

Does School Quality Matter? A Comparative Analysis of Provision of Services in Government Primary Schools of Rawalpindi Division

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to know the conditions and services of primary Government Schools across four districts (Jhelum, Chakwal, Attock and Rawalpindi) of Rawalpindi division, for consecutive three years (2012-2015). Using District Profile Education surveys from 2012 to 2015, it was found that there is a decline in performances by primary schools. The trend shown by chakwal was poor of all. As far as building conditions for schools, availability of electricity and drinking water along with other facilities at primary schools are concerned, Rawalpindi and Jhelum district declined in each variable (school building condition, lack of latrines, boundary wall around school and drinking water). However, Attock district has shown favorable trend from year 2012-2015 with improved condition for primary schools. In light of the above findings, it is recommended that there is a dire need to improve the school infrastructure and to ensure the child friendly environment in order to bring as well as stay children in the school to complete their study.

Keywords: Child education, Government Services, Quality Education, Primary School Infrastructure

Introduction

With the dawn of 21st century, education has become the most crucial enterprises of this century due to rapid expansion of technology and globalization. Pakistan is striving to meet the changing needs of society in respect of education. Huge investments have been made to improve the quality of education including improving the structure, providing incentives to the teachers, filling the vacant seats of teachers in schools, and the introduction of vigilant monitoring and evaluation system in school education. It is worth mentioning that school infrastructure and child-friendly environment in the schools has significant impact on the child education. Availability of physical facilities in a school has an important impact on student performance (Shami & Hussain 2005). The Bruce (2006) has rightly called the learning environment as the third teacher but it is not end by itself, we have to look at the settings. The

important factor in providing a rich environment for learning is space, but it is significant to the degree that assist in suitable climate for learning. Nevertheless, environment is a rich range of resources which is always available for children. The environment gives scope to build on developing interest and to practices where they applied and where they learned. It is easy to supervise that there is no hidden areas and the room of learning should be on the ground floor. Approximately 40 to 60 square feet per child is recommended and it should be also adjacent to toilet facilities. According to Bruce (2006) the door and indoor environment can attract the children to learn. Indoor and outdoor gap is not only different according to climate, location, and situation, but also different in terms of the program to be developed. Further, The movable, durable, comfortable, attractive and child sized furniture should be available in the classroom for children. The chairs should be light for child because it is easy to handle, it should be movable without nose and the back of chairs is about 22 inches high. The size of chair is varying from 15 to 20 inches high and it is depending on the age and size of children. Bookshelves and display rack should be movable which is easily accessible for child. In every class room should have a clock with a large face. The Clean environment has positive effect on child's personality. Hussain (2003) supported this idea that influence of the environment is starting before the birth of the child. In child environment the home and school both environment is included. Study of school building design and student learning, The Cash (1993) found that the structural factors have more effective factor for the student learning and student achievement. The high achievement of school was allied with the external environment is less noisy, the school that were air conditioned, had less graffiti, and furniture of class room and student lockers were in good repair (Earthman & Lemasters, 1996, 1998; Schneider, 2002; Earthman, 2004; Higgins, Hall, Wall, Woolner, & McCaughey, 2005).

The school building quality is measured according to student behavior which is including suspension, disciplinary incident, vandalism, absenteeism, smoking and violence (Schneider, 2002). It is true that the variety of sustainable design characteristics that can have a significant influence on student behavior and academic achievement. For improving and evaluating educational setting the awareness of design option is very important. As efforts are made to build or renovate schools and educational facilities, urgency is created regarding understanding designs that represent the most effective learning environment (Schneider, 2002). The facility of good school supports the educational enterprise. For academic achievement the clean air, good light, and a small, quiet, comfortable, and safe learning environment are important (Cash 1993; Earthman & Lemasters 1996; Lemasters 1997; Lackney 1999; Cotton 2001; Schneider 2002). The management, condition and adequacy of school building they are directly under the control of school state and district, hence for improving school facilities offers opportunity for improving academic performance. The District of Columbia school system originate that students' standardized achievement scores were lower in schools with poor building conditions. The school building which were in poor condition had achievement that was 6% below schools in fair condition and 11% below schools in excellent condition (Edwards, 1991).

Cash (1993) thoroughly inspect the interconnection between building condition and achievement of students in remote Virginia High schools. In achievement tests and socio-economic status' adjustment, students were found to be up to 5 percentile point lower in

building with lower quality ratings. Achievements possess direct relation with cosmetic factors than structural ones while poorer conditions specifically correlate with building conditions such as substandard science facilities, air conditioning, locker conditions, classroom furniture, more graffiti, and noisy external environments. Likewise, Hines (1996) also found the linkage between building conditions and students' achievement in urban Virginia high Schools. Indeed, students have 11 percentile points in low standard buildings comparatively high-standard buildings.

Jago and Tanner (1999) found that appropriate lighting and choice of colour plays a prime role in getting students achievement, influencing their abilities for interpreting written words and attention span. Bruce (2006) clarify that the indoor and outdoor environments should complement rather than duplicate each other. Simple and safe facilities, equipment, and furnishings allow freedom of activity and creativity on the part of the child. It is essential in the concept of learning environment that all physical facilities, equipment, and materials examine with great care in their relationship to the total learning situation and those they are selected and used in accordance with the basic principles of child growth. With respect to student's population efficient supply of facilities is a matter of attention because these physical facilities mark a deep impression on Child in receiving education (Adesina, 1990). Moreover, it creates a challenging environment. Moving to other side, lack of adequate facilities such as textbooks, ill-equipped classrooms, laboratories, workshops and library are the probable causes of student's poor performance in examinations (Olubor, 1998).

The study will provide about the progress of the four districts either it was upward or downward. It will give a Comprehensive Comparative analysis of the districts in Rawalpindi division and what effective steps can be taken to improve, also helpful in drawing the attention towards improvement of their services. This will also benefit and provide an insight to four different district schools to arrive on result for schools' quality of this Division. This study will also help in directing future course of action in the study area. It is pertinent to mention that evidence based policies making process is lacking in the country therefore such practices by the researchers will help the policy makers to get the background data analysis of different regions to incorporate better policy initiatives in future course of action. Moreover, it is important to analyze the trends in school education as there is a dire need to analyze the facts at gross root level in order to initiate indigenous policies.

Taking into account the above literary material, the study has following objectives:

Objectives of the study

1. To know the varying trends in school facilities in Rawalpindi Division from 2012 to 2015.
2. To compare the facilities among four districts of the Rawalpindi Division from 2012 to 2015.
3. To suggest suitable options for improving the facilities in the study area.

Material and Methods

This study is based on secondary data, obtained from following surveys conducted by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.

1. District Education profile 2012-13
2. District Education profile 2013-14
3. District Education Profile 2014-15

The school facilities at primary level were analyzed in the Division Rawalpindi. Furthermore, a comprehensive comparative analysis had been conducted among four districts i.e. Jhelum, Chakwal, Attock and Rawalpindi of the Rawalpindi Division.

Aspects of the study:

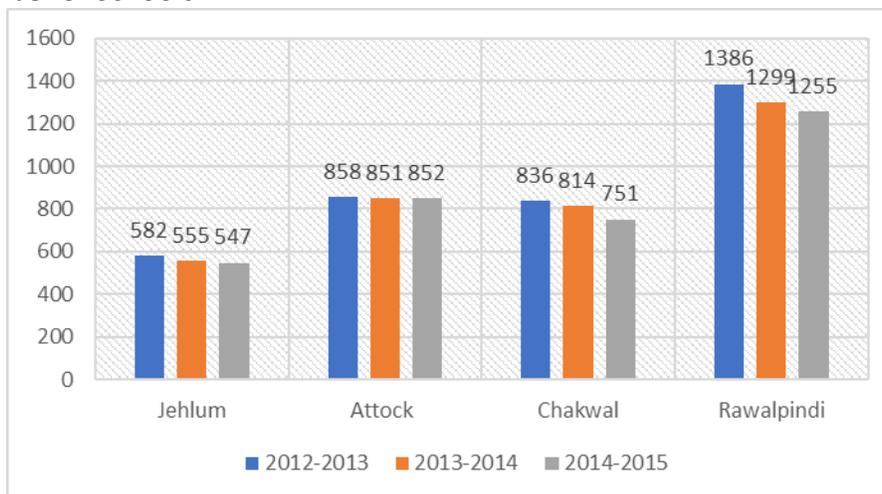
The study focused on administrative perspective of the education quality in the Rawalpindi district. Following aspects were considered for analysis:

1. Number of schools
2. Building availability
3. Ownership
4. Type of construction
5. Availability of electricity
6. Availability of latrine
7. Availability of Drinking water
8. Availability of Boundary wall
9. Building conditions of the school

Data Analysis:

The given graphs illustrate the total number of schools and then the total number of schools with the availability of buildings their ownership, availability of drinking water, electricity, latrine and the boundary wall of the schools.

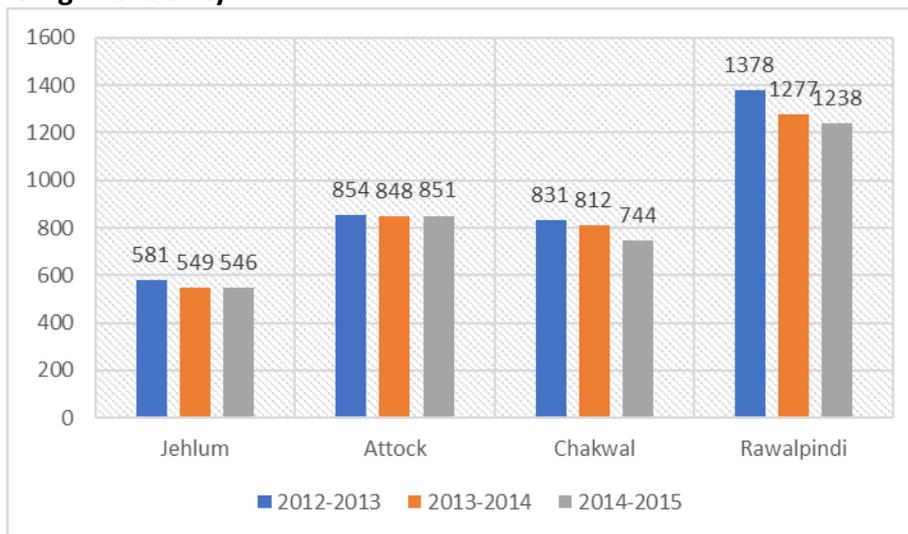
Figure1: Number of Schools:



The graph shows number of total number of primary schools in the four Districts of Rawalpindi Division, Jhelum, Attock, Chakwal and Rawalpindi for the three different years. In the year 2012-13 the number of total schools in Jhelum were 582 while in the next year 2013-14 it decreased by 4% and in the year 2014-15 it further decreased by 2% but lesser than the

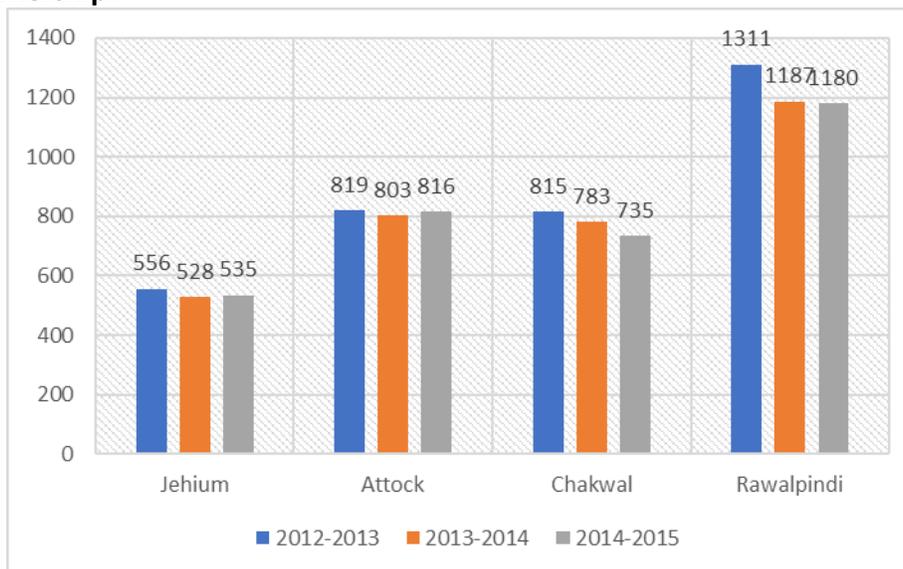
previous. In district Attock the total number of schools were 858 while in the next year this number dropped by nearly 1 % and in the next year this was increased by 0.1%. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools were 836, like other districts in next year the schools in this district were also decreased by and 3%. In next year, this further dropped by 8%. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools were 1386 while in the next year this number was decreased by 6%. Like previous it decreased further in the next year by 3%. Comparatively, number of decreased school was highest in the District Chakwal while lowest was in district Attock and a bit increase in the year 2013-14. in remaining districts number of schools have been decreased but still better than Chakwal.

Figure 2: Building Availability:



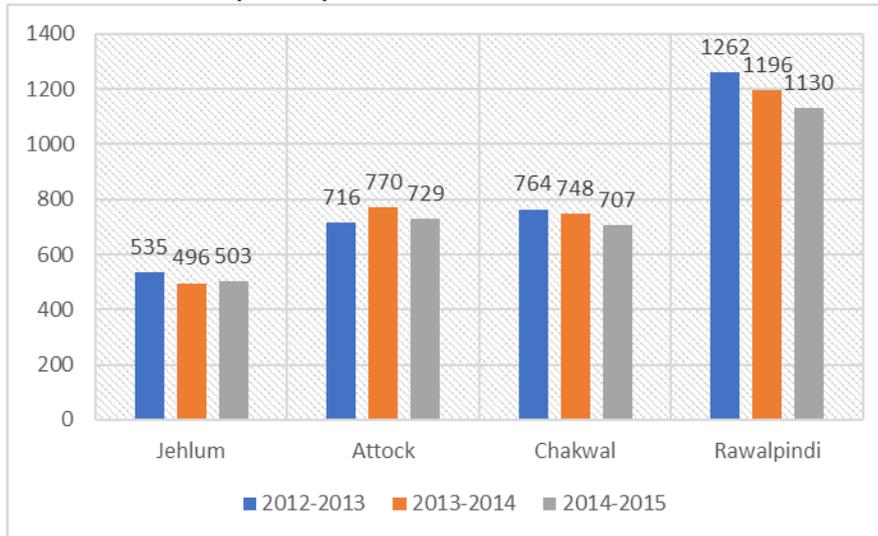
The graph shows total number of available buildings in the four Districts of Rawalpindi Division. In the year 2012-13 the number of total available school buildings in Jhelum was 581 while in the next year 2013-14 this was decreased by 6% and in the year 2014-15 it was decreased by only 1% but much lesser than the previous. In district Attock the total number of available buildings were 854 while in the next year this number dropped by nearly 1 % and in the next year this was increased by 0.3%. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools were 831, like other districts in next year the schools in this district were also decreased by and 2%. In next year, this further dropped by 8%. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools was 1386 while in the next year this number was decreased by 7%. Like previous it decreased further in the next year by 3%. As a result, number of decreased school was highest in the District Chakwal while lowest was in district Attock and a bit increase in the year 2013-14. in remaining districts number of schools have been decreased but still better than Chakwal. While out of the total number of the schools some buildings were not available and some were not reported too.

Figure 3: Ownership:



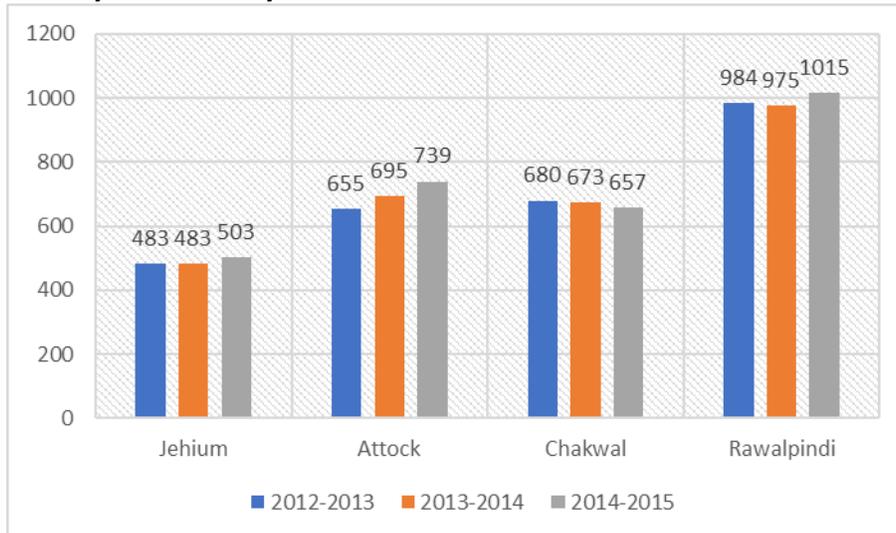
The graph shows ownership to the total number of available buildings in the four Districts of Rawalpindi Division. In the year 2012-13 the number of total Government holding school buildings in Jhelum were 556 while in the next year 2013-14 this was decreased by 5% and in the year 2014-15 it was increased by nearly more than 1% better than previous year. In district Attock the total number of available buildings was 819 while in the next year this number dropped by nearly 2% and increased by more than 1% in next. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools were 815, like other districts in next year the schools in this district were also decreased by and 4%. In next year, this further dropped by 6%. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools was 1311 while in the next year this number was decreased by 9%. Like previous it decreased further in the next year by 1% much lesser than previous one. Comparatively, number of decreased school was highest in the District Rawalpindi while lowest was in district Attock and a bit increase in the year 2013-14 and also an increase in District Jhelum too. In remaining districts number of schools have been decreased but still better than Chakwal. While out of the total number of the schools some buildings apart from Govt. building, some were rented, donated and not reported too.

Figure 4: Type of Construction (Pakka)



The graph shows type of construction of the buildings in the four Districts of Rawalpindi Division. In the year 2012-13 the number of buildings in Jhelum that were Pakka was 535 while in the next year 2013-14 this was decreased by 7% and in the year 2014-15 it was increased by more than 1% better than the previous. In district Attock the total number of Pakka buildings were 716 in the next year this number increased by 8% and in the next year this was decreased by 5%. In the Chakwal District in year 2014-15 the total number of Pakka schools was 764, in next year the schools in this district were also decreased by 2%. In next year, this further dropped by 5%. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools was 1262 while in the next year this number was decreased by 5%. Like previous it decreased further in the next year by 6%. Comparatively, number of decreased school was highest in the District Chakwal while lowest was in district Attock and an increase by a good 8% in the year 2013-14 and also an increase in Jhelum by 1% in year 2014-15. In remaining districts number of schools have been decreased but still better than Chakwal. While out of the total number of the schools the number of Pakka schools have been given while others were either Kacha or were mix and some were not reported too.

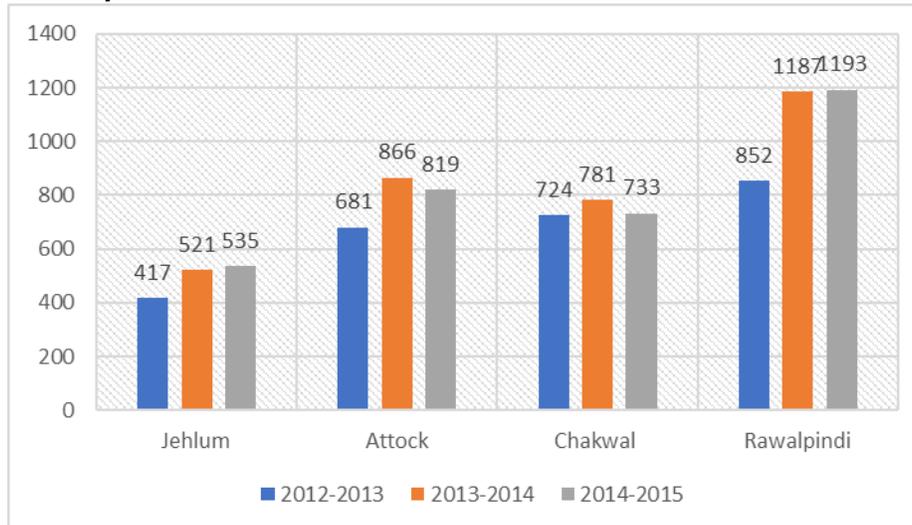
Figure 5: Availability of Electricity:



The graph shows total number buildings with availability of the electricity in the four Districts of Rawalpindi Division. In the year 2012-13 the number of total schools with available electricity in Jhelum were 483 while in the next year 2013-14 this was remained same and in the year 2014-15 it was increased by 4% much better than the previous. In district Attock the total number of available buildings with electricity were 655 while in the next year this number increased by 6% and in the next year this further increased by more than 6%. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools was 680, unlike other districts in next year the schools in these electricity available schools were decreased by 1%. In next year, this further dropped by 2% a bad condition at all. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools with electricity was 984 while in the next year this number was decreased by 1% and it increased in the next year by 4% which is better.

Comparatively, number of school with available electricity was highest in the District Attock in which the number kept on increasing while lowest and critical was in district Chakwal where the number constantly decreased. The two other districts Rawalpindi and Jhelum were fine compared to Chakwal and they did an improvement. The total number of schools and among it the schools with available electricity shown in graph while remaining were either the schools with no availability of electricity or were not reported

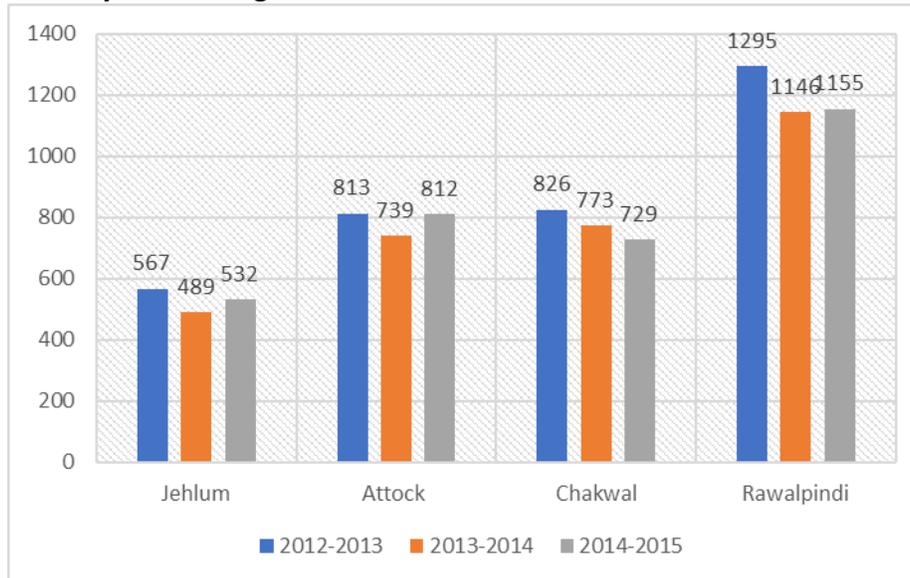
Figure 6: Availability of Latrine:



The graph shows the Availability of latrine in the primary schools of four districts. Out of the total number of the schools the latrine available in the schools In the year 2012-13 the number of total schools with latrine available in Jhelum were 417 which in the next year 2013-14 this was increased by 6% and in the year 2014-15 it was increased too by 3%. In district Attock the total number of available buildings with latrine were 681 and in the next year this number increased by 27% while in the next year this decreased by more than 5%. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools with latrine was 724, in next year this was increased by 8%. While in next year, this dropped by 6% a bad condition at all. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools with latrine was 852 while in the next year this number was increased by a large number 39% and increased in the next year by 1%.

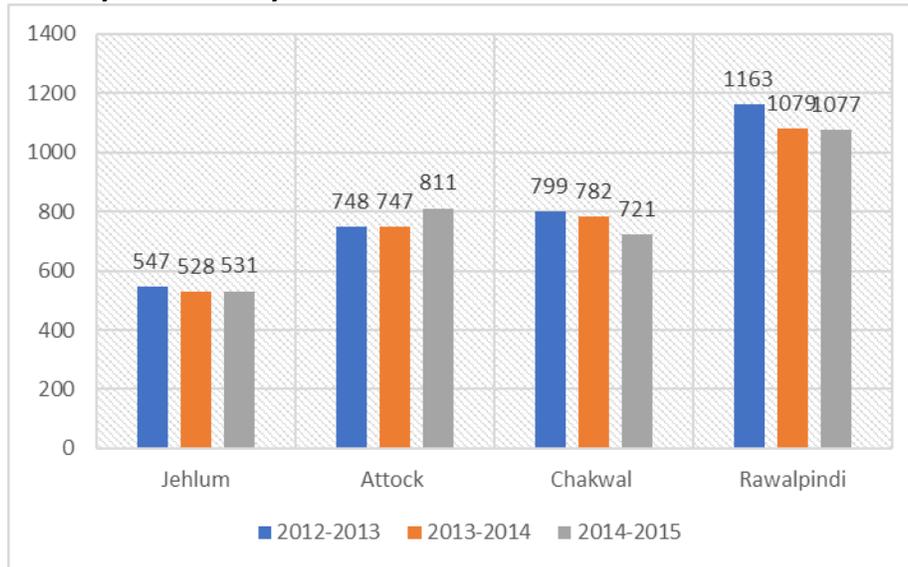
Comparatively, number of school with availability of latrine was highest in the District Rawalpindi and also much better in Attock and Jhelum in which the number kept on increasing while lowest and was in district Chakwal still better and did an improvement. The total number of schools and among it the schools with availability of latrine has been shown while remaining were either the schools were with no availability of latrine or were not reported.

Figure 7: Availability of Drinking Water:



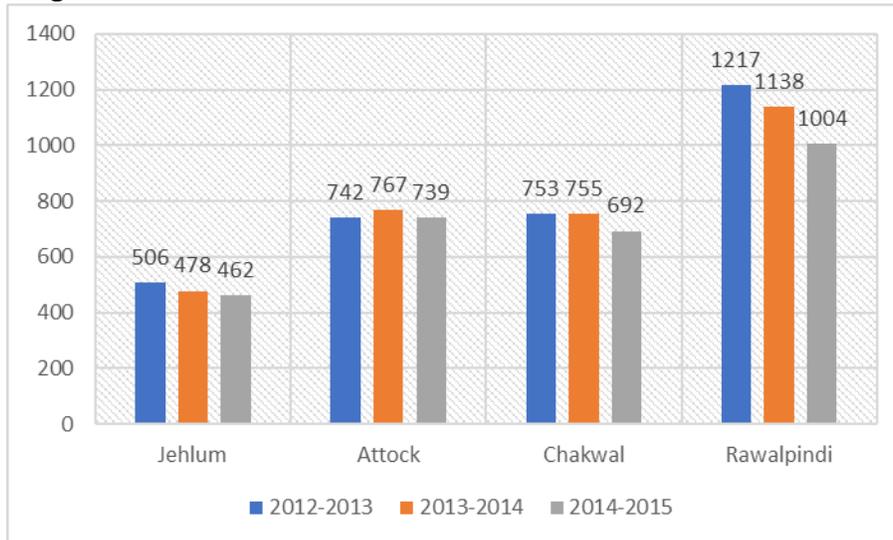
The graph shows the Availability of drinking water in the primary schools of four districts. Out of the total number of the schools in the year 2012-13 the number of total schools with drinking water available in Jhelum was 567 which in the next year 2013-14 were decreased by a huge 14% and in the next year it was increased by 9%. In district Attock there were 813 schools with available drinking water and in the next year this number decreased by 9% while in the next year this increased by more than 10%. This is good. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools with drinking water were 826, in next year this was decreased by more than 6%. While in next year, this further dropped by 6%. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools with available drinking water was 1295 while in the next year this number was decreased by 13% and increased in the next year by 1%. Comparatively, number of school with availability of drinking water was remaining good in all the districts except Chakwal which never showed any improvement. The total number of schools and among it the schools with availability of drinking water has been shown while remaining were either the schools were with no availability of drinking water or were not reported.

Figure 8: Availability of Boundary Wall:



The graph shows the Availability of the boundary wall in the primary schools of four districts. Out of the total number of schools in the year 2012-13 the number of total schools with boundary wall available in Jhelum were 547 which in the next year 2013-14 this was decreased by more than 3% and in the year 2014-15 it was increased by nearly 1%. In district Attock the total number of available buildings with boundary wall were 748 and in the next year this number remained same while in the next year this increased by more than 9%. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools with boundary wall was 799, in next year this was decreased by 2%. While in next year, this further dropped by 8% though a bad situation. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of schools with boundary wall was 1163 while in the next year this number was decreased by 7% and decreased too in the next year by 0.1%. Comparatively, number of school with boundary wall available was highest in the District Attock while improvement has been seen in the districts of Jhelum and Rawalpindi but Chakwal still legs behind and need more work to be done for the boundary wall of the schools in this particular district. The total number of schools and among it the schools with availability of school boundary wall has been shown while remaining were either the schools were with no availability of boundary wall or were not reported.

Figure 9: Building Condition of the schools:



The graph shows the satisfactory building conditions of the primary schools of four districts. Out of the total number of schools in the year 2012-13 the number of total schools with satisfactory conditions in Jhelum were 506 which in the next year 2013-14 was decreased by 6% and in the year 2014-15 it further decreased to more than 5%. In district Attock the total number of schools having satisfactory conditions were 742 and in the next year this number increased by more than 3% while in the next year this decreased by more than 4%. In the Chakwal District in the year 2014-15 the total number of schools with satisfactory conditions was 753, in next year this was increased by 0.2%. While in next year, this dropped by 8%. In the District Rawalpindi, the total number of satisfactory conditions was 1217 while in the next year this number was decreased by more than 6% and decreased too in the next year by 12% which is alarming situation. Comparatively, number of schools with satisfactory conditions was highest in the District Attock while there was no any improvement in the districts of Jhelum, Rawalpindi and Chakwal and need more work to be done for improving the building conditions to make them satisfactory. The total number of schools and among it, the schools with the satisfactory conditions were while the rest were having no satisfactory conditions or were not reported.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The study revealed school condition at primary level for the four districts of Rawalpindi division .The findings have elaborated that no attention is being paid for physical maintenance of the public schools and the condition is even dropping each year. It is very much obvious that physical conditions and physical environment can have drastic effect on the performance of individual. Poor physical conditions at school can hinder productivity of students at school. Similarly, Saeed & Wain (2011) found that physical condition of schools is significant in students; productivity, and poor infrastructure in government schools is matter of great concern. School poor hygiene condition of public schools was due to negligence of the school

heads. Likewise, Naz and Sulman (2012) argument that schools deprived of basic facilities like toilets, furniture, reliable building constructions and availability of drinking water and electricity, lack any accommodation or provisions for disabled children which is another important concern. Thus after analyzing the results it is very important to take initiatives for improving public institutions for more enrolment of students in order to study at less cost than private schools. This will not only improve public institutions but also increase literacy rate in coming years by encouraging and motivating students with healthy physical environment.

Recommendations:

- It is highly recommended that along with academic concerns for schools, structural concerns including reliable construction for school building save and healthy environment for students should also be primary concern.
- More budgets should be spent on education than other developmental projects at national level.
- A tract record for school condition should be kept twice a year by the concerned authorities for addressing the issue whenever arrive.
- There should be more government owned buildings for primary schools than private buildings for subsidized and quality education.
- Complain cells can be made at each districts for increasing accountability for educational institutes

Future implications:

The study can be extended from micro level to macro level for highlighting issues with public institutions. In this way all four provinces of Pakistan can have a research done on schools for improving their quality thus making educational system better and sound. Furthermore the study can be projected to secondary and tertiary level as well. Study in this dimension can lead to improvement in publicly owned educational institutes, hence ensuring elevated literacy rate in coming years.

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