

**A study on school councils' role in education provision of Disrupted Areas in Khyber
Pukhtoon khwa: A case of Kohat.**



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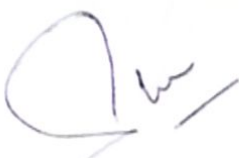
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis entitled: "**A study on school Councils' Role in Education Provision of Disrupted Areas in Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa: A case of Kohat**" submitted by **Mr. Abdul Nasir** accepted in its present form by the School of Public Policy, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad as satisfying the requirements for partial fulfillment of the degree in Master of Philosophy in Public Policy.

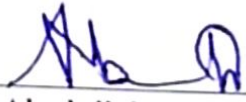
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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the role of school councils in the improvement of school outcomes with special reference to school councils' decision space, class level quality, and school councils' role in accountability in the district Kohat of Khyber Pukhtoon khwa. For this purpose, phenomenological approach of qualitative research methodology was employed to investigate school councils' actual role on ground for their decision space, class level quality and its role in accountability. The study nature is exploratory as the overall purpose was to explore the role of school councils after enacted act of education in 2017. Phenomenological approach of qualitative methodology was employed because this approach provide opportunity to conduct interviews with those who have lived experiences of the phenomenon. Therefore, based on Creswell (2013) recommendations, in-depth-interviews were conducted with twelve respondents. This study found that school councils have certain level of financial freedom through Taleem fund where members open the joint account in Bank and the fund is transferred to that account where then the members use the finds for school operations. Taleem fund is the package given to school councils after the 2017 act of free education in Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa. This practices of government is much appreciated by the respondents. However, it was also found that fund is not sufficient for smooth operations of schools, campaign for admissions and purchase of other infrastructural facilities for schools. Furthermore, it is found that councils have indirect role in class level quality, students' punishment is discouraged through councils, Student absenteeism rate in classes is decreased, teachers' role is more emphasised in increasing students' learning outcomes, Headmaster of school as a chairman of council is more influential in this case. Further, it is also concluded that school councils have no direct role in teachers' development, However, NGOs arrange some sort of workshops for students and teachers but which is not the formal practice or policy. At the climax of findings, this study found that in far remote school councils does not exist in far remote areas of district Kohat. In addition to aforementioned conclusion, this study also concluded dropout reasons such as Lack of parents' participation in student learning. Demotivation of parents for sending children to schools, parental Poverty level, corporal punishment, teacher overall rigid behaviour in class, lack of visionary approaches by parents and teachers regarding students' career. Lastly, this concluded that school councils have no direct role in accountability of the school system of the province Khyber Pukhtoon khwa.

Key words: School councils, role, quality education, improvement factors, KPK.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODCUTION AND BACKGROUND

1 Introduction and Background

The 2030 Agenda provides a blueprint for all countries to work for the total seventeen (17) sustainable development goals (hereafter SDGs). These goals are urgently calling all countries to work in a global partnership. These goals recognize that the elimination of poverty and other deprivations should be linked with policies and strategies to improve health and education reduce inequality and stimulate economic growth (UNDP, 2016). Out of 17 goals, quality education is the fourth sustainable development goal. Sustainable Development Goal 4 reiterates that both boys and girls will complete free education by 2030. As a result, high-quality education for SDG 4 has achieved significant success in developed countries, but in developing countries, high levels of poverty, armed conflict, declining trend of education quality and terrorism have damaged many Asian countries, including Pakistan. Instruction is considered a critical determinant of financial and social improvement of a nation. Human asset quality is exceedingly subordinate on quality of education. Essential education is the establishment, on which future of society, education and human capital stands. This give child with the essential bits of knowledge and essential devices to continue advance in life (Ayesha, 2016). Moreover, In regard to work for quantity and quality education, the last decade has also witnessed a paradigm shift from centralization to decentralization in schools management systems of basic or primary level education. This paradigm shift is the transfer of authority from central office to grass root levels. This shift is transfer of power and authority mostly to provincial, district governments, villages and municipalities and to the grass root levels of schools where head masters, teachers and community members are empowered (Cummings and Riddell, 1992; Winkler, 2005; Asim and Dee, 2016). Linking it with the context of education system of Pakistan, education in Pakistan is the basic rights of the citizens and constitution (article 37.b) of Pakistan has made it essential for the governments to provide free and basic education up to secondary level. Therefore, since the declaration of education for all, Pakistan has made an effort to expand education coverage by introducing different systems to increase the students' ratio in schools. In this regard, the KP government took initial step and started many reforms since 2000 in general while more specifically serious steps are taken in 2007-2018 to empower all the 32,000 schools of the

province. Haq (2017) focuses out that education rate in Pakistan remained 58% in FY16-17, which appears 2% diminish from past year. This articulation is additionally uncovered by Financial Overview of Pakistan (2016-17). The decay has been seen in all areas of Pakistan but KPK, it remained stagnant over there from past three a long time. In KPK, proficiency number is 72% in case of males and 36% for females. In remote, rate for male is 70 and for female is 33. While in urban ranges, it is 77% for guys and 52% for female. One of the main initiative taken by the KP government is to involve community for the betterment of schools, academic activities and to increase admission ratios in schools. The specific step taken was the approval of “The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017”. According to Ministry of Education, Pakistan spending on education has increased to 2.5 percent of GDP in 2016 from 1.9% in 2013 (Government of Pakistan 2016). The significant part of this act implies that the Government or a local authority shall not charge any fee or expense for providing education including expenditure on text books, stationery, school bags, and transport and the Government shall endeavor to remove financial barriers that may prevent a child from completing high level education up to 10 years. To achieve this goal, the already existing school councils/parent teachers’ councils are given more authority to realize the dream of quality and quantity education. In Pakistan, after decentralization of private schools in 1979 evidence suggest that the enrollment ratio of private school in terms of number of schools and in terms of student enrollment is increased, while In public sector it is still low (Khwaja et al., 2002). In regard to this, following section discuss composition and significance of school councils in education provision.

1.1 Composition and importance of school councils

School council is the teachers and parents combine council. It is a formal council and influential platform of eight members that can be used to develop children's educational processes to increase quality education, increase students’ enrollment, decrease drop out ratio and protect children's safety in schools, homes and other social vicinities. The councils consists of mainly following three categories of members.

- a) Parent members: Community member from the students’ parents.
- b) Teacher member: principal/head master/head mistress/head teacher of the respective school

- c) **General member:** An influential person from the same locality and a retired government servant or parent of alumni of the school

All these members are elected for specific period of time mainly three academic years. With the cooperative and consultative approach, formation of many committees like school attendance committee, “Taleem fund committee” are made necessary under the new act of primary and secondary education enacted in 2017 by government of Khyber pukhtoon khwa. This enacted act implies that all schools in the province are required to constitute school councils consisting members with the equal representation from teachers, community and local administration and therefore lead to significant and influential role of school councils. This act has authorized and has made school councils more functional for the improvement of education provision in schools. In this regard, some of the common function of school councils are:

- Monitor the general working of the school
- Ensure that the prescribed norms and standards are observed
- Ensure that the education policy of the Government is implemented;
- Prepare and recommend the School Improvement Plan
- Monitor the utilization of the aids and grants received from the Government or any other source;
- Perform such other functions as may be prescribed or entrusted to it by Government, the School council shall ensure attendance of every child for the purpose of the Act and its rules. And to make sure every child must attend a school and complete high level of education without any financial constraints.

As per (Faraone & Khan, 2006) School Councils helps the school in, surveying the school advance through parents meetings, correspondence between the school and guardians, supporting the school's different exercises and activities for example sorting out get-togethers for the understudies and so forth. Guardians are urged to include in the social and enthusiastic improvement of their kids. The point is to connect with guardians as basic accomplices who effectively add to the compelling working of the school. Along the similar lines, in terms of financial and infrastructure KP government enhanced non-salary budget from Rs 2,000 per classroom. 7,000 classrooms per year for school operation and maintenance (Ministry of

Education [E & SE], 2018). Second, a system has been devised to transfer the budget to the bank accounts of the school's board at the start of the financial year so that the school can make expenditures as needed.

Overall, the main purpose of this empowerment of schools is to improve the outcomes of students' education in terms of quantity and quality. These steps were taken and were considered groundbreaking steps for decentralization of power at the very grass root levels. According to the goals of the school council, the school council has the right to use school funds as needed. All the aforementioned steps were taken with the expectations to enhance the role of school councils in strengthening school learning and development. These school councils also play effective role in policy issues by adopting various measures such as increasing the enrolment and reducing dropout rate and to work for quality education, a sustainable development goal (Global Human Capital, 2017). Currently, Pakistan has high rate in out of school children. In addition who get enrolled is not getting quality education. Currently, Pakistan is ranked 125 out of among 130 countries in quantity and in quality education (Global Human Capital, 2017). Despite devolving power to schools and increasing school budgets, school enrolment rates is still low, learning quality is poor, and there are not enough buildings or teachers specifically in the KP.

Overall in Pakistan, the education system is considered weak despite of investment and reforms (Pakistan Education Statistics (2015–16) report, 2016 Annual State of Education Report). The decentralization of the education system has significant role in the way education is organized throughout the province and even the entire country. However, despite changes and developments, Pakistan still lags behind and is unlikely to achieve the SDGs-4 (UNDP, 2016). On the face of it, the integration of newly merged district (NMD, FATA) with KP also become a burning issue and a big challenge to provide education to all children of the said region. This area remain obfuscated due to militancy, partly due to firm values and indeed due to the heedless approach of policy makers towards this region (Naveed, 2018). The education provision is next to nothing in the far remote areas and districts of KP. Almost, 44.2% of children are never admitted in the schools despite of the average distance of 1.8 km from schools (Daily times, 2017, Naveed, 2018). According to the same report, the gross enrollment rate of primary schools (ages 6-10) is 77.4%, compared to 91% in the rest of the country. This overall worst situation of schools enrollment is calling for the intervention and there is a dire need of developing strategy to improve children

enrollment in schools. Therefore, this study is an endeavor in the same direction. The foregoing discussion and phenomenon guide this current study to investigate the research problem and research questions discussed below.

1.2 Problem Statement:

The aforementioned background information implies that despite of many steps taken by the government of Khyber pukhtoon khwa including massive education spending of Rs130 billion into the province's education sector during the last six years. Still, the dropout ratio is high in government schools. The 2017-18 annual statistical report of the education department shows that the school dropout rate is 44 and 40 per cent at primary and secondary levels, respectively. The report also linked dropout rate with poverty, non-conducive environment in classrooms and the teachers' inability to teach English books. Furthermore, it is also said that instead of 40 students as set in rules, there were over 100 students in every classroom of a government school. Furthermore, KPK government devolve authority to school councils in the act "The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017" in the provincial assembly. The significant part of this act implies that the Government or a local authority shall not charge any fee or expense for providing education including expenditure on text books, stationery, school bags, and transport and the Government shall endeavor to remove financial barriers that may prevent a child from completing high level education up to 10 years. To achieve this goal, the pre-existing school councils/parent teachers' councils are given more authority to realize the dream of quality and quantity of education. However, facts and figures in the statistical report of 2017-18 shows that school performance is in the declining stage in terms of increase in drop out ratio and overall school performance. The policy makers and school councils need to ensure the children accessibility to schools. The accessibility to education will definitely make them able to play role in future for rebuilding and developing their life and to play role in the development and growth of Pakistan. However, prior to devise any recommendation for future policy makers to ensure quality of education, it is imperative to explore how school councils' role can be strengthen to increase school outcomes. Therefore, on the basis of the evidence currently available, it is indeed imperative to investigate whether the free education enacted act is properly implemented in schools, though the act is approved from provincial assembly of KPK, however, what exactly the status of its implementation on ground remains questionable. Therefore, this study is designed to

investigate schools councils' role in the improvement of education provision in district Kohat of KPK. In regard to this, the problem being addressed in this study is the low level of schools' performance. Given the situation, the purpose of the current research endeavor is to explore the factors helpful to strengthen school councils' role in the improvement of education provision in district Kohat of KPK. In this regard, the following question and objectives are proposed to pursue in this current study.

1.3 Research question

1. Does school councils' play an influential role in the improvement of school outcomes with emphasis on school councils' decision space, education quality and accountability?

1.4 Research objectives

To investigate the role of school councils in the improvement of school outcomes with special reference to:

- 1 School councils' decision space on input level (students' enrollment, infrastructural factors),
- 2 Education quality (students' enrollment, class level quality and dropout issue)
- 3 School councils' role in accountability.

1.5 Rationale and significance of research

As stated earlier that after the security issues, the main problem is education provision in the district Kohat of KPK. To provide education and to follow the policy "education for all", government of KP initiated devolution of authority to school level through aforementioned enacted act. As reports suggests that enrolment in schools is not up to the mark. Therefore, the mentioned enacted act has authorized school councils to increase students' enrollment, decrease drop out ratio, increase class level quality. In this regard, very little research is conducted to explore the role of school councils' role in education provision with special reference to enacted act. It is of paramount significance to explore how school councils can play their role to increase number of

students' enrollment, decrease drop out ratio, and enhance class level learning quality in schools. Therefore, the rationale behind conducting this study is to explore school council's role district Kohat of KPK to include the masses in formal education system of country. This will lead to active role of local people in the vicinity in rebuilding and harmonizing the said region. Furthermore, relatively, very less academic research studies are carried out in the same vein. Hence, this study is designed to explore school council's role in the said region and therefore, this study would add its contribution in the aforementioned purpose.

1.6 Organization of study

This thesis comprises five chapters. **Chapter one** introduces and discuss the background of the study, problematic situation, aim of the study including research questions and objectives along with reasons and significance of current study. **Chapter two** discuss theoretical framework and present studies that highlight the issue under investigation. **Chapter three** describe and discuss the methodological approach of present research study. The specific issues cover in the chapter are philosophical stance of the research, deductive and inductive reasoning. Furthermore, data collection issues along with discussion of population, and sample are also the part of this chapter. **Chapter four** presents qualitative results and analysis. It shows the results and data analysis that identify school council role with special reference to their decision space, quality an accountability. Lastly, chapter five presents conclusions, implications & recommendations for future research investigation.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

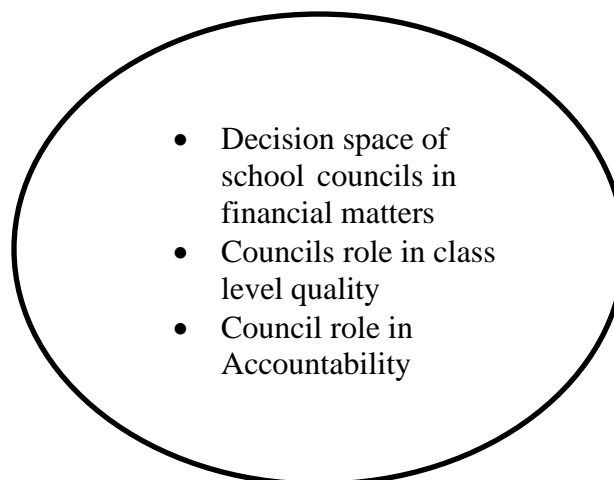
This part of the current study discusses theoretical framework of the study which is the base and foundation of present research study. It includes discussion of specific concepts with its relation with current study and its justifications. Furthermore, this chapter also discuss concept of school councils in general, concept of school councils in Pakistan and KP. This chapter also discuss some empirical studies on school councils and finally this chapter ends with summary of literature review.

2.1 Theoretical Framework:

The last decade has witnessed a paradigm shift from centralization to decentralization in schools management systems of basic or primary level education. This paradigm shift is the transfer of authority from central office to grass root levels. This shift is transfer of power and authority mostly to provincial, district governments, villages and municipalities and to the grass root levels of schools where head masters, teachers and community members are empowered (Cummings and Riddell, 1992; Winkler, 2005; Asim and. Dee, 2016). Overall purpose of this shift is to provide quality education in primary level all over the world. In this regard, Quality education models and framework are conceived and developed time to time. Similarly, in 2004, UNESCO offer a framework which gives insight to many concepts of quality education in primary level. Significantly, the mention framework is structured with input level variables of quality education and in fact these variables or factors are very well presented. The input level variables include for inside and outside classroom as a tool of learning process. The UNESCO (2004) quality education framework is used as foundation for this study. In the Framework, different indicators of quality education variables are mentioned such as learner characteristics; different contexts; various inputs and; learning outcomes. The input variables are categorized by classroom factors and beyond like physical infrastructure and facilities and human resources like teachers, principals, inspectors, supervisors, administrators and school governance are recognized. However, in this study, the UNESCO framework of quality equation in primary level serve as a partial but appropriate basis in this research study to investigate school councils role in improvement of quality education.

Linking the framework factors with the context of current study, this study is based on decentralized approach of school management of KPK. After 18th amendment powers are vested to provincial government specifically education and health, therefore, decentralized approach was chosen as study nature is to look into the school councils role in improving students learning of in schools. As, KPK government has enacted “The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017” education in Pakistan is the basic rights of the all the children of KPK and therefore, it is essential for the governments to provide free and basic education up to secondary level. Based on this act, every School in KPK is require to make functional pre-existing school councils and are require to establish school attendance authority, Taleem fund authority for likely to create conducive school environment for learning. Conducive school environment, in case of KP province, was devolution of decision-making authority over major school councils’ functions - budget and maintenance and infrastructure (purchase of educational materials and improving infrastructure). The other functions of school councils, as characterized by di Gropello (2006;Barrera-Osorio, Fasih, and Patrinos, 2009; di Gropello, 2006) are: personnel management (hiring and firing teachers and other school staff), pedagogy (developing curriculum) are not devolved to school level in KPK province and hence are not considered in this study. Therefore, three main concepts or variables assessed for their role in creating conducive school environment for students’ learning outcomes are presented in following Figure 1.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Modified from the global monitoring report of UNESCO, 2004

- 1- On ground school councils' decision space on input level that is students' enrollment, infrastructural factors of school to create conducive environment for learning outcome.
- 2- On ground school councils' role in education quality that is students' enrollment, class level quality and dropout issue.
- 3- On ground school councils' role in in accountability.

School councils' role in this study is analyzed in the context of aforementioned factors through qualitative approach. Linking these concepts with the current study, the main objective to analyze school council role for their decision space is to check actual on ground decision making process and power of school councils representative for smooth running of school operation specifically their role on student' enrollment and provision of basic facilities in schools. For efficient service delivery, appropriate presence of decision space is very important. The second significant factors consider in this study is school councils' role in quality education with special reference to class environment, teacher behavior with students, and factors leading to drop out of students. The last and more significant factor of this study is the actual role of school councils' role in accountability. This factor lead to efficient, transparent, accountable and smooth operations in the school level. This factors is taken into the account because it is the base for decision making process to create conducive environment in schools. In regard to this, following section discuss and highlight concept of school councils with relevant literature in the context of current study.

2.2 Literature Review

School councils is now basic element in reform agenda to strengthened children learning and development with better education provision. It has been noticed that Scandinavian states and developed countries are focusing on informal education as they have strong school councils that boost children development. Following are the literature that elaborate the role of school council to enhance.

Ayub (2001) conducted research study, in which survey data and interview responses were taken as a data collection method. The study indicates that parent's involvement in educational activities has positive impact on children achievement. Parents support and family environment has very positive impact on student's achievement. Griebler & Nowak, (2012) conducted a case study to examine the effect of student participation in school councils. The author conducted a qualitative

analysis of the diverse effect on student council. Finding shows that student participation on school councils has impact on personal effects of student's i.e. increasing life skills; developing self-esteem etc. student participation also enhances improvement in their physical and social environment of the school. The study concluded that school councils have huge influential role because of their structure, representatives' election process, the decision-making power of the council, supportive school context and training of councilors and staff. It is also pertinent that this research was also analyzed the health promotion from student participation in school councils.

In the same vein, a recent study conducted by Naveed, (2018) to see the status of girls education in the same areas. This study concluded that people of the tribal areas are on long waiting for government interventions to provide opportunities for their girls so that they should send their daughters to schools to avail opportunities in the same areas. However, this study didn't study the role of school councils in this regard.

Similarly, Shatkin & Gershberg (2007) carried out research through case study to reform the impact of school-based management on student outcomes. The article finds that outcomes can occur in situations where parents are empowered in schools' decision making process. NGOs provide training and advocacy for parents, and school principals actively promote parent involvement. This case study was conducted to improve school performance and the relationship between the school and the community.

Further studies resulted in parent role in enhancing student outcomes in terms of parent participation and parent involvement that they are two different things. Result shows that parent involvement and participation has positive impact on students learning. Parent's participation related to class governance in terms of student learning. While parent's involvement relate to day to day activities like complementary kids on college visits, cleansing toys or serving to within college library. According to author, this also increases student's learning (Lee, J. S., % Bowen, N. 2006).

Further research conducted by Bandur, (2008) found that School based management policies and programs created teaching learning environment and student achievement. Implementing SBM policies based on training and development of school councils members with continuous development and capacity building such as training on school leadership and management,

workshops on SBM and funding from government are needed to affect the further improvement in school effectiveness. Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are used for data collection. While semi structured interview were conducted from 504 respondents and 42 participants' belongings to all categories of school councils representatives in different cities of Indonesia. The study was based on SBM Policies and program effects on teachers learning and student achievement.

2.3 GAP of literature review

The aforementioned section has highlighted the literature review. Though, the above section has shed light on literature. However, based on the current literature and to the best of knowledge of researcher, not even a singly study is conducted on school councils' role in education provision in the areas of KP especially after the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017. Therefore, this situation is calling for urgent need of independent studies to explore school council's role with reference to their decision space, class level quality and accountability.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3 Introduction

This section highlight methodology employed for this current research. Before discussing methodology adopted in this study, it is important to reiterate the main concepts of theoretical framework discussed earlier in chapter two and its methodological application in rational regression

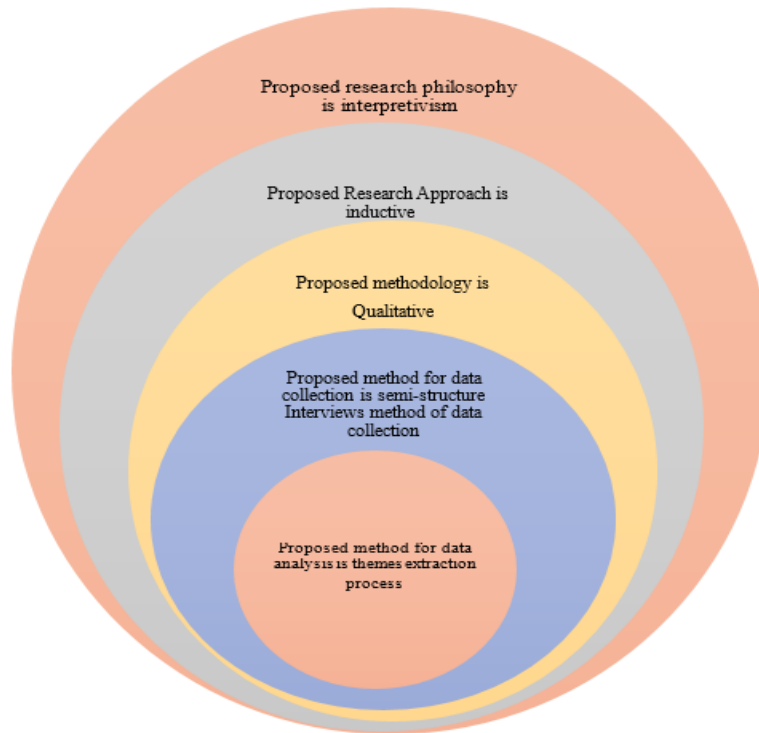
3.1 Recaptulation of objective of the study

As discussed earlier in detail in chapter one and two, school councils' role in this study is analyzed in following significant factors:

- 1- On ground school councils' decision space on input level that is students' enrollment, infrastructural factors of school to create conducive environment for learning outcome.
- 2- Actual school councils' role in education quality that is class level quality and dropout issue.
- 3- On ground school councils' role in accountability.

In regard to these aforementioned factors, the overall research approach of the current study is based on the Saunder et al. (2000) offered approach of research onion. They focus on layers approach of onion and link research process with those layers. Below Figure 3.1 shows the research onion proposed by Saunder et al. (2000). Therefore, the same approach is applied for the current investigation and the process is discussed below step wise.

Figure 3.1 Current research process “Onion”



Saunders et. al, (2000)

3.1 Research Philosophy

This study employed interpretivism as a philosophical stance. The explanation for choosing interpretivist philosophy is to explore school council role in provision of quality education. Therefore, considering the experience and suggestions of teachers, community members has explored the phenomenon of study in a best possible way to build social reality in the context of research, therefore, the interpretive philosophy better serves this research.

3.2 Research Approach

Creswell (2014) believes that this is the type of research question and the nature of the research and can best guide researchers in choosing the appropriate method. The social background and

overall environment of developing countries are different in the rural areas of district Kohat of KP, A post-war area of KP. Studies in the same context are scarce, and comparatively less research is done in the same context. The role of school councils is still in its infancy, so it is important to employ inductive approach to induce factors to generalize and make conclusion.

3.3 Research Methodology

This research employed phenomenological approach of qualitative research methodology to achieve the study objectives. Therefore, this research study analyzed the live experiences of various stakeholders including community members, teachers, and staff of education directorate of Kohat. As the main purpose of this research study is to explore the real and on ground role of school council in district Kohat of KPK, therefore, qualitative methodology best serve this current study. Qualitative methodology is prefer when the researcher purpose is to explore some phenomenon through in-depth interviews or observations. In contrast, quantitative methodology is prefer when the researcher purpose is to predict dependent variable based on independent variables or when the researcher employ deductive approach to test existing theory through developing hypotheses. This study is qualitative in nature and therefore qualitative methodology is employed in current study. Therefore, the mentioned approach is applicable and best suited methodology to answer research questions of the current research.

3.4 Operationalization of school councils' role

As mentioned in chapter no 1, the main objective of the preset study is to investigate the actual and on ground role of school councils with special reference to decision space, class level quality, drop out ratio and accountability in district Kohat. This investigation is based on phenomenological approach of qualitative research methodology and therefore qualitative methods are used to operationalize. Qualitative method being used to collect rich information on aforementioned factors through semi structure in-depth interviews. Semi structured interview would be developed to gather information on following items to operationalize school councils' role on factors or variables of the study discussed above and in theoretical framework. The following table shows operationalization of study theme.

Table: Operationalization of theme (school councils' role)

Theme	Dimension	Indicators
Role of school councils	Decision space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Liberty in decisions• Decision on students' enrollment• Infrastructural facilities in school level
	Class level quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reasons of drop out ratio• Teachers' behavior with students• Teachers' personality development.
	Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transparency• Check and Balance of Performance

3.5 Sample and sampling

Research based on phenomenological methods usually uses interviews for data collection. There are different ways to choose the number of people to interview. For this study, Creswell (2017)'s selection criteria will be considered, which suggested that the number of interviewees must be between a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 25. Based on sample criteria for phenomenological study, this study has employed twelve interviews teachers, community members/Parents staff of district education directorate of Kohat. Therefore, purposive sampling method is employed to select right people for interviews to meet the study objectives.

3.6 Data collection and analysis

It is to meet the current study objectives and as mentioned earlier, that data collection would be carried out through interviews with teachers, community members and Directorate of Education staff in the Kohat. In the current study, a structured/in-depth interview questions were designed to collect data from the informants. Furthermore, this study focused on the perspective of respondents from members of four schools' councils. Two schools namely Jungle khel (JK) School and Chicker kot (CK) schools were selected from city area of Kohat while two schools namely Kaghzai (KG) school and Nusrat Khel (NS) schools were selected from two villages of Kohat namely Nusrat khel and khagahzai. Only four school councils' are studied because of sudden emergence corona

pandemic situation. All the schools and offices were closed and the movement was forbidden by the government and therefore, through personal contacts, only four schools concern members were contacted and with each school only two interviews were taken place. Moreover, with the help and cooperation of Wasil shah, (a clerk in education department of kohat) four interviews were also conducted with officials of education officer of district Kohat. Moreover, to analyse data, themes extraction based on common key concepts is employed by adopting process proposed by Attride-stirling (2001). The steps followed for analysis are

- Transcription
- Reading and highlighting keywords
- Extraction of basic themes
- Converting basic themes into organizing themes
- Linking organizing themes with overall theme

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the data obtained from the interviews conducted with respondents as part of qualitative study. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed to make analysis and reach findings easier. A sample of interviews is attached in appendix 1. The analysis and results are presented and common themes are identified for getting into the objectives of the research. The following sections present results in various sections, firstly, respondent profile and then data analysis based on each objective and finally this chapter ends with summary of analysis and findings.

4.1 Respondents' profile

As mentioned earlier in chapter no 3, primary data in this study is obtained through interviews with 12 respondents including teachers, community members, and officials of the office of district education officers. It is worth mentioning that initially it was planned to conduct twenty interviews, however, due to corona pandemic the offices and schools were closed and therefore, only 12 interviews are taken place. The respondents were given option of their convenient places, the time and date for interview. The average duration for interview was almost 35 minutes. The interview protocols were divided into two parts, the first section was about the respondents' personal information while the second section asked questions based on objectives of the study. The respondents respond to all questions, the responses to the questions were recorded and then was transcribed manually. All the interviews were recorded through smartphone recorder with the prior permission of the respondents and then transcribed for themes extraction process. It is worth to mention that only main phrases or themes are converted into English language and not the whole conversation. Each interviewee was coded properly for classification of their responses. The below table 4.1 is self-explanatory showing characteristics of the respondents including interviewee id no, name, gender, age, education and position. E.g the first respondent name is Imtiaz, male with age 46 and who holds master degree with headmaster position. Moreover, the next section of the current study present result of the study.

Table 4. 1

S.no	Id no	Name	Gender	Age	Education	Position
1	NS1	Imtiaz	M	46	Master	Head master/
2	NS2	Aman Khan	M	38	Bachelor	Council Member
3	KG1	Mirwais	M	44	Master	Headmaster
4	KG2	Sayed	M	41	Bachelor	Council member
5	CK1	Waheed	M	48	Master	Headmaster
6	CK2	Ghiasudin	M	41	Master	Council member
7	JK1	Rahatullah	M	33	Master	Teacher
8	JK2	Nabi Badri	M	37	Bachelor	Council member
9	DEO1	Zahid Khattak	M	36	Master	Education officer
10	DyD-1	Mir Habib	M	40	MBA	Deputy officer
11	CRK-1	Rafiullah	M	47	Bachelor	Clerk in DEO
12	CRk-2	Wasil Shah	M	48	F.A	Clerk in DEO

Note: Headmaster are chairman of school councils

4.2 Data Analysis:

Themes extraction and its analysis is one of the methods of managing and organizing qualitative data. This analysis method seek out themes prominent in a text. In current study, themes extraction process was applied as per guidelines of Attride-Stirling (2001) with consideration of “Reduction or breakdown of text”, “Exploration of text” and finally “Integration of exploration”.

It is important to mention that themes extraction was based on school council’s role with special reference to decision space, class level quality and accountability. This whole process is applied based on above main themes of the study which is explained in subsequent sections with more details.

4.3 School council's role (Decision space as first objective of the study)

This part of study present results of the school councils' role with special reference to their decision space or the actual level of authority they hold for the betterment of the school outcomes. Decision space is considered because school councils can play more active role if they have more authority to take decisions as claim by the education act of Khyber Pukhtoon Khawa. Therefore, to investigate the actual decision space of school councils, following three issues were discussed during interviews.

- a) Liberty in decisions related to financial matters
- b) Decision on students' enrollment
- c) Decision on purchases & infrastructural facilities in school level.

The results of aforementioned issues are presented in form of basic theme, organizing theme and overall theme as shown in below Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Decision space related to financial matters (first objective of the study)

Basic Themes	Organizing Themes	Overall theme
1. Joint Account		
2. Financial freedom based on approved budget from district office	Financial authority through joint account	
3. Taleem fund		
4. Fund for parent' day		
5. Purchases through petty cash		Decision space of school councils
6. Role of students' enrolment.		
7. Financial resources are not sufficient		
8. Specific amount of budget		
9. Cannot take decisions for infrastructural purpose	Lack of sufficient Financial resources	
10. Sometime teachers arrange some petty level purchases through contribution		

Above table 4.2 shows total three columns including basic, organizing and overall theme. For example, basic theme column shows, there are total twelve (10) basic themes extracted and translated from the text. Column two shows two (02) organizing themes extracted from basic themes. Organizing themes “Financial authority through joint account” is extracted from six basic themes as presented in above table 4.2. Furthermore, second organizing theme “Lack of sufficient financial resources” is extracted from four basic themes. From the organizing theme, then overall theme is constructed which is “school councils’ decision space”.

Moreover, it is worth mention that during interview and analysis process, it was found that seven respondents NS1, NS2, KG1, KG2, CK1, CK2 and JK1 show consistency and were agree with financial authority level related to financial matters. They shared almost similar thoughts and explain by NS2 as:

“School councils have actually Taleem fund which is a complete financial package for schools. This fund is used through joint account of school council members where we receive specific amount and we withdraw the amount after all members agree and sign. [NS2].

Another respondents also replied the same for their decision space as:

“We have Taleem fund after 2017 education act of Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa, school councils’ members have joint account and upon need we withdraw the specific amount. We can make small level purchases for schools. We also mange that find for parents day. Also, for admission campaign”. [KG1].

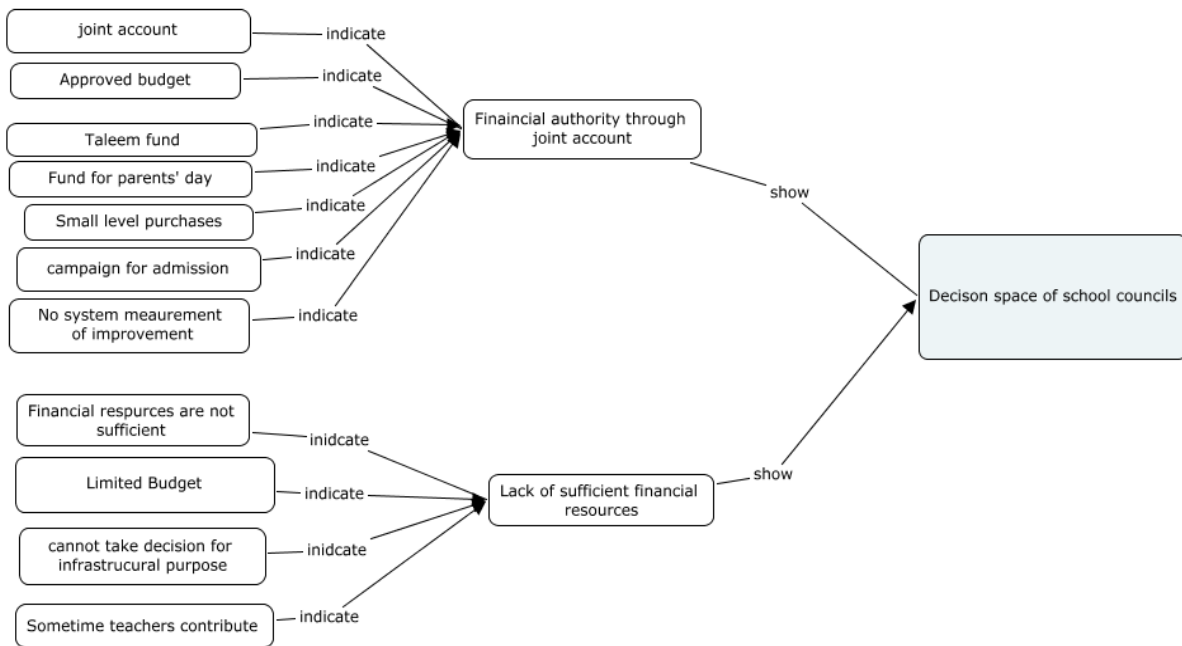
Moreover, another five respondents when asked about their level of authority, they also show their agreement with financial authority, however, they also pointed out the lack of sufficient financial resources. One of the respondent shared his thoughts and said as:

“We have Taleem find for school councils but it is not enough due to financial constraints. It is based on new law enacted in 2017, however, the amount in Taleem fund need substantial level increase based on school requirements, we receive many requests from headmasters for their school’ improvement. Though the school councils are not independent in taking decisions for school buildings and overall infrastructure except the boundary wall of school. I also believe that good change has to come and changes are good but it will take time to give results [DEO-Zahid Khattak].

The consensus views suggested that the school councils have up to certain level authority related to financial matters of the school. However, responses also indicate lack of sufficient financial

resources for taking bold decisions for the improvement of school infrastructural facilities. The respondents' responses, therefore, lead to two organizing themes namely "financial authority through Joint account" and "Lack of sufficient financial resources". The results of responses are also concluded and presented through following Figure 4.1 depicting basic themes with relationship of its organizing theme.

Figure 4.1 Decision space related to financial matters (first objective of the study)



4.4 School council's role (Class level quality as second objective of the study)

This part of study present results of the school councils' role with special reference to class level quality for the betterment of the overall school outcomes. Class level quality is considered for investigation as it is the ultimate purpose and goals of schools. Therefore, to investigate the actual role of school councils in class level quality of schools, following three issues were discussed during interviews.

- a) Reasons of dropout ratio
- b) Teachers' behavior with students
- c) Teachers' training and personality development

The results of aforementioned issues are presented in form of basic theme, organizing theme and overall theme as shown in below Table 4.3

Table 4. 3 School council’s role (Class level quality)

Basic Themes	Organizing Themes	Overall theme
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councils have indirect role in class level quality 2. Students’ punishment is discouraged. 3. Student absenteeism rate in classes is decreased 4. Teachers’ role in increasing students’ learning outcomes 5. Headmaster of school as a chairman of council is influential. 6. No direct role in teachers’ development. 7. NGOs training activities 	<p style="text-align: center;">Councils’ indirect role in classes</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Lack of parents’ participation in student learning. 9. Motivation of parents for sending children to schools. 10. Poverty 11. Corporal punishment. 12. Teacher overall rigid behaviour in class 13. Lack of visionary approaches by parents and teachers regarding students’ career. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Dropout reasons</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Councils’ role in class level quality & quantity</p>

Above Table 4.3 shows total three columns including basic, organizing and overall theme. For example, basic theme column shows, there are total thirteen (13) basic themes extracted from the text. Column two shows two (02) organizing themes extracted from basic themes. Organizing themes “Councils indirect role in classes” is extracted from seven basic themes as presented in above Table 4.3. Furthermore, second organizing theme “dropout reasons” is extracted from

another six basic themes. From the organizing theme, then overall theme is constructed which is “school councils’ role in class level quality & quantity”.

During data collection and data analysis, it was found that five respondents NS1, CK2, JK1, DEO1, CRK-1 shared similar thoughts and *explain* by NS-1.

“Councils has indirect role in class level quality through headmaster who is also a chairman of council. These are the teachers who have direct role in class level quality. Council’s members discourage students’ punishment. Students who are regularly absent are also called by their teachers. Their parents are also informed but problems are many which cannot be managed by only teachers or parents. Though, councils have up to some extent its role in class level through headmaster but that is indirect. Changes in government schools needs collaborative approach where all stakeholders have to play role” [NS-1].

Two respondents (KG1, KG2) shared same views and explain by KG2 in his view as following:

“There are NGOs staff that came to our school and get information from students in terms of student learning activity and conduct seminar if there is a lack of teacher awareness and sensitize teacher and PTC members how to create conducive, friendly, gender sensitive environment in the school. Also they approach financially to make school green and clean or repair missing furniture, construction of room” [KG2].

Regarding dropout ratio, respondents echoed their voice as following:

“We call parents that include in the composition of our school councils but the answers from parents are not good as they criticize school teachers as they answer that parents responsibility are not to educate student in the home while we try to help parents for the involvement in School Councils to increase students learning to make sure student participate in different activities at school and home. Due to lack of parental education student he/she may drop out from school (JK-1).

Other respondents of school council member view about different reason of drop ratio:

“As a part of school council’s members, chairman and on every meeting, SC provide support in improving the overall learning environment. Currently, councils have establish induction program 2020 for PST, CT and SST teacher to be friendlier and gender sensitive. In addition, NGOs staff visit our school and provide different seminars on how to involve parents, students” (KG 1).

Another respondents also share almost same thoughts

“Corporal punishment were strictly prohibited and guided by the PTC, although this happens once meeting were held regularly; respondent try to tell us about the PTC regular meeting that punishment may reduce if parents guide the children in terms of behavior; respondent try to tell us about the new initiative taken by government and that hotline has now been set up for the purpose by the provincial and elementary and secondary education Department. (JK -2)

Likewise one of the officer from Education office told us:

“We sensitize children and parents that for complaints redress in particular to corporal punishment, a mechanism in the form of a toll free hotline has been put in place to lodge the complaints against teachers who punish students. Same is also conveyed to teachers in the meeting that punishment action will be strictly followed in terms of students complains” [DEO]

In terms of teachers personality development and training few respondents said:

“School councils have no direct role in teachers’ personality development, it is the job of district education officer and overall district school management to arrange such trainings for teachers regarding attitude and behavior, different methodologies. Currently elementary and secondary education provide induction program 2020 for Different Cadres teacher of primary and secondary education. Activity base and discussion based methodology was once conducted which lead to very good results. (JK – 1)

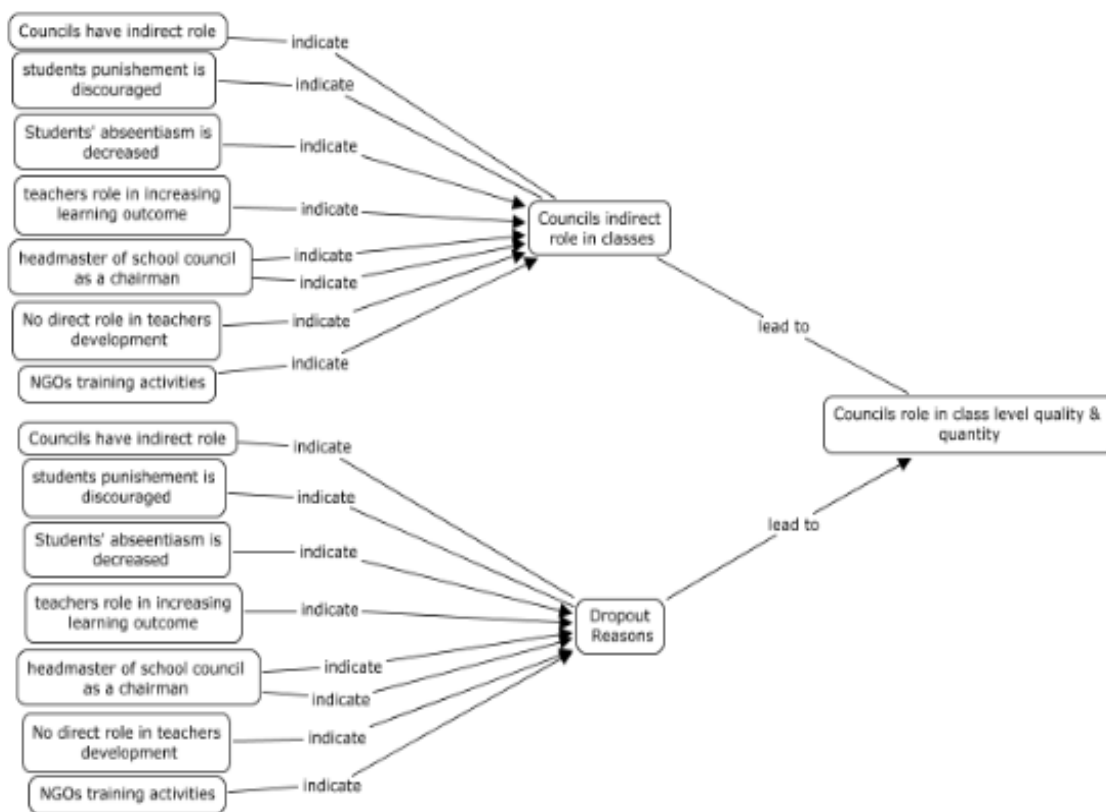
The respondents views depicts from the first three respondents including teachers, community members and clerks that due to lack of parental education, drop out ratio are increasing also lack of student participation in classes may the reason of drop out while one responded view about the teaching methodology i.e. lack of teaching style of teachers to involve students in learning are some of the reasons that causes drop out ratio at large. There is a proper need of parental education in schools and at locality of specific community. PTC to focus on parental education and teaching methodologies although there are some socio economic factors that also causes increase in drop out ratio.

Corporal punishment happens sometimes from teachers behave or the student attitude in the class or not participation of students in class; due to corporal punishment uncertainty in class level quality happens. Now hotline has been set up for the purpose to redress students, parents complains regarding punishment by the provincial E & SE Department. There is a dire need to educate teachers in terms of awareness against corporal punishment as there are school where there is no PTC Meetings happens and ultimately teacher are free to act and punish students.

The consensus view for teacher’s personality development before new reforms enacted in 2017 there is no proper teacher personality development or training although current government now

has taken responsibility to initiate induction program 2020 in which different teacher personality development and teaching methodology is conducted for school improvement. The respondents' responses, therefore, lead to two organizing themes namely "Councils' indirect role in classes" and "Dropout reasons". The results of responses are also concluded and presented through following Figure 4.2 depicting basic themes with relationship of its organizing theme.

Figure 4.2 School council role in class level



4.5 School council's role (SC role in Accountability as third objective of the study)

This part of study present results of the school councils' role with special reference to their school council's role in accountability), following three issues were discussed during interviews.

- Transparency in financial matters
- Check and Balance of teachers' Performance.

The results of aforementioned issues are presented in form of basic theme, organizing theme and overall theme as shown in below Table 4.4

Table 4.4 School council’s role in Accountability

Basic Themes	Organizing Themes	Overall theme
1. Not a decisional role 2. Warning to teachers. 3. Monitor performance 4. Maintain records & submit to district officer. 5. Only Recommend	No decisional role in accountability	
6. Independent monitoring unit 7. DEO visits to school 8. Teachers attendance 9. Council role	Teachers and school performance	
10. Councils spending’s are exempted from audit.		School council’s role in accountability.
11. Financial transparency of council through third party	Third party Evaluation of councils	
12. Ensure implementation of policies.		
13. Purchases for schools are done by councils		

Above Table 4.4 shows total three columns including basic, organizing and overall theme. For example, basic theme column shows, there are total twelve (12) basic themes extracted from the

text. Column two shows three (03) organizing themes extracted from basic themes. Organizing themes “No decisional role in accountability” is extracted from first five basic themes. Second organizing theme “Teachers and school performance” is extracted from another four basic themes. Moreover, third organizing theme “Third party Evaluation of councils” is extracted from last four basic themes. Finally, from the organizing theme, then overall theme is constructed which is “school councils’ role in accountability”.

With reference to school councils’ role in accountability, during data collection and data analysis, it was found that six respondents NS1, CK2, DYD, DEO1, CRK-1, CRK2 shared similar thoughts and explain by DEO-1

“Well, councils have role in managing overall schools operations, however, they are not direct decision makers. They recommend their decisions to district office for further approval. In terms of teachers’ absenteeism, council may issue warning to teachers and may recommend their decision to district education officer. Also, about the teachers’ and school performance through strong independent monitoring unit that was establish by current government. Bio metric machine were installed to look in to the attendance of teachers. Previously, there was no such process of maintaining attendance. DEO also visit to school and go to classes to know either teacher is present and to know about their teaching methodology; in context of that this report is sent to head office.

Likewise another four respondents, DyD, NS2, KG1, KG2, JK1, and JK2 echoed the same voice and explain by DyD.

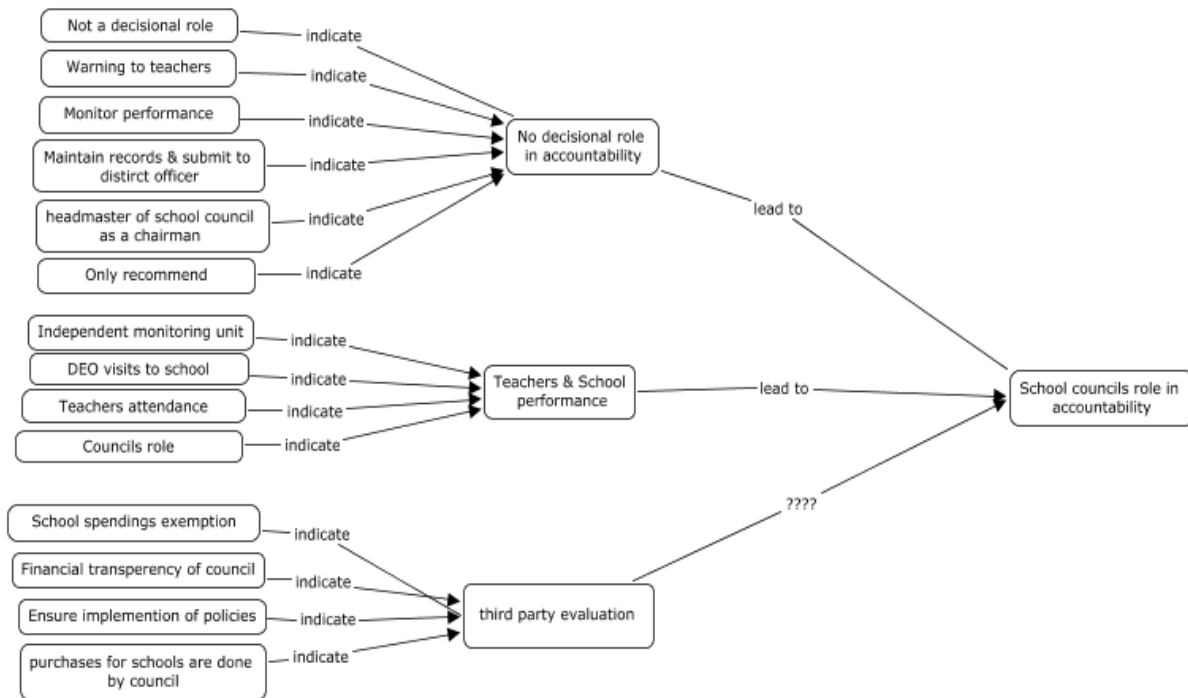
“.

“In school’s councils make purchases up to certain level and councils spendings are actually exempted from audit, but there is an independent third party evaluation of school council’s activities and operations. Although there is a lack of funds but through joint account PTC ensure transparent, effective and efficient financial management and that the funds are been used for the purpose they meant for; in some schools this accountability lacks as there is no check and balance. As mentioned, the expenditure incurred through PTC has been exempted from Audit; however, in order to ensure transparency in the expenditure process, third party validation and monitoring system has been introduced”.

The consensus views about role of school councils in accountability is that school councils have role in accountability, however, this role is indirect as councils members recommend their decision to district office and councils members cannot take direct decisions against teachers except issue warning on their absentees. Moreover, some of the informants also echoed their voice for third party audit conduction of school councils itself. They shared similar thoughts and said about Transparency of financial management and school councils are exempted from conducting audit or

making evaluations. Quarterly and yearly reports are submitted to DEO and same to directorate for summary. Directorate that were sent to head office for establishing a summary of the reports. Therefore, school councils have no direct role in accountability process of schools. Moreover, the joint account of school council’s members make them accountable for their use. Furthermore, school councils have no role in teachers’ transfers, promotions, hiring, and firing. Additionally, councils have no role in attendance of teachers as it is controlled by independent monitoring unit which is managed through bio-metric system from provincial secretariat. However, they may can issue warning letters to teachers. Bio-metric attendance system has produced good results in terms of teachers’ attendance and their availability in schools and classes. Although there is a need of proper accountability in terms of teacher behavior and teaching methodology. Overall, the informants were positive for the overall changes initiated by government in Khyber pukhtoon khwa. The results of responses are also concluded and presented through following Figure 4.3 depicting basic themes with relationship of its organizing theme.

Figure 4.3: School council role in accountability



4.6 Summary of chapter

This chapter presented results and findings of the data obtained from interviews conducted with respondents as part of qualitative study. The interviews analysis and themes extraction process is discussed based on each objectives of this study. The analysis and results are presented and common themes are discusses for getting into the objectives of the research. The specific sections presented in this chapter are respondent profile, themes extraction process with analysis based on each objective and finally overall themes are concluded and presented in this chapter. The next chapter of this current thesis present conclusion and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER NO 5

DISCUSSION CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

This part of thesis concludes and establishes objectives of the study. Specifically, this section covers recapitulation of the study, establishment of each research objective, limitations and implications of the study. Future research direction is also given and finally this chapter ends with conclusion and summary of the chapter.

5.1 Recapitulation and Summary of Findings

This qualitative study was guided by the two questions mentioned below.

Research Question: What is the current status of school councils' role in the improvement of school outcomes with emphasis on councils' decision space, class level quality and accountability?

Based on aforementioned questions, following three objectives were planned for this study.

To investigate the role of school councils in the improvement of school outcomes with special reference to:

- 1- School councils' decision space on input level (students' enrollment, infrastructural factors)
- 2- Class level quality (dropout reasons, teachers' overall behavior with students, Teachers' personality development)
- 3- School councils' role in accountability.

The following section conclude this study based on each objective of the current study.

5.2 School councils' decision space (First objective)

To establish the valid, reliable and concrete conclusion of the actual decision space of school councils, following three issues were discussed during interviews.

- a) Liberty in decisions related to financial matters

- b) Decision on students' enrollment
- c) Decision on purchases & infrastructural facilities in school level.

Based on the respondents' views and themes extraction process first research objective of the current study is established. The school councils have up to certain level authority related to financial matters of the school. However, this study also found that there is lack of sufficient financial resources for taking bold decisions for the improvement of school infrastructural facilities. The respondents' responses, therefore, lead to two organizing themes namely "financial authority through Joint account" and "Lack of sufficient financial resources". Therefore, Summing up and concluding the first objective of this study, school councils have financial freedom up to certain level which is based on specific budget. For this purpose school councils have Taleem fund which is a complete package for running school activities smoothly. This Taleem fund is managed by joint account of all members of school council. However, it is worth mentioning that concept of school councils is not realized in the remote areas. This shows that the real sense of schools councils' implementation is yet to be realized in villages. As, government schools in villages are in constant shambles due to lack of surveillance.

In regard to giving more authority to schools in financial matters, the main initiative taken by the KP government is to involve community for the betterment of schools, academic activities and to increase admission ratios in schools. In this regard, step taken was the approval of "The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017". According to Ministry of Education, Pakistan spending on education has increased to 2.5 percent of GDP in 2016 from 1.9% in 2013 (Government of Pakistan 2016). The significant part of this act implies that the Government or a local authority shall not charge any fee or expense for providing education including expenditure on text books, stationery, school bags, and transport and the Government shall endeavor to remove financial barriers that may prevent a child from completing high level education up to 10 years. To implement all these changes, schools are given financial authority to streamline the teaching and learning process in schools. Up to some extent, it has been found in the study that on ground school councils have role in financial matters through joint account. However, the lack of financial resources is not sufficient with relation to size of classes and children in schools. This clearly indicates that there is more need to be done on government

part to provide resources and to make school councils more active for the betterment of school outcome.

5.3 School councils' role in class level Quality (Second Objective)

This second objective of the current study was related to school councils' role with special reference to class level quality for the betterment of the overall school outcomes. Class level quality is considered for investigation as it is the ultimate purpose and goals of schools. Therefore, to investigate the actual role of school councils in class level quality of schools, following three issues were discussed during interviews.

- a) Reasons of dropout ratio
- b) Teachers' behavior with students
- c) Teachers' training and personality development

The respondents' views depicts that due to lack of parental education, drop out ratio are increasing also lack of student participation in classes may the reason of drop out while one responded view about the teaching methodology i.e. lack of teaching style of teachers to involve students in learning are some of the reasons that causes drop out ratio at large. There is a proper need of parental education in schools and at locality of specific community. PTC to focus on parental education and teaching methodologies although there are some socio economic factors that also causes increase in drop out ratio. Corporal punishment happens sometimes from teachers behave or the student attitude in the class or not participation of students in class; due to corporal punishment uncertainty in class level quality happens. Now hotline has been set up for the purpose to redress students, parents complains regarding punishment by the provincial E & SE Department. There is a dire need to educate teachers in terms of awareness against corporal punishment as there are school where there is no PTC Meetings happens and ultimately teacher are free to act and punish students.

The consensus view for teacher's personality development before new reforms enacted in 2017 suggests that there was no proper teacher personality development or training programs. However current government now has taken responsibility to initiate induction program 2020 in which different teacher personality development and teaching methodology is conducted for school

improvement. The respondents' responses, therefore, lead to two organizing themes namely "Councils' indirect role in classes" and "Dropout reasons".

In regard to the concept of class level quality which largely determine by teaching-learning process. This is in fact associated with methods of teaching, evaluations, feedback, and management of class rooms, overall learning environment of class, teacher behavior and education (Salam,2015; Chuunga, 2013; Rigelman and Ruben, 2012) This study focuses on vital elements of quality indicators involved in teaching-learning where both teachers and learners seem to play positive roles in creating a fruitful and effective learning atmosphere in the classroom. In the context of this study, it is found that there is in-fact indirect role of school councils in class level quality which indicate more teachers' and headmaster role to in class level quality. Though, headmaster in some cases is the one of the member of school councils, however, overall the school councils are not given that level of authority where they can take decision for teachers, materials, teachers' promotion and transfer. While KPK, free education act of 2017 is appreciated, however, there is a dire need of class level quality issues which should be addressed by school councils while giving some direct role through headmaster as a member of school councils.

5.4 School councils' role in accountability (third objective)

To establish the valid, reliable and concrete conclusion of the school councils' role in accountability, following issues were discussed during interviews.

- Transparency in financial matters
- Check and Balance of teachers' Performance.

The consensus view about role of school councils in accountability is that – third party audit is conducted for transparency of financial management and school councils are exempted from conducting audit or making evaluations. Quarterly and yearly reports are submitted to DEO and same to directorate for summary. Directorate that were sent to head office for establishing a summary of the reports. Therefore, school councils have no direct role in accountability process of schools. Moreover, the joint account of school council's members make them accountable for their use. Furthermore, school councils have no role in teachers' transfers, promotions, hiring, and firing. Additionally, councils have no role in attendance of teachers as it is controlled by independent monitoring unit which is managed through bio-metric system from provincial

secretariat. Bio-metric attendance system has produced good results in terms of teachers' attendance and their availability in schools and classes. Aforementioned results and findings of school councils role in accountability of schools shows that though schools councils are up to some extent are given authority ,however, this study shows that school councils have no role in accountability. More, the KPK government has established independent monitoring unit to monitor schools form the main education office of provincial government. In fact, establishment of independent monitoring unit has been found influential in terms of proper monitoring. Despite of many steps taken by the government of Khyber pukhtoon khwa including massive education spending of Rs130 billion into the province's education sector during the last six years. Still, the dropout ratio is high in government schools. The 2017-18 annual statistical report of the education department shows that the school dropout rate is 44 and 40 per cent at primary and secondary levels, respectively. The report also linked dropout rate with poverty, non-conducive environment in classrooms and the teachers' inability to teach English books. Furthermore, it is also said that instead of 40 students as set in rules, there were over 100 students in every classroom of a government school. Furthermore, KPK government devolve authority to school councils in the act "The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Free Compulsory Primary and Secondary Education Act, 2017" in the provincial assembly. The significant part of this act implies that the Government or a local authority shall not charge any fee or expense for providing education including expenditure on text books, stationery, school bags, and transport and the Government shall endeavor to remove financial barriers that may prevent a child from completing high level education up to 10 years. To achieve this goal, the pre-existing school councils/parent teachers' councils are given more authority to realize the dream of quality and quantity of education. However, facts and figures in the statistical report of 2017-18 shows that school performance is in the declining stage in terms of increase in drop out ratio and overall school performance. The policy makers and school councils need to ensure the children accessibility to schools. The accessibility to education will definitely make them able to play role in future for rebuilding and developing their life and to play role in the development and growth of Pakistan. Moreover, the paradigm shift from centralization to decentralization in education systems all over the world has produced very good results. In line to decentralized approach of managing schools, it is of paramount significance that independent monitoring unit may be established based on district level and it may lead to huge level of change in schools as the same notion is supported by (Rahim, 2017; Saam, 2015).

With continuation of the establishment of objectives of the current study, following section discuss limitations of the present study.

5.5 Study limitations

Though the findings of the current study provide fruitful comprehensions, however, many limitations were also faced during conduction of the study. Firstly, This study only focused on the perspective of respondents from members of four school councils. Two schools namely Jungle khel (JK) School and Chicker kot (CK) schools were selected from city area of Kohat while two schools namely Kaghzai (KG) school and Nusrat Khel (NS) schools were selected from two villages of Kohat namely Nusrat khel and khagahzai. Only four school councils' are studied because of sudden emergence corona pandemic situation. All the schools and offices were closed and the movement was forbidden by the government and therefore, through personal contacts, only four schools concern members were contacted and with each school only two interviews were taken place. Moreover, with the help and cooperation of Wasil shah, (a clerk in education department of kohat) four interviews were also conducted with officials of education officer of district Kohat. Secondly, it was observed that some of the respondents were reluctant to express their experiences in English language, though the interviews were conducted in English language but during interviews it was felt that respondents were feeling difficulty to express themselves properly. Thirdly, it was also observed that due to job security and confidentiality some of the informants were reluctant to share the real problems

5.6 Implications of the study

The implications of the present study are that the policy makers should strengthen school councils and should established school councils in far remote areas and villages of province in general and district in specific. As, during interview with education officer of Kohat, it was observed that concept of school councils is not fully implemented in all the schools of district Kohat, specifically in far remote villages of Kohat. In fact, these are the areas which need too much attention of government.

5.7 Future Research

In spite of the limitations of the current study. This research study recommends some of the aspects for future research investigation to explore critical success factors of school councils by employing mix method approaches of research. The future research should consider the perspective of different stakeholders including provincial assembly representatives, members of provincial secretariat of education of Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa, community members and students who studies from these schools. Furthermore, future researchers should investigate this phenomenon through applications of ethnography approach of qualitative methodology to observe the issues in the field. These aforementioned suggestions will contribute to explore holistic factors of improvement of school councils in Khyber pukhtoon Khwa.

5.8 Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the role of school councils in the improvement of school outcomes with special reference to school councils' decision space, class level quality, and school councils' role in accountability in the district Kohat of Khyber Pukhtoon khwa. For this purpose, phenomenological approach of qualitative research methodology was employed to investigate actual school councils' role for their decision space, class level quality and its role in accountability. The study nature is exploratory as the overall purpose was to explore the role of school councils after enacted act of education in 2017. Phenomenological approach of qualitative methodology was employed because this approach provide opportunity to conduct interviews with those who have lived experiences of the phenomenon. Therefore, based on Creswell (2013) recommendations, in-depth-interviews were conducted with twelve respondents. The study found that school councils does not exist in far remote areas of district Kohat. Moreover, where school councils existed, it was found that school councils have certain level of financial freedom through Taleem fund where members open the joint account in Bank and the fund is transferred to that account where then the members use the finds for school operations. Taleem fund is the package given to school councils after the 2017 act of free education in Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa. This practice of government is much appreciated by the respondents. However, it was also found that fund is not sufficient for smooth operations of schools, campaign for admissions and purchase of other infrastructural facilities for schools. Furthermore, it is found that councils have indirect role in class level quality, students' punishment is discouraged through councils, Student absenteeism rate in

classes is decreased, teachers' role is more emphasised in increasing students' learning outcomes, Headmaster of school as a chairman of council is more influential in this case. Further, it is also concluded that school councils have no direct role in teachers' development, However, NGOs arrange some sort of workshops for students and teachers but which is not the formal practice or policy.

In addition to aforementioned conclusion, this study also concluded dropout reasons such as Lack of parents' participation in student learning. Demotivation of parents for sending children to schools, parental Poverty level, corporal punishment, teacher overall rigid behaviour in class, lack of visionary approaches by parents and teachers regarding students' career. Lastly, this concluded that school councils have no direct role in accountability of the school system of the province Khyber Pukhtoon khwa.

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