



Exploring Dimensions of Corruption in Education Sector

Dr. Shahnila Tariq, Assistant Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, School of Professional Psychology, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan. Email: shahnila.tariq@umt.edu.pk

Dr. Shazia Qayyum, Assistant Professor, Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Email: shazia.appsy@pu.edu.pk

Dr. Iram Fatima, Associate Professor, Institute of Applied Psychology, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Email: iram.appsy@pu.edu.pk

Dr. Sonia Omer, Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan. Email: soniaomer78@gmail.com

Syed Muhammad Ahmad Hassan Gillani, PhD, Lyallpur Business School (LBS), Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Abstract- Rate of corruption is increasing day-by-day in Pakistan. It has affected almost every department of the government. The present research was an effort to explore major dimensions of corruption in education sector. Information regarding types and ways of corruption in education sector was collected from students, teachers and administrative staff to construct a questionnaire through open ended questionnaire asking only to enlist the factors. The self-constructed questionnaire was administered to collect data from students, teachers and administrative staff (N=300) with age range 20-55 (M= 37.5. SD=4.5) from different departments of University of the Punjab, Lahore Pakistan by using convenient sampling technique. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to determine the nature and number of factors. Total three factors were identified namely: academic, administrative and moral/ethical. The most significant factor was the "academic" factor, with nearly 36.90% of the total variance. The findings can be used for eradication of corruption in education sector by controlling it all the three identified levels in order to make corruption free education sector.

Key words: Corruption; Education Sector; Exploratory Factor Analysis; Academic

I. INTRODUCTION

Corruption in Pakistan is widespread, particularly in almost all the departments of government (Faisal & Jafri, 2017). Pakistan is facing a various problems including poverty, security issues, terrorism, sectarianism, lack of resources, law and order situation, war on terror etc., and the root cause of majority of these problems is corrupt educational system (Amin et al., 2020; Khushi, 2018).

After 73 years of independence, different governments have introduced more than 23 educational policies and action plans but education sector is still waiting the solution (Jabeen, 2020). According to the survey (UNESCO, 2017), the literacy rate in Pakistan is 59% which makes Pakistan stands at 157th in the world (Ghani, & Qureshi, 2019; Yaseen, & Muzaffar, 2018).

There are multiple systems of education due to inconsistent education policies, insufficient funds, underprivileged physical facilities, poor examination system, dropouts, lack of research facilities, and deficiency of qualified teachers. These problems are still prevailing in our educational system (Anjum, 2020; Ghani, & Qureshi, 2019; Ramchand, 2020; Yaseen, & Muzaffar, 2018; Khan et al. 2020; Iftikhar, et al. 2020; Ibrahim, et al. 2019; Rashid, et al. 2019; Bhatti et al. 2018; Khan et al. 2015; Qureshi et al. 2014; Rasli et al. 2015). Corruption is one of the leading factor causing failure of educational policy. There is lack of transparency and accountability and low remunerations of the employees in education sector, causing them to use illegal means for fulfilling their needs (Faisal & Jafri, 2017; Kamal & Batool, 2020; Richter, 2019). Examinations are conducted to test the capability, his/her level of educational learning and knowledge, or memory of the student. The use of illegal means in our examinations has become extensive and wasted its goals (Faisal & Jafri, 2017). The problem is aggravated by the teacher absenteeism, untrained and non-professional teachers, inadequate materials, outdated teaching methods, poorly managed school administration, poor quality of education, use of below par textbooks and syllabi that are not pertinent to the requirements of the present era. This results in reducing admission in most of the government schools (Husain, 2011).

II. OBJECTIVE

The main objective/ aim of this research were to recognize the factors responsible for or root cause of corruption or dishonesty in education sector.

III. CONCEPTUAL MODEL

This research is based on the conceptual model proposed by Narayan (2014) regarding corruption in education sector. The model given in Figure 1 covers two levels: delivery level and policy level, whereas the present research focused only on the delivery level of the model.

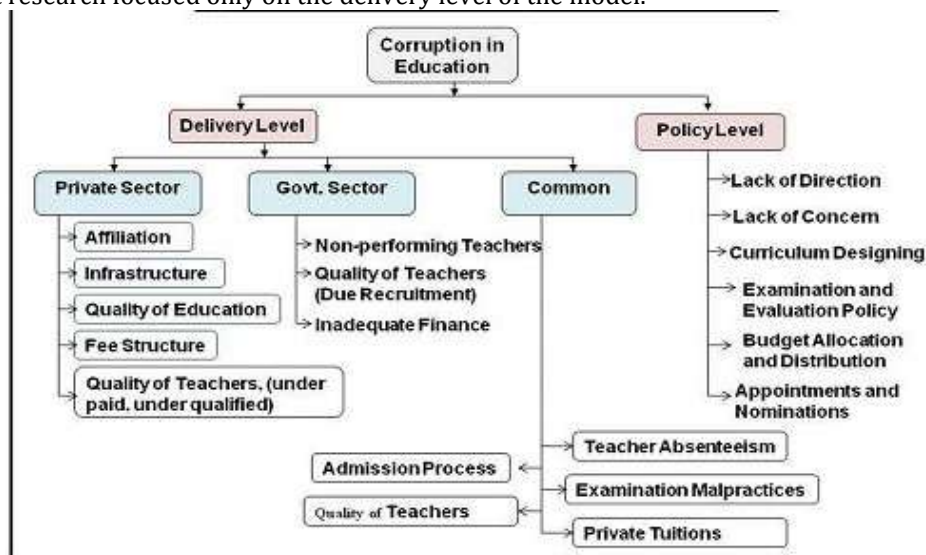


Figure 1: Corruption in education sector (Narayan. 2014)

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design

Survey research design was used to collect the information and data from students' teachers and administrative staff of different departments of University of the Punjab, Lahore Pakistan.

4.2 Research Sample

The sample consisted of three groups comprising of both genders

1. Students of B.A/B.Sc/BS (Hons)/M.A/M.Sc/M.Phil level
2. Teachers of the same university from where students are selected
3. Administrative staff of the same university from where teachers are selected

The sample (N=300) was selected by using convenient sampling technique with age range 20-55 years (M= 37.5; SD, 4.5)

4.3 Assessment Measures

For this research assessment was carried out by using, demographic information sheet, and self-constructed scale of corruption in education sector based on the information generated through an open ended questionnaire filled by students and administrative staff and teachers. The scale consisted of 49 items. Responses were made on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1= strongly agree, to 5= strongly disagree. The alpha coefficient of the scale was found to be .86

4.4 Procedure

An authority letter was taken by the researcher from the parent institute and formal permission was taken from the competent authorities of the University to collect data from various departments, explaining the nature of the research. The sample was selected according to the specified criteria. From every the faculties, one department was randomly selected and from each department one teacher, one admin officer and six students (including three males and three females) was selected for data collection. A written consent was taken from the students, teachers and administrative staff after describing the objective and nature of the study. After brief instructions, the participants were asked to fill the questionnaire. It hardly took 10 minutes to respond on the questionnaire. All the ethical considerations of the research were catered.

V. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

After collecting the data information provided it was analyzed and quantitative interpretations were performed.

Table 1
Factor Loadings for Dimensions of Corruption in Education Sector Scale(N=300)

Statement	Academic Corruption	Administrative Corruption	Moral/Ethical Corruption	Communalities
Giving favors to students in assigned tasks			.71	.52
Lack of moral values		.39	.61	.58
Misuse of political rights		.47	.66	.74
Unfair distribution of educational opportunities	.46	.41	.52	.65
Use of non-transparent and inequitable method during selection of students for advanced or equivalent educational opportunity	.44	.40	.46	.56
Offering and accepting gifts for good grades			.31	
Discriminating students on the basis of race, culture, socioeconomic status, gender, while providing educational opportunities	.58		.37	.54
Disclosing private information of students in front of others	.48	.37		.44
Sexual harassment	.70			.57
Discriminatory attitude against the students	.54	.53		.65
Exploiting students' rights	.54	.53		.58
Wrong educational policy	.64	.44		.65
Forcing students to buy that material in which the teacher has the monetary share in publication	.65	.31		.53
Giving responsibility of selecting the students for educational activities to the non-professionals	.78	.30		.73
Asking for commission for doing work	.78			.67
Using illegal ways to register private students	.83			.78
Changing test results by using own authority	.75	.47		.84
Making a fake educational degree	.85	.30		.86
Using personal influence at the time of admission of students in educational institutes	.70	.40	.38	.79
Inappropriate distribution of governmental grants among educational institutes	.82	.30		.83
Taking money from the students for the facilities which are free for students	.83			.81

<i>Statement</i>	<i>Academic Corruption</i>	<i>Administrative Corruption</i>	<i>Moral/Ethical Corruption</i>	<i>Communalities</i>
Receiving an additional amount for prescribed fee	.78			.70
Insisting students for taking tuition from the teacher	.75		.31	.69
Selling inferior text content	.77			.68
Misuse of the allotted educational premises	.47	.72		.77
Dishonesty in the sale and purchase of consumer goods by educational institutes	.54	.63	.30	.77
Inability of teachers to perform their duties	.73	.52		.83
Dishonesty in the contract of construction and repair work of educational institutes	.55	.62		.77
Unwarranted support of head by staff during official inspections	.54	.54		.65
Using governmental educational institutes for personal goals	.43	.70		.75
Unequal treatment while publishing institutional research work	.79	.47		.83
Publishing someone else's research work with your name	.69	.46	.30	.79
Selling free textbooks provided by the government in local markets		.40	.69	.66
Selling of entry test and question papers before exams		.74		.67
Working on a discriminatory social class basis	.65	.45		.69
Decrease in quality of education	.58	.63		.79
Double standards of educational system	.46	.67	.41	.82
Staff grouping	.44	.63	.40	.75
Deduction in staff salaries	.50	.60		.60
Poor security system of educational institutes		.73		.69
Unfair treatment in the selection of individuals for any position		.61	.40	.66
Holding evening classes at the University		.43		.52
Taking unfair advantage of one's position	.48	.66		.73
Tendency to cheat in exams	.38		.65	.63
Dishonest behavior of students	.35	.30	.69	.69
Interference of political organizations in educational institutes	.39	.65		.61
Giving priority to the old education system over new education system		.69		.57
Recruitment of ineligible persons in educational institutes	.51	.72		.81

VI. INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

Forty nine (49) statements relating to reasons for corruption in education sector were analyzed by using principal component analysis (Varimax rotation). The analysis generated three factors explaining a total of 58.87% of the variance for the complete set of variables. Factor 1 was labeled academic reasons due to the high loadings on the items including: Discriminating students on the basis of race, culture, socioeconomic status, gender, while providing educational opportunities, Disclosing private information of students in front of others, Sexual harassment, Discriminatory attitude against the students, Exploiting students' rights, Wrong educational policy, Forcing students to buy that material in which the teacher has the monetary share in publication, Giving responsibility of selecting the students for educational activities to the non-professionals, Asking for commission for doing work, Using illegal ways to register private students, Changing test results by using own authority, Making a fake educational degree, Using personal influence at the time of admission of students in educational institutes, Inappropriate distribution of governmental grants among educational institutes, Taking money from the students for the facilities which are free for students, Receiving an additional amount for prescribed fee, Insisting students for taking tuition from the teacher, Selling inferior text content, Inability of teachers to perform their duties, Unequal treatment while publishing institutional research work, Publishing someone else's research work with your name, Working on discriminatory social class basis. This first factor explained 36.91% of the variance. The second factor was labeled administrative reasons for corruption in education sector, due to the high loadings on the following factors: Misuse of the allotted educational premises, Dishonesty in the sale and purchase of consumer goods by educational institutes, Dishonesty in the contract of construction and repair work of educational institutes, Using governmental educational institutes for personal goals, Selling of entry test and question papers before exams, Decrease in quality of education, Double standards of educational system, Staff grouping, Deduction in staff salaries, Poor security system of educational institutes, Unfair treatment in the selection of individuals for any position, Holding evening classes at the University, Taking unfair advantage of one's position, Interference of political organizations in educational institutes, Giving priority to the old education system over new education system, Recruitment of ineligible persons in educational institutes. The variance explained by this factor was 19.87%. The third factor was labeled moral and ethical reasons to do corruption in education sector, due to high loadings by the resulting factors: Giving favors to students in assigned tasks, Lack of moral values, Misuse of political rights, Unfair distribution of educational opportunities, Use of non-transparent and inequitable method during selection of students for advanced or equivalent educational opportunity, Offering and accepting gifts for good grades, Selling free textbooks provided by the government in local markets, Tendency to cheat in exams, Dishonest behavior of students. The variance explained by this factor was 9.85%. Only one item was removed which was not loaded.

The communalities of the variables involved are low overall with one variable having a small amount of variance (12 %) in common with the other variables in the analysis. This may specify that the variables selected for this analysis are only weakly related with each other. Basically, this means that we have identified three clear patterns of response among respondents – one pattern of academic reasons for corruption in education sector (or not), and one pattern of administrative reasons (or not), one pattern of ethical reasons for corruption in education sector (or not). These three trends are independent of one another (i.e. they are not correlated).

VII. DISCUSSION

The goal of this investigation was to explore the factors of corruption in education sector. It is worth mentioning that nearly all variables related to academic outcomes loaded on a single factor, with a number of items loading most significantly.

Richter (2019) found that students use different cheating tactics as invigilators bribing, papers are solved outside the examination hall and even cell phones are used without any fear and hindrance. Corruption includes the use of funds for means other than those related to education, like the misappropriation of funds, attaining of non-wage related goods and services, repairs of school building, the design, manufacture and dispersal of textbooks, the procurement of equipment such as chairs and tables, but also in the form of ghost teachers and ghost schools (Kamal, & Batool, 2020). The corruption is reported in the selection or appointments of new teacher, as well as in admission of students on merit, improper allocation of available resources. This study supports our findings of the research.

Favoritism is most popular in educational institutions. It is believed that parents who were friends or relatives of the teachers, working high ranks or positions or were financially advantaged and those who

have alike political views to the teacher or were physically attractive were preferred by the teachers (Hussain et al., 2019; Hussain et al., 2020).

It is not easy to provide exact approximations of costs of corruption in the education sector because the available estimates have been limited to financial amounts and goods in kind (for example, textbooks, equipment, and school meals) that have been embezzled for private use at various levels of an education system (Anjum, 2020). Some corrupt practices related to the organization of examinations, admissions to university, and or the approval of institutes of higher learning are directly linked to the control adored by the management (Raza et al., 2021).

Ghani and Qureshi (2019), explained administrative corruption as a transferal of interests between the public and private sectors in which the public interests are directed towards private interests. Some of the most important factors include uneven distribution of income, intervention of high-ranking politicians and governmental authorities in education sector which provides a ground for the growth of corruption at micro level (managerial corruption) and macro (political corruption) level. Our findings also found high loading on these factors so, these supported our findings.

Naher et al., (2020) and Abbas (2020) has also mentioned the major issue of public sector expenditures. Due to lack of transparency and accountability, the public sector expenses are formally misused by public officials. This research findings also support our findings.

Ahmad et al., (2020) reported corrupt practices by government including some of these support our findings are: unsatisfactory teaching and learning facilities including laboratories and libraries, Political pressure by government on institutional administrators to admit students more than the capacities of their courses and to even admit those that are not qualified and also forceful appointment of unqualified candidates as lecturers or teachers. All these practices also supported our findings.

Abbas (2020) reported corrupt practices by other government agencies including some of these which supported our findings are: granting of accreditation to under funded, ill-appointed and inadequate staffed institutes, leakage of examination question paper either by design or default, inappropriate checking of the institutions after permission (Ulain, & Hussain, 2020).

This study will be of particular interest to the authorities of the educational institutes and higher education departments working across the country to control the rate of corruption and save the provided funds from going into the hands of the corrupt people. Timely check and balance and follow-up of all the academic as well as capacity building activities by the funding agencies and higher education department and commission can play a pivotal role in stopping corruption. It can be concluded that corruption is destroying the education sector in Pakistan and if it will not be timely stopped than its results will be devastating for the present as well as future generations.

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