed using Chi Square ‘Goodness-of-Fit Test’. The null hypothesis is rejected, $\chi^2 (1) = 2233.091, p \leq 0.05$

More than half of the parents, head teachers and union council representatives were not involved in making decisions for the betterment of education at school level in the district Khairpur.

Hypothesis II: Leadership in education relates to improvement in the quality of education.

There is a negation of the second hypothesis that the leadership in education relates to improvement in quality. The research outcomes are completely in verse of the statement. The Government is devoting unparalleled resources to the development of education leadership. This leadership and accountability has created a very different working situation for parents, teachers and education leaders; there is a clear need to better understand the consequences of that situation for results of leadership quality. The previous table defines the current situation of leadership.

TABLE-3 DO PARENTS, HEAD TEACHER AND UC LEVEL REPRESENTATIVE HAVE AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISIONS	
Yes	No
30%	70%



Source: Survey Data, 2010.

As can be seen in Figure-4 and Table-3, the majority of participants stated that parents at Unions council level representatives are not permitted to make decisions in relation to the educational institutions in their town. From this finding it can be concluded that local leaders in education do not have the power to make decisions; they are unable to initiate improvements in education.

OUTCOME

Research question two was addressed by conducting a statistical test, namely a Chi-square test. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Question III: Do local authorities involved in monitoring the local schools?

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is unequal number of respondents from local authorities involved in, as is not involved in monitoring.

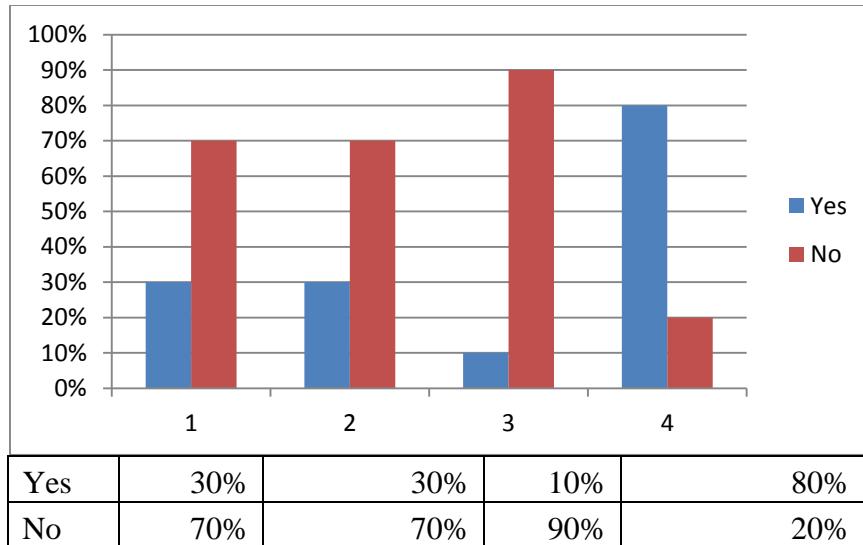
Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): There is unequal number of respondents from local authorities involved as is not involved in monitoring.

Research question III was addressed by conducting a statistical test, namely a Chi-square test. In this research, from 70 schools, samples of 256 members of Local authorities of the local schools were asked whether Local authorities' members are involved in monitoring of local schools. The number of respondents, from local authorities, who were involved in monitoring of schools ($f_{involved} = 96$) was fewer than the number not involved in monitoring of schools ($f_{not\ involved} = 160$). The data was analyzed using a Chi Square 'Goodness-of- Fit Test'. The null hypothesis is rejected,

$$\chi^2(1) = 1751.157, p \leq 0.05$$

More than half of the local authorities' members were not involved in monitoring the local schools in the district Khairpur.

FIGURE-5
VISIT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY



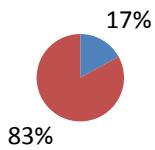
Source: Survey Data, 2010.

TABLE-4
**HEAD TEACHER & LOCAL AUTHORITY VISIT TO SCHOOL,
 FOUND ANY BETTERMENT AFTER VISITS &
 PROGRESS REPORT OF TEACHERS**

Yes	No
17%	83%

Figure. 6: Results of involvement of Local Authority

■ Yes ■ No



Source: Survey Data, 2010.

Hypothesis III: Good Governance of the education sector relates to sustainable improvement in education. Sustainable improvement in education. Good Governance of the education sector relates to Figure-5, 6 and Table-4 shows that 83 % of participants reported that their school had not received a visit from education authority staff. Once again, the research results oppose these expectations and the reality is disappointment with the policy of governance of education under the devolution plan.

Due to the lack of a monitoring- mechanism of district and local administrations, no or very little improvement in the devolution of education is evident in the selected population. Thus, sustainable improvements should be achieved if good governance practices are adopted in the education system.

OUTCOME

Research question three was addressed by conducting a statistical test, namely a Chi-square test. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Research Question IV: Does the role of community participation in local education administration on the decline?

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is unequal number of community members who are participating in the School Management Committee (SMC), as is not participating in the SMC.

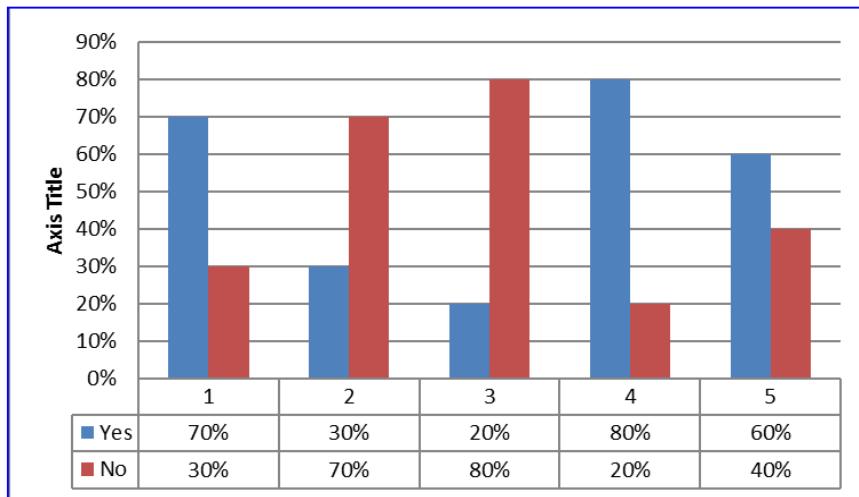
Alternate Hypothesis (H_a): There is unequal number of community members who are participating in the School Management Committee (SMC), as is not participating in the SMC.

In this research, from 70 schools, samples of 256 community representatives were asked whether the community representatives were participating in the affairs of School Management Committees (SMCs). The number of the respondents who participated in the affairs of SMCs ($f_{involved} = 18$) was fewer than the number of community representative who were not involved in the School Management Committees (SMCs) ($f_{not\ involved} = 82$). The data was analyzed using Chi Square ‘Goodness-of- Fit Test’. The null hypothesis is rejected,

$$\chi^2(1) = 470.541, p \leq 0.05$$

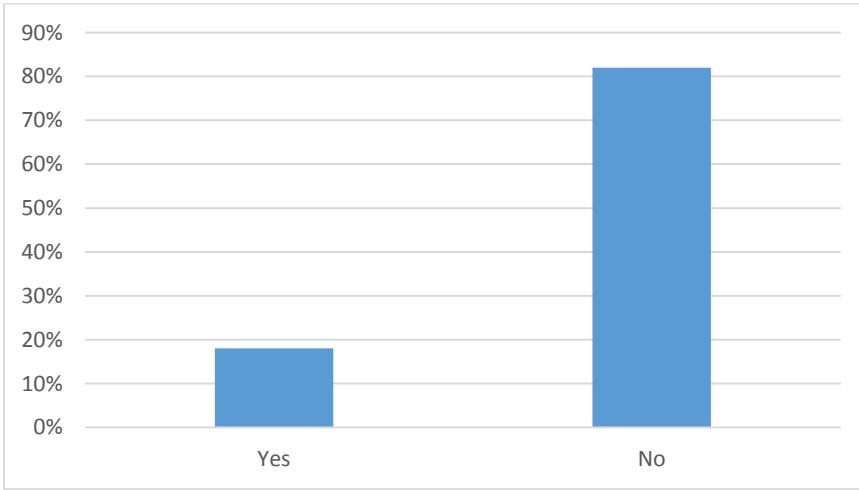
More than half of the community representatives were not participating in the School Management Committees (SMCs) activities at district Khairpur.

**FIGURE-7
ROLE OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN
PUBLIC SECTOR EDUCATION**



Source: Survey Data, 2010.

**FIGURE-8
DECLINED PARTICIPATION OF COMMUNITY**



Source: Survey Data, 2010.

Yes	18%
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No	82%
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Hypothesis IV: The overall participation of communities in public sector institutions is declining.

Figure-8 shows the trend of community participation in public sector education. This figure, taken alongside the following findings from earlier tables indicates that community participation is minimal, or when it does occur, it is dominated by small groups of people. By taking into consideration the following tables, hypothesis IV is proved statistically as alternative

OUTCOME

Research question four was addressed by conducting a statistical test, namely a Chi-square test. The null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

Pakistan has many obstacles on the road to a smoothly functioning, efficient education system. These include: political interference, corruption, and over-centralization, lack of school autonomy, underdeveloped managerial capacity, and poor information systems. District Level of education planning is facing problems because power is not devolved from province to district level. There is a urgent need to put in place an effective and workable system that can deliver equitable and timely resources towards improving the quality of education for all children, even the most disadvantaged. This research not only measures the extent of devolution but also test four hypotheses relating to its impact on various services where it would be appropriate to test the levels of participation, accountability mechanisms, impact on service delivery and transparency.

This research study examined the education perspective of the devolution plan and its impact on governance. This study investigated the policy implementation gaps. These gaps include, in terms of decision making, lack of prioritization of education in financial allocation and lack of community participation. In this regard, the research findings indicated that more than half of the school and community representatives were not aware of the devolution plan and were not involved in making decisions for the betterment of education at school level. Some examples of the lack of capacity building at local level were discussed in detail, for example, implementation of

school management committee model of community mobilization and inclusion of the marginalized communities. The key findings of this research show that in Khairpur district, inadequate planning for physical infrastructure and local political interference were the barriers in improving the situation of education. Additionally, participation of Communities in School Management Committees (SMCs) was minimal. Furthermore, local authorities were not involved in the monitoring of schools. The situation contributing to make the process of achieving goals of Education For All (EFA) and international commitments to the same goals were also discussed. Due to shortcomings of accountability and transparency at all tiers of the provincial and district education administration, the community leadership could not emerge. Hence, the model of a devolution plan did not prove itself as a good governance tool for the improvement of education.

This research explored ways and means, by which the children could get quality education under the devolved education strategies, as seen through the innovation model i.e. generation of an idea and that its acceptance, and implementation strategies. It is found in this study that decentralization of power, and financial authority would significantly improve school education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Government should set clear objectives and achievable goals for utilization of the increased financial resources, and district governments should be held accountable if funds are not utilized. Moreover, to meet the growing needs for basic education in public schools, the government must dedicate more finances, with clearly defined goals and objectives, especially in the rural areas of the country. A range of practical actions that can be taken immediately to add momentum to the transfer of authority, resources and responsibilities as follows: The most important recommendations are summarized as follows:

- There is a strong need of increasing in the number of trained teaching staff at school level;
- Provision of adequate physical infrastructure, furniture and basic amenities at schools level;
- Enabling learning environment and ‘child friendly schools’ should continue to be developed;

- Marginalized communities and their children should be considered while doing annual planning and budgeting;
- Adequate arrangements regarding education of girls in rural areas need to be ensured;
- Interference of politicians need to be avoided;
- Best practices of School Management Committees (SMCs) should be replicated at school level;
- Reliable data need to be maintained for good planning and management of education matters at district level;
- National Curriculum needs to address modern expectations and should be relevant to people's lives;
- Community participation plays a vital role in the school affairs. SMCs need to be strengthened and communities are supposed to be mobilized to engage at SMCs.
- Monitoring and evaluation systems for education need to be designed and education managers are supposed to be trained to implement them.

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