



School Management Systems in Punjab: Evidence from a study of government and NGO schools

Institute of Economic Development and Alternatives (IDEAS)

List of Abbreviations	3
List of Tables, Figures and Boxes	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Context.....	11
2.1 Government Schools in Punjab.....	11
2.1.1 Policy Mentions of School Leadership	12
2.2 NGO Schools.....	14
3. Methodology.....	16
3.1 Survey.....	16
3.1.1 Sample Design and Selection	16
3.1.2 Survey Tool.....	17
3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews	17
3.2.1 Sample.....	17
3.2.2 Interview Tool	18
3.3 Ethical Considerations.....	18
3.4 Contributions and Limitations	18
4. Findings	19
4.1 Profile of Head Teachers in Our Sample	19
4.1.1 Gender and Location.....	19
4.1.2 Academic and Professional Qualifications.....	20
4.1.3 Experience.....	22
4.1.4 Seniority of Government School Head Teachers	23
4.1.5 How Did They Become Head Teachers?	24
4.1.6 Training Received by Head Teachers	25
4.1.7 Key Points from this Section	28
4.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Head Teachers.....	29
4.2.1 Expectations of Head Teachers as Reflected by Their Job Descriptions.....	29
4.2.2 Head Teachers' Description and Perception of Their Roles.....	32
4.2.3 Key Points from this Section	34

4.3 Dimensions of Practice of Head Teachers.....	34
4.3.1 Key Points from this Section	39
4.4 Autonomy of Head Teachers in Matters of Management and Instruction	40
4.4.1 Autonomy of Heads in Government Schools.....	43
4.4.2 Autonomy of Heads in NGO schools.....	45
4.4.3 Comparison of Autonomy of Heads in Government and NGO Schools.....	46
4.4.4 A Closer Look at Head Teacher Autonomy in the Development of the School Improvement Plan.....	48
4.4.5 Key Points from this Section	49
4.5 Financial Autonomy of Head Teachers	50
4.5.1 Key Points from this Section	58
5. A Closer Look at Instructional Leadership Practices Across School Heads	59
5.1 Teaching Practices.....	59
5.2 Student Learning.....	62
5.3 Curriculum and Textbooks	63
5.4 Key Points from this Section	64
6. Conclusion.....	66
7. References	71
APPENDIX.....	74

List of Abbreviations

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
AEO	Assistant Education Officer
BPS	Basic Pay Scale
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CT	Certificate of Teaching
DCO	District Coordination Officer
DEO	District Education Officer
DSD	Directorate of Staff Development
DTE	District Teacher Educator
EDO	Executive District Officer (Education)
FTF	Farogh-e-Taleem Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSB	Non-salary School-specific Budget
PEC	Punjab Examination Commission
PEELI	Punjab Education and English Language Initiative
PTC	Primary Teaching Certificate
QAED	Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey

List of Tables, Figures and Boxes

Table 1 Number of school heads surveyed by type of school

Table 2 Snapshot of districts: PEC score averages and presence of NGO-schools

Table 3 Gender of head teachers (frequency)

Table 4 Native locations of head teachers (frequency)

Table 5 Highest level of qualification of head teachers

Table 6 Qualifications of head teachers by school type

Table 7 Professional qualifications (Pre-Service training) of head teachers

Table 8 Institutions where head teachers obtained their degrees from

Table 9 Head teachers' Basic Pay Scales (frequency)

Table 10 Channels to becoming head teachers

Table 11 Areas in which head teachers are trained in pre- and in-service programs (frequency)

Table 12 Responsibilities of a head teacher in a government school in Punjab (according to the Head Teacher guide)

Table 13 Head teachers teaching regular classes in schools

Table 14 Frequency with which head teachers engaged in activities listed in the last 12 months

Table 15 Decision-making autonomy of government school heads (frequency)

Table 16 Decision-making autonomy of NGO school heads (frequency)

Table 17 Comparison of autonomy of government & NGO school heads in management and instruction

Table 18 Role of head teachers in making school improvement plan

Table 19 Access of head teachers to school bank account(s)

Table 20 Frequency with which heads engaged in activities related to improvements in teaching in the last 12 months

Table 21 Frequency with which heads engage in listed activities

Table 22 Level at which decisions regarding curriculum & textbooks are taken in practice (frequency of responses)

Figure 1 Reporting hierarchies for government school heads in Punjab

Figure 2 Organizational structures in NGO-school system

Figure 3 Quality of schools across Punjab based on PEC performance

Figure 4 Years of experience serving as head teachers (frequency)

Figure 5 Years of experience serving as head teachers by school type (frequency)

Figure 6 Types of funds received by the school in the last year

Figure 7 Average amount of funds received in last school year

Figure 8 Categories across which financial expenditure has been incurred by school type

Figure 9 Main challenges faced by school heads in spending funds by school type

Figure 10 Level at which decisions regarding teacher training are taken in practice (frequency of responses)

Box 1 A closer look at the literature on school leadership

Box 2 Snapshot of PEELI training received by heads in government schools

Box 3 Dimension of practice: Interactions with parents

Box 4 Differences in autonomy of school heads as per policy and in practice

Box 5 Differences in autonomy of school heads across government schools

Box 6 Use of NSB and FTF funds in government schools in this study

1. Introduction

A significant part of the problem holding the education sector back is the low quality of government schools, which account for 60% of total school enrolments in the country. Children in government schools are learning less than their counterparts in private schools. Governance issues have long plagued this sector. Despite better qualifications, more experience and better pay, teachers in government schools are less motivated and put in less effort than their counterparts in the private sector. A high proportion of primary schools function with one teacher teaching at least three grades, often at the same time. One study has found multi-grade teaching practices in 22% rural schools and 11% urban schools in Punjab – by teachers untrained to manage differential ability classrooms (Aslam, Jamil and Rawal, 2011). Quality of instruction in the classroom (pedagogical practices), low teacher effort and low levels of teacher motivation are major contributing factors to low learning outcomes. Innovations in government schools are few and far between. They are often top-down and not owned by teachers and head teachers.

A growing body of evidence points to the fact that the breakdown is happening at the district, sub-district and school level. Expenditure tracking reviews have documented that a significant proportion of funds either never reach schools or remain unspent in schools (World Bank Social Sector Expenditure Review, 2016). Fear of audits of school funds is a major disincentive for head teachers keeping them from spending funds allocated for school development. School councils were set up to increase local/community ownership of schools and provide support to the school head (ibid; PCE, 2015). Studies have documented that a majority of school councils are not functioning in the way that they should. Head teachers have reported their frustration with excessively bureaucratized and inefficient processes for teacher recruitment, lack of authority to hold non-performing teachers accountable and the non-instructional demands on their times which interfere with their jobs significantly.

Schools are at the frontline of a large and complex system of governance and service delivery. Teachers and school leaders are agents that are embedded within schools and schools, in turn, are embedded within bureaucracies. There's a recognition that decentralized systems of service delivery, with empowered schools are more likely to have, and autonomous school leaders are more likely to preside over, motivated and effective teachers and engaged students. However, research has noted that decentralized or more autonomous school management works in contexts of developed countries, but not necessarily in developing country contexts (WDR, 2018). There is an assumption that autonomy is conducive to improvements in all contexts, where as in contexts with lack of sufficient support, training and an enabling environment that autonomy may be a bane rather a boon for effective leadership. In Pakistan's context, the role of school leaders within the broader effort for school reform is understudied. There is however a caveat, autonomy at the school level does not necessarily work to the benefit of the school or school management in all contexts.

The importance of effective school leadership features prominently in education discourse. There are numerous studies on the link between school leadership and student learning. Although studies vary in terms of rigor and results, a case has been made for the positive impact of school leadership on school performance and student learning (Witziers et al, 2003; Leithwood et al, 2004; Nettles and Herrington, 2007; Robinson et al 2008; Hallinger & Heck 2010). School leadership is said to impact student performance indirectly with effects being mediated through a good school climate, safe classrooms, and teacher motivation and efficacy amongst other things. According to the literature, effective school heads are not mere administrators or managers but are leaders above and beyond that. Instructional leadership i.e. leadership focused on instruction and teaching and learning processes within the classroom, is said to have greater impact on student learning compared with other leadership models or styles (Robinson et al, 2008; Schleicher, 2012).

There are very few studies on school leadership that focus on Pakistan or that are situated within the Pakistani context and there is little documentation of school leadership practices in the country. Studies that do focus on Pakistan are normally qualitative case studies based on very few schools/ school heads (Khaki, 2006; Shafa, 2011; Karim, 2015; Mansoor & Akhtar, 2015).

In order to develop an understanding of the ways in which school leaders (education managers and head teachers) can become agents of change in their own contexts and catalyze reform at the school level, there is a need to understand current practices of school leadership, the context in which these practices are observed, and the structural and institutional barriers that stand in the way of effective leadership. Effective leadership (or the link between head teacher practices and desired student outcomes) assumes space for autonomous decision-making (see review of literature below). Received wisdom suggests a significant disconnect in Pakistan between authority that head teachers have on paper and what they are able to exercise in practice. There has been to date no systematic exploration of the link between autonomy and effective leadership. Another important aspect of the study is the mapping of the relationship and interaction between teachers and head teachers.

This study involves a mixed-methods, comparative study of school leadership practices in Punjab in government and NGO schools.¹ The objectives are two-fold: a) to generate contextually-relevant, empirically-informed models of school leadership, and b) to generate knowledge regarding the extent to which (lack of) autonomy is a challenge in the way of effective school governance (and exercise of leadership best practice). The key questions the study aims to answer are:

- What are the dimensions of practice of school heads? I.e. what constitutes the day-to-day affairs of head teachers?

¹ The comparative aspect is important to capture the differences in approaches to school leadership in different types of schools.

- What are the dimensions of interaction of school heads with teachers within the school?
- What are the dimensions of interaction of school heads with higher authorities?
- What is expected of school heads by relevant education authorities?
- What level of autonomy and decision-making power do heads possess in matters of instruction, management, and finance?

In order to answer the above, a survey of 119 school heads including 89 government school heads and 30 NGO-school heads was conducted across Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha districts in Punjab. The government school sample comprised of three types of schools: primary standalone schools, primary attached to middle schools, and primary attached to high schools (see table below for breakdown). In addition, semi-structured interviews were held with 21 school heads including 12 government and nine NGO-school heads in Lahore and Sheikhupura. The research was also informed by some key informant interviews of officials from the government and non-government sectors.

Table 1 Number of school heads surveyed by type of school

School type	Number of school heads
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS	89
1. Primary standalone	36
2. Primary attached to middle schools	18
3. Primary attached to high schools	35
NGO SCHOOLS	30
Primary	21
Secondary	9

Box 1 A closer look at the literature on school leadership

School leadership emerged as a construct in education discourse in the 1970s and 1980s. The focus on school leadership in this period of time was the result of qualitative research and case studies on ‘turnaround’ schools where principals were perceived as significant contributors to improved student performance, resulting in a romanticized or heroic view of leadership. It was felt that principal leadership matters greatly to student learning particularly in the case of students with disabilities; slow learners; and students from low-income households (Nettles & Herrington, 2007). Policymakers saw school leadership as a ‘means to reducing learning disparities between different social groups’ (Robinson et al, 2008). However, there is lack of consistent evidence of the effects of school leadership on student learning- in particular how and to what extent leadership shapes outcomes and what the exact pathway to affecting these outcomes is (Nettles & Herrington, 2007).

Both qualitative and quantitative research has been conducted on the impact of school

leadership on student learning. The former yield more favorable findings on the impact of principal leadership on student learning as compared with the latter. Studies that have looked at the direct effects of school leadership on student outcomes find that there is little to no impact (Witziers et al, 2003; Dumay et al, 2013; Nettles & Herrington, 2007). As a result, conceptualization of leadership as having direct effects on student learning has 'largely been abandoned' (Nettles & Herrington, 2007:729); although some feel that more research needs to be conducted on the direct effects of leadership on learning outcomes of subgroup student populations, such as those described above (Nettles & Herrington, 2007: 733). The 'direct effects' period has been associated with the heroic leadership model (Hallinger & Heck, 2010: 9). Studies that have looked at the indirect effects of school leadership (i.e. those that are mediated by factors affected and shaped by school leadership such as school environment, teacher motivation and discipline) find some evidence of impact, albeit these vary considerably in size.

Some of the limitations of studies that have been conducted are that most of them focus on the United States, the United Kingdom and other high performing education systems/ countries and that there is a need for greater research on school leadership in developing country contexts. In addition, that the methodology and the assessment tools that are used in studies on school leadership need to be looked at more closely to ensure that they are built to actually measure and capture effects of school leadership on student and other outcomes.

Despite lack of rigorous and/or consistent evidence in support of the positive impact of school leadership on student learning, school leadership remains prominent and relevant in the education discourse today. This is especially in the context of the 'outcome-based accountability' that has permeated education systems around the world and that holds school leaders, specifically principals, responsible for student performance.

Much of the literature is grounded in any one theory of leadership. It may be more useful, however, to study different dimensions and components of leadership instead. There has been a shift away from focus on leadership styles to focus on dimensions/ components of leadership practice that have greater bearing on student learning. While there is no consensus on what constitutes effective school leadership; a non-exhaustive list includes: ensuring a safe and orderly environment; having a clear vision and mission; community involvement; monitoring school progress (visiting classrooms and tracking student performance and use student test data to shape programmes); having an instructional focus; having and communicating high expectations of students; and provision of professional development opportunities to teachers and staff (Nettles & Herrington, 2007: 726- 728). Others have articulated desirable leadership capacities and competencies as: "(1) Constructing an understanding of how to support teachers in doing their work effectively by providing models of practice, i.e. leaders must provide instructional leadership empowering teachers to promote student learning; (2) Developing shared goals,

identity, meaning and purpose. This means that leaders should encourage effective communication within a culture of shared knowledge, leadership and responsibility for school events and processes; (3) Fostering collaborative processes that cultivate better teaching and learning; (4) Recognizing individual and school accomplishments, thus furthering individual and collective efficacy; (5) Situating teachers' learning in the unique educational context at hand; (6) Facilitating collective learning by establishing collective organizational structures, processes and practices. Thus, leaders should take the role of facilitators and co-learners who guide collective learning; and (7) Modeling learning as a shift in perception, thereby promoting learning in which teachers can construct, refine and negotiate meanings. Altogether, current school principals are expected to focus on the influence of leadership on teaching and learning issues (Orr 2006) through generating learning opportunities for all staff members and students” (Shaked & Schechter, 2013:774).

Studies that have broken down leadership into specific components/tasks as opposed to treating leadership as a broad concept find that there is some evidence of the impact of specific principal behaviors on student performance- findings that would otherwise have been masked when leadership is taken as a monolith.

2. Context

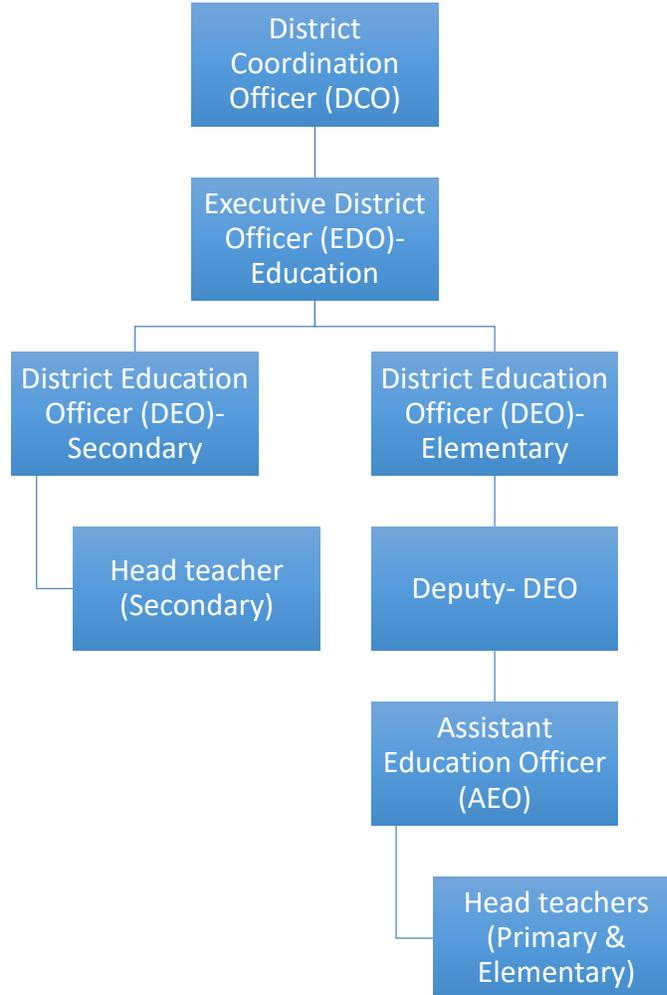
2.1 Government Schools in Punjab

There are approximately 53,000 schools in Punjab. Of these, close to 37,000 are at the primary level, 8400 at the middle level and 6400 at the high school level (EMIS, 2016). The reason for looking at each of the three types of government schools separately in this study is to capture variations, if any, across school leaders' practices, interactions and autonomy. The reasons for expecting this variation is as follows:

1. There is no officially designated post for head teachers in primary schools in the government sector who are referred to as head-designates. At the elementary and secondary levels, however, there are designated posts for heads teachers.
2. Differences in Basic Pay Scales (BPS) of schools heads in primary standalone, primary attached to middle and primary attached to high schools. The BPS of primary school heads normally lies between BPS 9 to 14; that of middle school heads between BPS 16 to 17; and that of high school heads between BPS 16 to 19.
3. Differences in the reporting hierarchies of heads of each of the three types of government schools. Heads at the primary and middle level report to and are supported by Assistant Education Officers (AEO) while heads at the high school level report to and are supported by the District Education Officer (DEO) in chains that ultimately lead up to the Executive District Officer (EDO)- Education and the District Coordination Officer (DCO) in the district education department (see figure below).

All of the above can mean that there are differences in the practices, interactions and autonomy of school heads in different types of government schools.

Figure 1 Reporting hierarchies for government school heads in Punjab



2.1.1 Policy Mentions of School Leadership

Various policies over the decades have highlighted the important role school leaders can play in education reform. The National Education Policy, 1959 stated that the Education Extension Centers being established should run training courses to improve the ‘administrative ability and professional competence’ of headmasters and that promotions of headmasters be made conditional on successful completion of these courses (323). It noted that selection of headmasters on the basis of seniority was problematic as it meant that headmasters were often older, closer to retirement and less inclined to make positive changes. It stated that little attention had been paid in the past to seeking out the kind of character and qualities of leadership found in good leaders in heads of schools in Pakistan (325). It also recognized that headmasters ‘do not carry the authority required for effective management and are constantly harassed by interference from outsiders’ (324). The policy emphasized, therefore, that younger headmasters be recruited, preferably between the ages of 35 and 45, and that they be given

greater control over the affairs of their schools. The desired profile of a headmaster and principal was described as:

‘...the type of person who can give leadership to teachers and students, a man whose ideas carry weight, whose personal character is an inspiration... the men who are put in charge should be chosen with the same care as we select a captain for a ship’ (324-325)

In 1970², the National Education Policy spoke about the need to increase the autonomy of heads of secondary schools, stating that they should have ‘staff councils’ answerable to them to assist in the day-to-day administration of the affairs of the school. It said that heads should have the power to spend their budget after consulting the school staff council. It also stated that heads should have the power to appoint staff for a period of up to six months as and when the need arose to fill vacant positions (21).

The next mention of school leadership is found 22 years later, in the national education policy in 1992, which increased the rank at which head teachers would be inducted into the system, and expanded their duties to supervision and teaching, and listed the need to provide them training in educational and financial administration at the time of appointment (60-61).

Similar challenges and needs were highlighted in the National Education Policy in 2009³. This policy noted that head teachers were unprepared and untrained for educational management and that recruiting head teachers from the teaching cadre who had little management experience was problematic (28). It highlighted the importance of introducing a management cadre and training head teachers in social mobilization and working with the community in order to make the most of School Management Committees (SMCs). It noted that where SMCs were successful there was often a dynamic head teacher stationed in the school (30).

In 2009 the Punjab Government issued a notification on the ‘Empowerment of heads of educational institutions’ giving them full authority to hire temporary or part-time science and English teachers and sweepers using the Farogh-e-Taleem (FTF) fund. Primary and elementary heads would complete the Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) for all teaching and non-teaching staff in their schools as per this notification. Heads were given the authority to sanction casual leave of teachers. They were also given the authority to assign teaching and non-teaching duties to all members of staff during and after school hours. The notification also warned against insubordination to heads of schools. This notification was welcomed as a positive step to improve the authority of heads. According to a government official interviewed, before this notification:

“If the head teacher would tell teachers not to take leave or instructed them to take classes the teachers often would not listen or act on these instructions. This was very demotivating

² Ministry of education & scientific research (1970). The new education policy of the government of Pakistan. Pp.1-25

³ Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan (2009). National Education Policy 2009. Pp. 1-71

for heads and as a result, in order to save face, they stopped telling and instructing teachers what to do”.

The Punjab Education Sector Plan 2013 – 2017 devoted little space to discussion of head teachers in the province. Where it did discuss head teachers it stressed the role that head teachers can play in creating a positive school environment and tending to the ‘physical appearance’ of the school as well as its ‘psychological climate’. The plan underlined the need to develop guidelines for head teachers in how they could do so. The plan also noted the criticality of head teachers (along with school councils and education officers at the district level) in improving and monitoring enrolment and attendance in schools. It emphasized that good leaders and head teachers interact with the community effectively and community involvement in turn drives up enrolment and retention, accountability of the school to members of the community, and confidence in schools. The plan also recognized that head teachers have ‘very high stakes in the education sector but are powerless in terms of bringing change or impacting policy and decision making’ (School Education Department, Government of Punjab, 2013:58).

As described above, head teachers, and the importance of head teachers, are mentioned sparsely in education policies and plans. It has been consistently observed, however, in these policies and plans, that head teachers lack autonomy and that this should be increased and that head teachers have not been trained or prepared for this leadership role- another area requiring urgent attention. While some reforms related to head teachers have come through these have been few and far between.

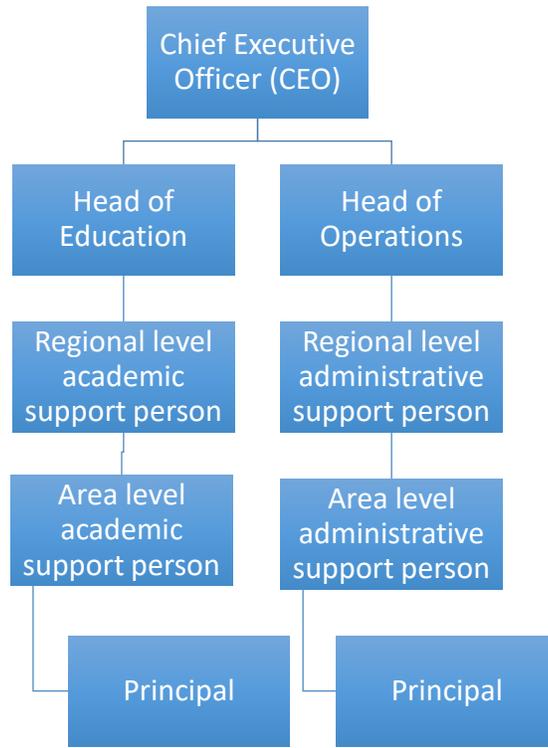
2.2 NGO Schools

School heads from primary and secondary schools run by a well-established education NGO that operates across Pakistan, including Punjab, were looked at in this study. This NGO was established in 1995 and runs more than 1400 schools across the country for underprivileged children. 45% of its schools are in the Punjab province.

This education NGO has its own processes and systems in place that are distinct to those in the public education sector. Unlike the public system, this NGO only runs two types of schools that it calls ‘Primary’ (grades 1 – 5) and ‘Secondary’ (grades 6 – 10). School heads are known as principals. Every principal is assisted, within the school, by a ‘senior teacher’- a teacher who will assist the principal with administrative duties- and an accounts assistant for help with school finances.

The NGO has a different chain of command for education or academic related matters and operations or administrative related matters. The principal is, therefore, part of a dual hierarchy. This is depicted in the figure below.

Figure 2 Organizational structures in NGO-school system



3. Methodology

The following research methods were adopted to answer the research questions outlined in Section 1 of this report:

1. Quantitative research methods- a survey of 119 school heads was carried out in Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha districts of Punjab.
2. Qualitative research methods- semi-structured interviews with 21 school heads in Lahore and Sheikhpura were conducted. In addition, some key informants from the public and private sector were also interviewed.

This was an exploratory study with multiple objectives: a) to collect information about school management practices- an area where there is little available data; b) to understand and document challenges and accounts as well as to understand the patterns emerging from the survey. For this reason we conducted a survey which is the first on leadership practices. We conducted interviews with head teachers and bureaucracies in the two systems to go underneath the numbers and to document contextual differences.

3.1 Survey

3.1.1 Sample Design and Selection

90 school heads were initially selected to participate in the survey from government schools⁴ while 30 were selected from NGO-schools. The sample design was premised on a number of considerations.

First, we were interested in surveying head teachers in schools that reflect the quality spectrum i.e. high performing, middle performing and low performing schools as this would yield a richer understanding of the challenges that school heads experience in exercising their autonomy in diverse school settings. For our purposes we measured school quality using the Punjab Examination Commission (PEC) results⁵ for grade-5 students in schools across the public and private sector. We analyzed student level PEC examination results for the year 2012- 2013⁶ and ranked districts by:

- a) Their overall performance on the PEC exam (we took the average of student scores within a school to work out the school average. We then took the school averages to work out the district average); and
- b) The level of variation in PEC examination scores within the district (we analyzed to what extent school averages varied from the district average calculated).

⁴ 89 government school heads were included in the final sample

⁵ This is a province-wide standardized and mandatory high-stakes assessment that all grade-5 children need to take, and the objective is to ascertain levels of student learning that are comparable across districts.

⁶ IDEAS had access to this data from its work on a previous project

Our next consideration was to select districts in which NGO schools were present as well. Our final consideration was to further narrow down district selection on the basis of the presence of at least one school in which the British Council had delivered training to head teachers as part of the Punjab Education and English Language Initiative (PEELI). The purpose of including such head teachers in our sample was to see how, if at all, head teachers who have been trained to exercise their autonomy better have changed practices compared with head teachers who have not received such training. The British Council shared data on head teachers/ schools that had participated in this programme. We found that that such schools existed in 26 of Punjab's 36 districts. However, only 11 of the 36 districts had both (at least) 10 NGO-run schools and 1 school that participated in the PEELI programme. These 11 districts include: Muzaffargarh, Attock, Khanewal, Jhang, Sheikhpura, Chakwal, Sargodha, Rawalpindi, Kasur, Faisalabad and Lahore.

From this list of 11 districts, three were selected for our survey: Lahore, Faisalabad and Sargodha. 30 government schools and 10 NGO-schools were selected in each of these districts. While selecting schools we ensured that we include:

1. Schools that are primary standalone, primary attached to middle and primary attached to high schools for reasons outlined in Section 1 of this report
2. Schools that have both female and male school heads and schools
3. Schools that are in close proximity with one another to facilitate logistical arrangements and cost effectiveness of the survey exercise.

3.1.2 Survey Tool

Three tools/questionnaires were consulted in the design of the final tool that was used in this study. These include the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) tool; the Young Lives School Survey tool; and the relevant section of the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) tool used by the World Bank. The final tool included sections on the profile of school heads; the administrative and financial autonomy of school heads; interaction of school heads with teachers and members of the community (including school councils); time use by school heads on different activities; and job satisfaction and challenges faced by school heads.

3.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

3.2.1 Sample

21 school heads were interviewed in total. 12 of these were government school heads⁷ and nine were heads in NGO-schools. Interviews included both male and female heads as well as heads across different types of school: primary, middle and high.

⁷ In addition to these 12 heads, 10 telephonic interviews were conducted of government school heads that had received the PEELI training designed by the British Council. The latter set of interviews were focused specifically on questions relating to the PEELI training.

Eight of the 12 government school heads were male while four were female. All nine of the NGO-school heads were female.

Six of the 12 government school heads were stationed in primary standalone schools; five were heads of middle schools and one was head of a high school. Three of the nine NGO-school heads were heading primary schools while the remainder was heading secondary schools.

3.2.2 Interview Tool

The interview tool designed by the project team sought to collect in-depth information from school heads on their recruitment and preparation as school heads; their perceptions regarding their roles and responsibilities; their level of authority; challenges they face; the level and quality of support that they receive from teachers, community members and higher education authorities; and their experience with financial planning and expenditure in relation to the Non-salary School-specific Budget (NSB) in particular.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Particular care was taken to take relevant government departments on board but more importantly to seek permissions from head teachers themselves. All head teachers were given the option not to participate in the survey or in the interviews. Refusal rates were negligible since head teachers were happy to make time to speak to us once we showed them all relevant permissions and explained the purpose of the exercise. A careful process of seeking permissions from NGO schools was also undertaken.

All data have been anonymized and maintained at a central location accessible by people involved directly with the project only.

3.4 Contributions and Limitations

This is the first survey based comparative study on school management and leadership practices in Punjab or Pakistan's context. We have used internationally comparative survey tools adapted for Pakistan's context. The study is a substantial contribution to the literature on school leadership. This was an exploratory study, while the most rigorous way of selecting schools for comparison would have been to utilize propensity score matching techniques, given limitations of data availability regarding NGO schools, this was not possible. We were also limited to using PEC scores to compare learning outcomes in government schools and across NGO and government schools since that is the only universal national learning database where all schools can be compared. There are concerns about the integrity of the PEC scores as accurate assessment tools of learning abilities. For the purposes of sampling, however, the data are perfectly suitable.

4. Findings

This section of the report discusses findings from the primary research collected as part of this study. Observations pertain to head teachers who formed part of the sample.

4.1 Profile of Head Teachers in Our Sample

This section outlines who head teachers are, their experience and qualifications.

4.1.1 Gender and Location

All of the NGO schools have female head teachers. Most of the government schools, with the exception of primary standalone schools have female head teachers. The highest female to male ratio is, therefore, in primary attached to middle schools and primary attached to high schools. Primary standalone schools have an equal number of female and male head teachers.

Table 3 Gender of head teachers (frequency)

	Govt Schools			NGO Schools	TOTAL
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High		
Male	18	5	10	0	33
Female	18	13	25	30	86
Total	36	18	35	30	119

Most government school head teachers are native to the districts in which they are serving. Most head teachers do not, however, live in the same village as the school. This trend is consistent across all schools apart from primary standalone schools- even though the majority of head teachers live outside the village (but within district) in the case of these schools too, a significant number of head teachers also live within the same village as the school.

Table 4 Native locations of head teachers (frequency)

Frequency: What is your native place?	Govt Schools			NGO Schools	Totals
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High		
Within the village	9	2	3	3	17
Outside the village but within the District	21	11	24	20	76
Outside the district but within the state	6	4	8	6	24
Another State or Province	0	1	0	1	2
Totals	36	18	35	30	119

4.1.2 Academic and Professional Qualifications

The majority of head teachers in our sample have Masters' degrees, and a few have MPhil degrees (see table below). Of the 119 head teachers that participated in the survey, 80 had a Masters' degree. The proportion of heads with only 10 years of education has declined. There are a few with Bachelor's degrees. These trends are reflective of the changes in recruitment criteria i.e. the minimum qualifications required to qualify for teaching positions in the government sector. In 2004, the government made a Bachelor's degree (14 years of education) the minimum criterion for recruitment.

Table 5 Highest level of qualification of head teachers

	Frequency
Secondary (matric/class 10)	4
Higher secondary (class 12)	9
BA, BSc	14
Masters (MA, MSc)	80
MPhil/Ph.D.	12
Total	119

The table below reports a breakdown of levels of qualification of head teachers across the different types of government and NGO schools.

Table 6 Qualifications of head teachers by school type

Frequency	GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS			NGO Schools
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High	
Secondary (matric/class)	4	0	0	0
Higher secondary (class)	8	1	0	0
BA, BSc	11	1	0	2
Masters (MA, MSc)	11	15	27	27
MPhil/Ph.D.	2	1	8	1
Total	36	18	35	30

A majority of head teachers in all categories have Masters degrees. All the head teachers in high schools (who oversee the primary school sections within these schools) have Masters degrees. There is more variation in the primary standalone schools – a number of them have Bachelors

degrees (12 of the 36). A third of the primary standalone school heads have only completed their education till Matriculation or Intermediate level.

Many government primary standalone and primary attached to middle schools, and NGO-schools have head teachers with a Bachelor's in Education, however, a majority of school heads in primary attached to high schools have a pre-service training qualification of a Master's in Education (24 out of the 35 such school heads surveyed have this qualification). Government primary standalone schools still have a significant number of head teachers with a Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC). Furthermore, these head teachers mostly obtained their degrees from Allama Iqbal Open University (see table 8 below).

Table 7 Professional qualifications (Pre-Service training) of head teachers

Frequency:	Government Schools			NGO Schools	Totals
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High		
None	1	1	1	4	7
CT	2	0	0	0	2
PTC	13	0	0	0	13
BEd (1 year)	12	9	7	16	44
BEd (4 years)	0	1	0	0	1
AED	1	0	0	0	1
Med	7	6	24	9	46
Other	0	1	3	1	5
Totals	36	18	35	30	119

Table 8 Institutions where head teachers obtained their degrees

Frequency:	Government Schools			NGO Schools	Totals
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High	NGO Schools	
Allama Iqbal Open University	15	8	15	16	54
Institute of Ed and R	3	2	7	1	13
Sargodha University	2	0	0	3	5
Other (Specify)	15	7	12	6	40
Totals	35	17	34	26	112

4.1.3 Experience

A majority of head teachers in our sample are young recruits, with between 1- 5 years of experience as head teachers. Years of experience are divided across three groups: 1-5 years of experience, 6-15 years of experience, and 16 and above years of experience. This variable measures experience of individuals for years spent in the post of head teachers – whether in this school or another school. Around 62 head teachers have 1-5 years of experience, whereas 40 head teachers have 6-15 years of experience, and only 17 have 16+ years of experience. This tells us that most of the population of head teachers hired are young and in early parts of their careers.

However, as we dissect our sample across school types we find that this above-mentioned relationship is not true for primary attached to middle schools. Here, head teachers' experience is concentrated between 6-15 years of experience.

Figure 4 Years of experience serving as head teachers (frequency)

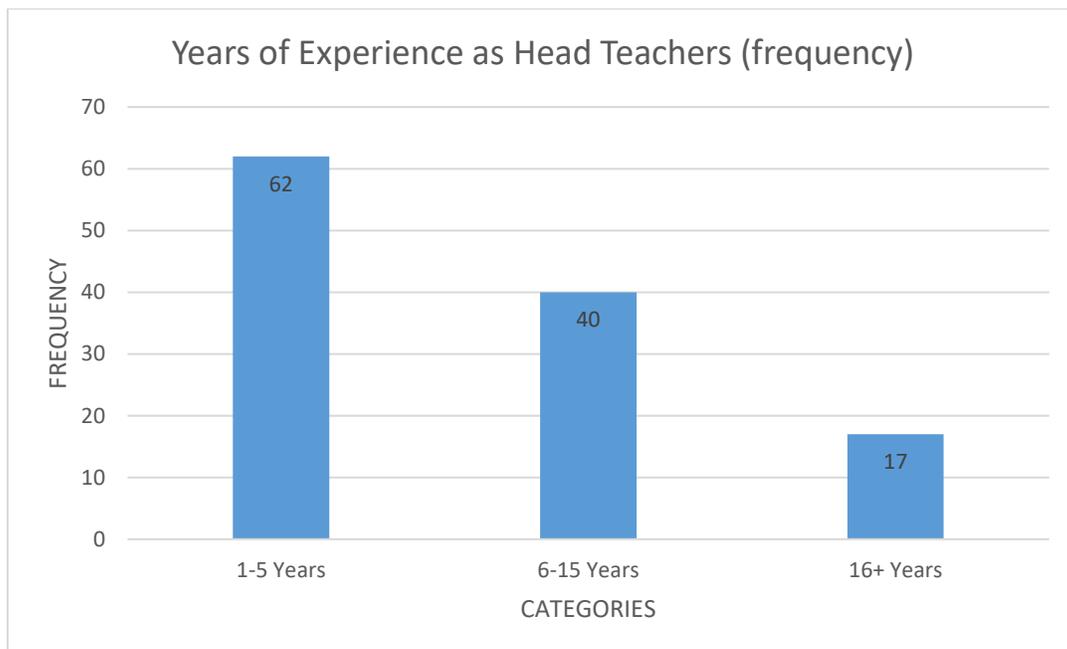
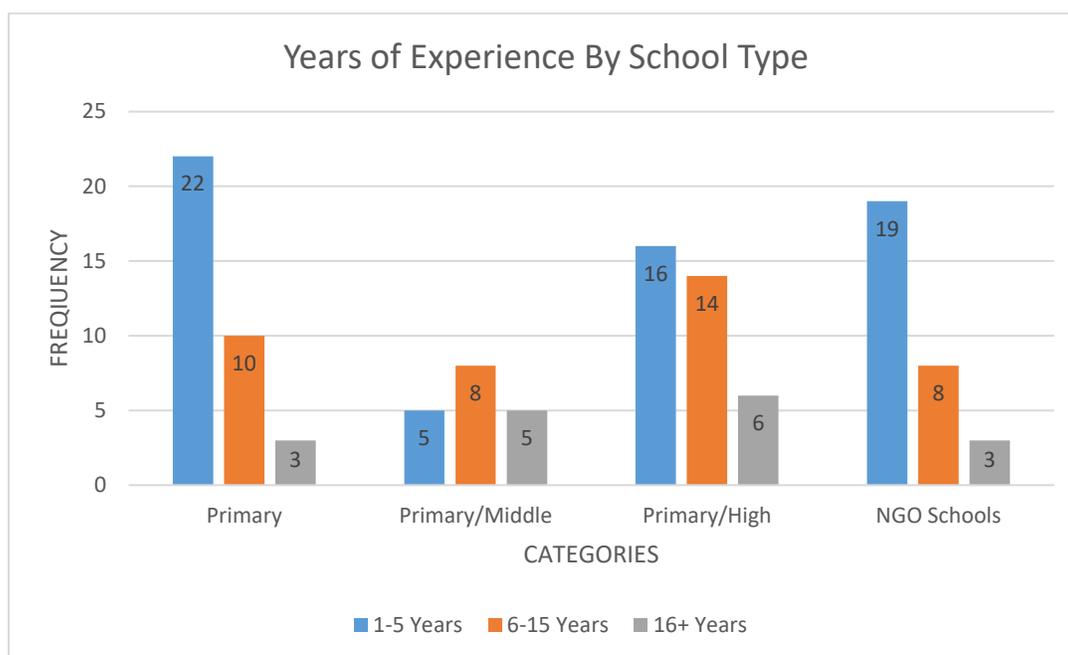


Figure 5 Years of experience serving as head teachers by school type (frequency)



4.1.4 Seniority of Government School Head Teachers

Seniority of government school head teachers is discussed in terms of the BPS set by the Punjab government. Higher pay scales reflect more years of experience, as promotions are mostly based on years of experience. Teachers can enter at different pay scales, for example teachers may be hired at a post in a high school at grade 15 and so on. But most will rise through the system over time. Seniority also brings more authority and better networks within the education department.

Table 9 Head teachers' basic pay scales (frequency)

	GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS			Total
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High	
Grade 9 (Rs. 8015-Rs. 22865)	13	0	0	13
Grade 12 (Rs. 9055-Rs. 28555)	12	0	0	12
Grade 14 (Rs. 10340-Rs. 34040)	5	2	0	7
Grade 15 (Rs. 10985-Rs. 38135)	0	1	0	1
Grade 16 (Rs. 12910-Rs. 43690)	0	7	8	15
Grade 17 (Rs. 20680-Rs. 51780)	6	6	13	25
Grade 18 (Rs. 25940-Rs. 64940)	0	2	5	7
Grade 19	0	0	9	9
Total	36	18	35	89

The majority of primary standalone head teachers in our sample are grades 9-12 i.e. entry grades. Middle school head-teachers are between grades 14 and 18, and the majority of high school head teachers are grade 17 and above.

4.1.5 How Did They Become Head Teachers?

Head teachers in government primary attached to high schools were promoted and transferred from other schools. This is also consistent for heads in primary attached to middle schools. The process is different in primary standalone schools; here teachers are promoted from within the school to the position of head teacher. The majority of NGO principals in our sample had been directly hired as head teachers. Some had been promoted or transferred to this position.

Table 10 Channels to becoming head teachers

Frequency:	Government Schools			NGO Schools	Totals
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High		
Hired at this post	5	1	7	17	30
Promoted and transfer	5	6	10	3	24
Transferred from a different school	4	6	6	1	17
Promoted from within	16	1	5	5	27
Appointed head in same school	6	3	7	4	20
Others (Specify)	0	1	0	0	1
Totals	36	18	35	30	119

One important aspect of the government system – mentioned in Section 2 of this report and worth repeating here – is that there is no designated post for a head teacher in primary standalone schools. 36,695 of Punjab’s 53,000 schools are primary standalone schools. Almost 55% of all primary standalone schools in Punjab are single-teacher or two-teacher schools. The process of appointment of heads in these schools simply involves assignment of administrative responsibilities associated with the role to one of the teachers for a nominal extra income of 500 rupees a month.

Another point made in Section 2 is that there has been a policy concern that teachers and head teachers are from the same cadre and that head teachers need to be from a separate cadre with specific skills in management. Recently, the Punjab government has been talking about separating cadres of head teachers again. It is unclear however if that will be helpful. Head teachers who also have experience of teaching may make more effective and empathetic managers. It may be that hiring directly on the post of head teachers and providing specialized training is a better route.

4.1.6 Training Received by Head Teachers

The survey asked head teachers if they had received training prior to assuming responsibilities as head teachers i.e. training pertaining to administrative and management duties. All but one head teacher in the NGO system reported receiving training specific to duties of headship, before assuming their position. This indicated that the NGO school system had a universal and systematic system for training heads, regardless of school level or years of experience. 57 out of 89 government school heads surveyed reported that they did not receive any such training. This was especially pronounced in the case of primary school heads. In contrast, relatively more head teachers in middle and high schools had received capacity building support. For example, approximately half of the head teachers of government primary attached to high schools reported receiving training prior to assuming their position (i.e. 17 out of 35 report they did). In some cases this would have been the promotion-linked training that is received by any teacher (not just heads) when they progress to a higher grade/ BPS. This means that more heads in middle and high schools, where heads belong to higher Grades, are likely to have been recipients of these trainings. Middle and high school heads are also more likely to be nominated to participate in programs such as PEELI that dovetail with promotion-linked trainings. For example, of the 13 government school heads in our survey sample that had received PEELI training, the majority (i.e. 12 of the 13 were stationed in high schools) and the majority (i.e. 12 of the 13) belonged to Grade 17.

This reflects a blind spot in the government sector – a negation of the importance of equipping young relatively inexperienced head teachers entering the system at the primary school level with the skills they need to become effective administrators.

Interviews with school heads reflected the same- all NGO school heads interviewed were trained before assuming responsibilities as heads, while only a few of the government school heads had received similar training. NGO school heads described this training as including an introduction of the NGO, attributes of an effective head teacher and the differences between a teacher and a head. It also included a briefing regarding management, administration and accounts. Additionally, it used a case-study approach to illustrate scenarios and guide heads regarding their interaction with parents, teachers and students. According to head of an NGO primary school interviewed:

“I learnt a lot from this training... the case-study method was very helpful as it created an environment where we arrived at solutions ourselves. No matter how much advice you take from people, you remember what you have achieved yourself.”

Since serving as head teachers, 29 of the 30 NGO school heads report receiving training once or twice a year compared with only 30 of 89 government school heads who report the same. Within government schools too, there are differences in the frequency of training between heads in primary standalone, primary attached to middle and primary attached to high schools. For instance, only 8 of the 36 heads in primary standalone schools report receiving training once or

twice a year compared with 6 of the 18 heads in primary attached to middle schools and 16 of the 35 heads in primary attached to high schools.

According to interviews conducted, all NGO school heads once in service are trained annually at weeklong principal academies conducted by the head office which are mandatory to attend. The purpose is to provide administrative, management and leadership training to school heads. One NGO school head commented:

“I could not have learnt so much in the government sector, the Principals’ Academy has groomed my personality.”

The NGO takes input from head teachers on trainings that they would like to receive and designs these courses accordingly. As an example, NGO school heads interviewed described how they were struggling to develop school improvement plans and how the training at the Academy last year focused on how to develop such a plan effectively.

Other installments of this annual training have focused on leadership skills, motivation, managing finance and accounts, personality grooming, teacher observations, and so on. Feedback on the Principals Academy is also collected systematically in order to shape future trainings. NGO school heads also receive support from area level academic and administrative support persons.

Box 2 Snapshot of PEELI training received by heads in government schools

Snapshot of the PEELI program and training received by some head teachers

Apart from the 12 semi-structured interviews held with government school heads as part of our study, we conducted an additional 10 telephonic interviews with heads who had received the PEELI training to ask them a few questions that were specific to the nature and usefulness of this training. All had received the PEELI training in 2017 and were aware that this was a mandatory training that was linked to their promotion.

The focus of the program was encouraging use of English, activity-based, and child-centered learning in teaching and learning processes within the school. The majority deemed the training useful while one commented that the training was more relevant to teachers and not to heads and to more inexperienced/ younger teachers.

Opinion varied across heads about which parts of the training were suitable and which were not. For example, there was limited ownership of the policy imperative to teach in English. Heads felt that it would be difficult to implement in practice particularly in rural contexts. There was, however, more uptake of activity-based learning in schools.

Interviews with government school heads showed that some had received training since becoming head teachers while others had not. These varied in scope and focus (see table above for details on focus of the PEELI training) and were not necessarily focused on their role as heads

(for example, some heads were trained on Early Childhood Education as part of specific donor-supported project).

While there are forums where government school heads convene on a regular basis, the meetings are not focused on capacity building. For example, heads meet regularly every month at the cluster-level to discuss questions and problems related to school leadership. In practice, however, this meeting unfolds differently and is more rigid in format. As summarized by a key informant interviewed:

“The head teacher has to bring ... school attendance and other registers (to this meeting). The cluster head checks these registers and sees amongst other things that the District Teacher Educator (DTE) completed his two visits; that mentoring and target forms from these visits were completed; teacher attendance and so on. Action, if necessary, is taken against head teachers on the basis of these. In addition, cluster heads communicate to head teachers any notifications, directives or new policies that the head teacher has to implement”.

School-based pedagogical support and capacity building was provided until recently by the District Teacher Educators (DTEs) and at present by the AEOs, however, this is only for teachers and not for school heads. The DSD, now referred to as QAED, is currently working with the British Council to design and implement a more comprehensive mandatory training program for heads in 2017⁸. However, primary standalone school heads have not yet been made part of the training process.

It is believed that there is some informal collaboration that takes place between head teachers in the same locality who contact one another of their own accord for guidance and advice.

Another key finding regarding the level of preparedness for school management and performance of headship duties emerges from the data on the topics covered in pre- and in-service training.

The table below shows that a greater proportion of NGO school heads, compared with government school heads, received pre-service and in-service training in areas such as child psychology, teaching slow learners, teaching children from poor households, school administration, instructional leadership, human resource and finance management. More

⁸ The DSD is bringing in a leadership program- 4 trainings will be offered (these are being designed by the DSD, TAMO and the British Council and there will be a test at the end of each):

- Leadership fundamentals; this will be 8 days in duration (on one weekend a month spread over 4 months)- all HTs and designated HTs will be required to attend this in 2017
- Emerging leadership; this will be 20 days in duration. It is being designed this year and will be delivered in 2018 to elementary and high school HTs, AEOs, Dep. DEOs, DEOs
- Developing leadership; This will be designed in 2018 and delivered to those who qualified the emerging leadership program
- Advanced leadership; Those qualifying the developing leadership program will receive this

government school heads, compared with NGO school heads, received in-service training in multi-grade teaching reflecting conditions of schools in the government sector.

Table 11 Areas in which head teachers are trained in pre- and in-service programs (frequency & percent)

	Pre-Service Training				In-Service Training			
	Government Schools		NGO Schools		Government Schools		NGO Schools	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Child Psychology	31	35	14	47	43	48	18	60
Multi-grade teaching	22	25	6	20	43	48	12	40
Teaching in a multi-lingual classroom	17	19	6	20	22	25	9	30
Teaching slow learners	20	22	13	43	41	46	19	63
Teaching children with disabilities	7	8	3	10	6	7	3	10
Teaching children from poor backgrounds	20	22	14	47	25	28	18	60
School administration or head-teacher training	25	28	16	53	54	61	26	87
Instructional leadership course	17	19	16	53	41	46	22	73
Human resource management	23	26	16	53	41	46	22	73
Financial management	22	25	17	57	47	53	23	77

4.1.7 Key Points from this Section

- The majority of head teachers in our sample are female – in both government and NGO schools.
- School heads in government high schools are more senior i.e. have more years of experience as head teachers compared to heads in other types of schools.
- The majority of the head teachers in primary standalone schools have less than 5 years of experience working as head teachers.
- There is no designated post for head teachers in primary standalone schools in Punjab unlike in middle and high schools.
- A large number of head teachers in government schools receive little training (on human resource or financial management) at the time of appointment and before

assuming their responsibilities. This is particularly true for those in primary standalone schools. In contrast, all head teachers in the NGO system regardless of the level of school they are heading or experience receive training.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Head Teachers

This section describes and details the role of head teachers in both the government and selected NGO school system as derived from a) a review of policy documents and head teacher guides that outline head teacher responsibilities and what is expected of them, and b) asking head teachers in both systems to describe their jobs and roles in interviews conducted with them.

4.2.1 Expectations of Head Teachers as Reflected by Their Job Descriptions

Government schools

The roles and responsibilities of head teachers can be gleaned from a number of documents including the compendium of rules and regulations for district education offices⁹ and the head teachers' guide¹⁰.

The compendium¹¹ emphasizes the head teacher's role in 'instructional supervision'- i.e. observing teaching and learning in the classroom and reviewing what has been observed with teachers as a way of providing on-the-job training. It states that head teachers are to enable teachers to self-evaluate and lays down guidelines for how the head teacher can do so (74-75). Heads are also required to teach at least six periods a week. Other responsibilities of head teachers are said to include drawing up the school timetable; maintaining discipline; being in charge of the 'intellectual, religious, social and moral welfare' of students; organizing games and co-curricular activities; maintaining registers¹²; spending the school budget according to rules issued and tracking and recording expenditures; promoting students to the next class at the end of the academic year; monitoring teacher and student attendance; imposing student fines for breaches of discipline or prolonged absence; and presenting names of students who are to sit for public examinations. Things that heads cannot do include promoting students during the school year, determining the opening and closing hours of schools/ school time, the distribution of time to be devoted to each subject as per the scheme of studies issued by the department or board, and which textbooks are to be used (80-81).

⁹ Canada Pakistan Basic Education Project (2009). Compendium of rules and regulations for district education offices. Pp. 1 – 576.

¹⁰ DSD (DSD) (n.d). Head teachers' guide for primary and elementary schools. Pp.1-78

¹¹ The compendium draws on the Punjab Education Code

¹² Registers include: the cash register, acquaintance roll, contingent register, stock register, fund register, admission and withdrawal register, property register, visitors' book, income and expenditure register, correspondence register, and examination register

The head teacher guide compiled by the DSD envisions the role of a head teacher as two-fold; as a manager and as an instructional leader.

In his/her capacity as a manager a head plans (resource and financial needs, timetables, and meetings with school councils, parents and staff), organizes (duties of staff members, co-curricular activities and arranges for the appointment of new staff), directs (conducts an induction program for new teachers and orientation for new students), supervises (monitors teacher and student attendance, teacher lesson plans, classroom teaching, marking of student homework, and stock of school assets) and evaluates (conducts teacher appraisals, analyzes examination results and prepares the school annual report).

Head teachers can exercise financial autonomy in conjunction with school councils. As a result, heads must understand the role of the council, how to constitute it, and how to incur financial expenditure with it. With the introduction of the NSB in Punjab in 2013/14, heads have a greater role in formulating and managing school development plans in collaboration with school councils. Heads can also use the NSB fund, with the consent of the council, to hire part-time coaches in case of shortage of teachers in their schools.

In his/ her capacity as an instructional leader a head engages in developing a school vision, goal-setting, and sharing of goals with teachers and students; he/she motivates and supports teachers and students and has an important role in coaching and mentoring members of staff in achieving personal and organizational goals and grooming them to lead in future.

See the table below for the division of a heads' responsibilities across eleven main areas in the head teacher guide and the frequency with which they are supposed to attend to these.

Table 12 Responsibilities of a head teacher in a government school in Punjab (according to the Head Teacher guide)

Quality Teaching	Lesson study to discuss what teachers will teach	Weekly
	Monitor lesson preparation	Weekly
	In school training session	Every Summer Vacation
Academic Calendar	Establish a calendar of activities	Once at the beginning of each term
School Timetable	Check class and teacher-wise timetable	In the beginning of the Academic Year
	Ensure preparation of substitute timetable	Every day in the morning
	Check/ensure that each teacher reaches the class on time	Every day in every period
Classroom Management	Classroom observation	Three times a month
	Meeting with teachers	After classroom observation
	Teachers' group meeting	Weekly/Monthly
Teacher Appraisal	Conduct performance appraisal meeting with teachers	After every observed lesson
	Conduct a re-meet with teachers to follow up any improvement	Weekly/Monthly
	Use teacher appraisal form	Once every three months

School Record	Update the record (receipts and expenditures)	Every month
Delegation and Accountability	Assign tasks to teachers	Do this at the beginning of the year and follow up in weekly meetings
	Follow up regularly on delegated work	
	Evaluate the performance and achievement of tasks	
Stakeholders	Consultation with teachers	Weekly
	Consultation with students	Every 6 months
	Consultation with school council	Quarterly at least
	Consultation with parents	Twice a year
Maintenance and Disaster Management	Survey of School: checklist of school safety	Every 6 months
	Check safety issues	Every two months
	Repair of damage	Every six months
	Disaster management	Quarterly
Health and Hygiene	Provide checklist to teachers to check health conditions of students	Monthly
	Develop a policy for solving problems regarding health and hygiene	As per requirement
Finance	Here the head is to understand the role of the School Council in financial procedures and spend according to rules	As and when required
	Keep records of financial management (such as receipts, cashbook, stock register, bank account statement and so on) and administrative activities (such as notification of the school council, register of meeting proceedings and so on)	

NGO schools

Roles and responsibilities and expectations of school heads in NGO schools are divided into: 1) academic related responsibilities 2) administration related responsibilities and 3) responsibility of maintaining relations and contact with the community in which the school is based.

Academic related responsibilities include: observing teaching and conducting classroom observations; reviewing lesson plans and providing constructive advice; reviewing students' copies; delivering demonstration ('demo') lessons; conducting peer teaching; and assessing teacher needs/ what support they need and asking the area level support persons accordingly.

Administrative responsibilities include: managing enrollment, making school improvement plans, communicating with teachers, maintaining discipline, ensuring student and teacher attendance, and a variety of reporting activities.

Heads are to communicate with teachers frequently to inform them about new or changed policies from the head office. Heads are also to hold bi-monthly meetings with staff (on a regular basis and as needed) to discuss any issues. Heads divide roles and responsibilities related to assessments and tests, planning of school events and other important days of the calendar amongst teachers.

4.2.2 Head Teachers' Description and Perception of Their Roles

It is clear from the interviews conducted with head teachers that they consider their roles and responsibilities to be fairly extensive and comprising of both administrative and academic duties. School heads in both systems described themselves as being responsible for (and consequently being held accountable for) all aspects of their schools. Many likened their role to that of a head of a family who has to take care of everyone and everything. As a key informant interviewed put it:

"A principal is solely responsible for the functioning of her school, where her core responsibility is academics, but... functioning means total functioning, therefore, administration is also included... as well as accounts and other routine matters. So a principal is responsible for all aspects of her school"

A government school head commented on the immense responsibility placed on a head teacher as follows:

"(It) is a huge problem for the head teacher who is held responsible (for everything), if a teacher is absent- the head teacher (is responsible); if the result is bad- the head teacher (is responsible); if the account of something is missing- the head teacher (is responsible)"

Most school heads understood the role of the head as that of both administrator and leader and believed that it would be impossible to separate the two; only one government school head expressed uneasiness about her ability to be both and felt that she could not focus on academic matters as much as she would have liked to:

"Personally, I think that the administrator in a school should be different and the head teacher different. Currently, the head teacher is undertaking both responsibilities. This is interfering with the delivery of quality education."

A key informant from the public sector remarked that, in practice, the head in government schools is perceived by higher-level officials as an administrator and planner as opposed to a leader:

"There is difference between what the actual role of a head teacher should be and the role of head teachers in our education system- here the head has an administrative role to run the institution, to establish relations with the community, to coordinate with staff, and evaluate them.... the head teacher's role is above all one of planning... the head teacher is like the government of a school at a micro-level; he is the sole implementer of reforms communicated from the top."

This emphasis or bias towards administrative duties is also reflected in the indicators that are used to gauge head teacher performance that include student enrolment, retention and dropout numbers.

Responsibilities, as highlighted in interviews, include keeping the school clean, renovating and expanding infrastructure, allocating classes to teachers, mentoring and monitoring teachers, and evaluating student performance, ensuring attendance, overseeing lesson development and planning and financial management and expenditure. There is almost no variation in the role of heads between government and NGO schools. However, the extent to which roles are prioritized may differ across both systems. Moreover, it seems that in the government system, head teachers' responsibilities are modified and added to on an on-going basis. For example, a government official interviewed noted:

'Head teachers have now (also) been made responsible for the security of schools even though they do not have adequate funds to handle this. Yet they are issued warnings if they do not meet these (requirements). I visited a school where the head teacher was roaming around with a gun himself for the security of the school... there is resistance amongst teachers to becoming heads because of the varied responsibilities and the number of indicators that they are made to report on especially in the last three years'.

A few of the dominant responsibilities of heads, as highlighted by the interview data, are indicated below:

School cleanliness related

A great deal of emphasis has been placed on cleanliness, beautification and improvement of school infrastructure as 11 of the 21 heads interviewed include this as one of their core responsibilities. For instance, Huma, the head of an NGO secondary school, when asked about her role as head teacher, said:

"My school was new. There was nothing here but I did plantation. The first target I took was plantation. I wanted to improve my school so I put plants and within four years ماشاءالله there are big and small trees, and plants with flowers"

Enrollment related

Student enrollment is a key responsibility of school heads in both systems. For government school heads, enrollment is also linked with the NSB (discussed later in the report). Heads in both systems are assisted by teachers and personally visit homes of potential students to encourage parents to enroll them.

Finance related

School heads in both government and NGO schools are responsible for financial planning, management and expenditure (in conjunction with other actors as discussed later in the report).

Staff development related

School heads in both systems described staff development and capacity building of teachers as one of their roles. This is especially so in the case of NGO school heads. In government schools staff development is mostly catered to by the DSD. NGO school heads state in their interviews that they are very regular with conducting classroom observations and delivering 'demonstration' lessons to teachers. One head of an NGO primary school remarks:

"I observe teachers from the back of the classroom. If I feel that their body language is informal, or there is no anticipation among students for what she is teaching or her lesson delivery is weak, I don't disturb her at that time. Later on, I call her in my office and explain it to her, so she can improve."

4.2.3 Key Points from this Section

1. Job descriptions in both the government and NGO system are similar insofar as they emphasize the role of the school head as both an administrator and an instructional leader. Their responsibilities are varied and numerous.
2. Job descriptions of head teachers in government schools are modified and added to frequently.
3. Head teachers interviewed in the study also highlight their role in overseeing the overall functioning of the school. They ensure school cleanliness, lead student enrollment drives, plan school expenditures and engage in capacity building of teachers, amongst other things.

4.3 Dimensions of Practice of Head Teachers

Most head teachers surveyed, in all types of schools, are teaching regularly in their respective schools. Their responsibilities as managers and instructional leaders are, therefore, in addition to their teaching responsibilities. The number of head teachers teaching regular classes is significantly high across both government and NGO schools. This is especially so in the case of government primary standalone and primary attached to middle schools. This has implications for workload of head teachers and their ability to discharge headship duties effectively.

Table 13 Head teachers teaching regular classes in schools

	GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS			NGO	Total
	Primary	Primary/Middle	Primary/High	NGO Schools	
Yes	35	16	24	19	94
No	1	2	11	11	25
Total	36	18	35	30	119

Apart from teaching, heads were asked to report on the frequency with which they conduct a variety of activities pertaining to management and instructional leadership. The table below shows that as managers and administrators, heads are frequently engaged in managing teachers and students; maintaining school records and reporting to higher authorities; interacting with parents; planning use of school funds; and planning co-curricular activities. As instructional leaders, heads are regularly involved in goal setting; and teacher and student development.

Table 14 Frequency with which head teachers engaged in activities listed in the last 12 months

Activity	Type	At least once a month	At least once a year	Never	Total
Management/ Administration					
Managing teachers					
I spent time explaining teacher's responsibilities/ changes in policy (staff meetings)	Govt	80	6	3	89
	NGO	28	1	1	30
I take teachers' opinions into consideration when deciding issues that impact them	Govt	88	0	1	89
	NGO	30	0	0	30
Managing students					
I collaborated with teachers to solve classroom discipline problems	Govt	88	1	0	89
	NGO	27	2	1	30
I organized for school funds to be used to help children from poor households	Govt	26	26	37	89
	NGO	9	10	11	30
Maintaining school records & reporting to higher authorities					
I spent time maintaining data on enrolments	Govt	87	2	0	89
	NGO	21	9	0	30
I spent time preparing results from student assessment for reporting to authorities	Govt	84	4	1	89
	NGO	13	17	0	30
I spent time meeting with monitors to discuss their findings	Govt	84	2	3	89
	NGO	27	2	1	30
Interacting with parents					
I provided parents or guardians with information on school and student performance	Govt	87	1	1	89
	NGO	23	7	0	30
I spent time meeting with parents of weak students to discuss progress	Govt	87	1	1	89
	NGO	28	2	0	30
I meet parents to understand their needs and requirements from the school	Govt	86	2	1	89
	NGO	28	2	0	30

Activity	Type	At least once a month	At least once a year	Never	Total
Spending school funds					
I planned use of school funds (for classroom building, repair)	Govt	15	60	14	89
	NGO	6	4	20	30
Planning co-curricular activities					
I organized extra-curricular activities	Govt	43	41	5	89
	NGO	18	11	1	30
Instructional leadership					
Goal setting, motivating and encouraging					
I have developed school goals that are understood by teachers	Govt	69	18	2	89
	NGO	23	7	0	30
I have used student assessments to develop quality targets	Govt	80	9	0	89
	NGO	19	11	0	30
I have provided assistance to teachers in setting and meeting teaching goals	Govt	83	4	2	89
	NGO	27	3	0	30
I have set high expectations for teachers' work with students	Govt	86	0	3	89
	NGO	28	1	1	30
I have set high expectations for students' work and results	Govt	83	3	3	89
	NGO	29	0	1	30
I have encouraged raising test scores	Govt	86	3	0	89
	NGO	29	1	0	30
I tried that teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching skills	Govt	85	2	2	89
	NGO	28	1	1	30
I ensured that teachers feel responsible for their students' learning outcomes	Govt	86	0	3	89
	NGO	30	0	0	30
I am available for teachers/students during office hours	Govt	89	0	0	89
	NGO	30	0	0	30
Teacher development					
I observed instruction in the classroom	Govt	88	0	1	89
	NGO	28	2	0	30
I have provided teachers individual support and feedback for their teaching	Govt	80	4	5	89
	NGO	25	2	3	30

Activity	Type	At least once a month	At least once a year	Never	Total
I have collaborated with teachers to develop new teaching practices	Govt	83	4	2	89
	NGO	26	3	1	30
I created/identified professional growth opportunities for teachers	Govt	32	28	29	89
	NGO	17	12	1	30
I have created opportunities for/encouraged teachers to talk about teaching and learning in the school	Govt	59	21	9	89
	NGO	28	1	1	30
I have created opportunities for/encouraged teachers to use their time to practice new skills and concepts	Govt	58	22	9	89
	NGO	27	2	1	30
I have discussed academic performance results with teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in their teaching	Govt	79	7	3	89
	NGO	22	7	1	30
I have trained teachers in this school	Govt	46	18	25	89
	NGO	24	5	1	30
Student development					
I started a remedial teaching strategy for children who were struggling with learning	Govt	79	9	1	89
	NGO	22	8	0	30
I have used student tests to develop remedial courses in school	Govt	69	12	8	89
	NGO	20	9	1	30
Curriculum & textbooks					
I changed the pace of the syllabus to keep pace with student learning	Govt	82	6	1	89
	NGO	28	0	2	30
I introduced new books in addition to the regular syllabus	Govt	9	24	56	89
	NGO	8	7	15	30

Heads across the government and NGO school system engage in the activities listed above with the same regularity in most cases. For example, heads in both types of schools interact with parents of students and other members of the community extremely regularly. The nature of this

interaction is more nuanced than reflected in the table above. More detail, as provided from interview data, is included in box 3.

Box 3 Dimensions of practice: Interactions with parents

Heads deem parents important stakeholders of the education system. Heads are expected to interact with parents to improve the functioning of the school. Interview data reveals that school heads actively involve parents and the community in assisting them in repairing school infrastructure and facilities and improving hygiene and health in schools. Some provide examples of parents and community members banding together/ donating funds to provide the school with a playground, a *pakka* road leading to the school, filling open sewers outside the school with earth, ensuring clean water supply in the school and so on. One NGO school head described how she had established relations with a doctor in the community who came to the school to conduct free medical checkups of students. In government schools, parents and the community are represented on the school council and, therefore, also play a role in approving or making decisions pertaining to the school.

Heads recognized the importance of building trust in their interactions with parents. An NGO school head, for example, described how the community distrusted the NGO school because of its higher fees and high turnover of heads and how she tackled this by exceeding their expectations- providing an outstanding result, visiting homes of community members and encouraging students to bring their parents to school for frequent parent-teacher meetings.

Heads also, however, recognized the challenges they experienced in communicating with and convincing parents to enroll and keep children in school and to monitor their work (seven of the 21 heads interviewed reported difficulties). One government head teacher remarked:

“Mothers of most children either work in homes or factories. They do not know if the child is at school. He can roam in the streets all day and go home and say that I was at school. They do not have the time or awareness to invest in their children’s education.”

An NGO school head noted that it was difficult to keep boys in school as their fathers wanted them to work and earn money instead of stay in school/ work after school instead of focus on their schoolwork. Another discussed the challenges of convincing parents to enroll daughters in school.

Government school heads maintain and report data to higher authorities more frequently compared with NGO school heads. For example, 87 of 89 government school heads maintain data on student enrolment every month compared with two-thirds of the NGO school heads that do so with the same frequency. 84 of the 89 government school heads prepare and report student assessment results to higher education authorities every month compared with less than half of NGO school heads that do so every month (the majority of NGO school heads i.e. 17 of the 30 only report results to higher education authorities once a year). It appears, therefore, that reporting requirements are more onerous in the case of government school heads. According to interviews conducted with head teachers, however, even NGO heads are required to submit monthly reports on attendance, enrollment and teacher observations to area level support

persons. Interview data also suggest that whereas NGO school heads only report to area level support persons, government school heads report to a larger and more varied group of higher-level officials comprising of district education officials and the DSD and its district and cluster level staff.

Government and NGO school heads did not, however, express any reservations regarding the monitoring and accountability frameworks in place and did not view these requirements as burdensome. Seven of the 12 government school heads interviewed actually supported the monitoring and accountability measures in place. One government head teacher summarized the benefits of these checks as follows:

“This is a very good system of monitoring and monthly checking. The teachers who did not want to work are now applying for early retirement”.

With reference to teacher development, NGO school heads engage in the following more frequently compared with government head teachers: creating or identifying professional growth opportunities for teachers; creating opportunities for and encouraging teachers to use their time to practice new skills; and creating opportunities for and encouraging teachers to talk about their teaching and learning in schools. For instance, only a third of government school heads identify or create professional growth opportunities for teachers on a monthly basis whereas more than half of NGO heads do so. Only two-thirds of government school heads facilitate and encourage teachers to talk about their teaching and learning in school and practice new skills on a monthly basis whereas almost all NGO heads do so. It appears, therefore, that NGO school heads prioritize and emphasize instructional leadership practices including staff development more compared with government school heads. This could also be explained in part by the fact that the DSD and its district teacher trainers have been delegated the primary responsibility of staff development of teachers in the province in public schools and so head teachers are not too focused on this role.

4.3.1 Key Points from this Section

1. The majority of head teachers in our sample, across both government and NGO schools, teach in addition to being heads in their schools. This is especially so in the case of government primary standalone and middle schools.
2. Heads in both sets of schools carry out administrative and instructional duties with the same frequency in almost all cases with the exception of maintaining and reporting data to higher education authorities and teacher development.
3. Government school heads maintain and report data to higher authorities more frequently compared with NGO school heads according to survey findings. Government school heads also report to a larger number/ set of higher authorities compared with NGO school heads.

4. NGO school heads create opportunities for the professional growth of teachers, facilitate teachers talking about their teaching and learning and provide opportunities for teachers to practice new skills more frequently i.e. at least once a month compared with government school heads.

4.4 Autonomy of Head Teachers in Matters of Management and Instruction

School heads were asked to identify who made a range of decisions relating to management and instruction in their schools as per policy/ law and in practice/ effectively. The purpose of structuring the question like this was to see where they were gaps in the heads' exercise of autonomy. Their responses were grouped and sorted into three main categories- i.e. school-level actors, district-level actors and provincial-level actors. Their responses indicate decision-making areas in which school heads have more autonomy in law and in practice and discrepancies, if any, between the two. Responses also simultaneously indicate, therefore, areas in which school heads lack autonomy.

School-level actors include head teachers and teachers in both government and NGO schools. In government schools, school-level actors also include school councils. At the 'district' level, actors within the district education office such as the EDO, DEO, Deputy DEO and AEO are included in the case of government schools. For NGO schools, the 'area' is treated as the equivalent of the 'district'. It includes, therefore, area-level academic and administrative support persons in the NGO system. Lastly, province-level actors include the Secretary Education, Education Department, the DSD and other provincial entities. For NGO schools, the 'province' equivalent is the NGO's head office, as well as its regional academic and administrative support staff.

Tables 15 and 16 below depict levels at which decisions pertaining to instruction and management in the school are taken in the government and NGO system respectively.

Table 15 Decision-making autonomy of government school heads (frequency)

At what level are these decisions taken?	Policy/law			Effectively			Difference (effectively-policy)		
	school	district	province	school	district	province	school	district	province
Appointing teachers	-	74	15	-	73	16	-	-1	1
Hiring contract/part time teachers	14	63	9	22	55	8	8	-8	-1
Hiring the non-teaching staff	26	51	5	30	50	5	4	-1	0
Appointing and deploying principals	-	54	35	-	54	35	-	0	0
Suspending teachers	8	73	4	9	71	4	1	-2	0
Suspending students	65	1	1	64	2	1	-1	1	0
Nominating teachers for promotions/bonuses	18	54	5	20	55	4	2	1	-1
Establishing student disciplinary policies & procedures	76	6	5	77	4	5	1	-2	0
Determining course content – for core curriculum	13	12	62	16	13	58	3	1	-4
Determining course content – for non-core curriculum	33	4	28	36	5	24	3	1	-4
How much curriculum will be taught each year	23	18	43	24	17	43	1	-1	0
Choosing the text books	-	4	84	3	5	80	-	1	-4
Choosing teaching & learning materials	68	6	14	70	5	12	2	-1	-2
Deciding which questions will be included	54	7	21	57	7	18	3	0	-3
How frequently students will be test in a year	53	18	16	58	13	15	5	-5	-1
Deciding the school calendar	10	32	47	12	32	45	2	0	-2
Deciding on the structure of the school day	70	14	5	74	10	5	4	-4	0
What language to use for teaching	47	12	25	53	11	22	6	-1	-3
Making strategies for helping slow learners	82	1	1	81	1	1	-1	0	0
How to allocate students to sections	85	0	0	85	0	0	0	0	0
Deciding whether/which students will repeat classes	80	2	0	80	2	0	0	0	0
Developing the annual SIP plan	82	3	1	85	1	0	3	-2	-1
Developing teacher training programs	6	21	60	10	21	57	4	0	-3
Managing teacher holidays	41	46	0	43	45	0	2	-1	0
Planning/organizing the extra-curricular activities	82	4	2	84	4	0	2	0	-2

Table 16 Decision-making autonomy of NGO school heads (frequency)

	Policy/law			Effectively			Difference (effectively-policy)		
	school	area	head office	school	area	head office	school	area	head office
At what level are these decisions taken?									
Appointing teachers	2	15	13	9	11	9	7	-4	-4
Hiring contract/part time teachers	13	10	2	16	7	2	3	-3	-
Hiring the non-teaching staff	19	8	3	22	7	1	3	-1	-2
Appointing and deploying principals	-	5	24	-	5	24	-	-	-
Suspending teachers	10	6	9	13	5	7	3	-1	-2
Suspending students	20	4	1	23	2	1	3	-2	-
Nominating teachers for promotions/bonuses	23	1	3	24	-	3	1	-1	-
Establishing student disciplinary policies & procedures	23	-	5	24	-	5	1	-	-
Determining course content – for core curriculum	1	4	21	4	5	19	3	1	-2
Determining course content – for non-core curriculum	6	5	17	7	4	17	1	-1	-
How much curriculum will be taught each year	2	4	20	3	4	19	1	-	-1
Choosing the text books	1	3	21	2	3	20	1	-	-1
Choosing teaching & learning materials	11	4	14	13	4	11	2	-	-3
Deciding which questions will be included	8	4	17	11	4	12	3	-	-5
How frequently students will be tested in a year	6	3	17	8	3	13	2	-	-4
Deciding the school calendar	2	4	23	3	3	21	1	-1	-2
Deciding on the structure of the school day	14	3	10	15	3	9	1	-	-1
What language to use for teaching	15	2	11	16	1	10	1	-1	-1
Making strategies for helping slow learners	29	-	-	28	-	-	-1	-	-
How to allocate students to sections	22	3	3	21	3	3	-1	-	-
Deciding whether/which students will repeat classes	26	2	1	26	1	1	-	-1	-
Developing the annual SIP plan	27	-	1	26	-	1	-1	-	-
Developing teacher training programs	3	11	10	5	10	9	2	-1	-1
Managing teacher holidays	20	4	4	20	4	3	-	-	-1
Planning/organizing the extra-curricular activities	17	2	7	19	2	4	2	-	-3

In general, there are small differences between policy and practice across both government and NGO schools (these are summarized in box 3), that is to say if certain decisions are to be taken at the provincial level as per policy, they are in fact taken at the provincial level in practice as well (and so on). This suggests that either respondents did not understand the distinction between policy and effectively, or that decision-making in practice is by law.

Box 4 Differences in autonomy of school heads as per policy and in practice

In practice, slightly more schools, overall, have autonomy over ‘hiring non-teaching staff’.

Decision-making on ‘determining course content for the core curriculum’ at the school level increases from policy/law to effectively. This is, however, counter-intuitive, as course content for the core curriculum is not determined at the school level in either the government or the NGO system. A closer look at respondents shows that 5 of the 6 school heads who reported making these decisions at the school level have only 1 year of experience – suggesting lack of understanding of the system on their part.

In practice, NGO school-level autonomy when ‘appointing teachers’ increases by 23.3% from policy/law.

For government school heads, 8 more heads report that ‘hiring of contract/part time teachers’ takes place at the school level in practice; 5 more heads report that ‘how frequently students will be tested in a year’ is decided at the school level; and 6 more heads report that choice of ‘language to use for teaching’ takes place at the school level.

4.4.1 Autonomy of Heads in Government Schools

It appears that government school heads have no autonomy in crucial aspects of teacher management and development, in that; they cannot appoint teachers or suspend teachers, nominate teachers for bonuses or promotions, nor can they develop teacher-training programs for their teaching staff. This has implications for their ability to raise quality of teaching for improved student learning in their schools.

On the point of inability to hire and fire teachers, a government school head interviewed noted:

“We can only report (a teacher who is not performing), but the teacher just apologizes and is sent back to the school. They are then bolder than they used to be when they come back”

Five of the 12 government school heads interviewed expressed their desire for more authority in this regarding conceiving of the power to fire as the only ‘weapon’ that could keep teachers in line.

At present, the process for reporting teachers who are not performing well is tedious and lengthy and often with no effect. As described by a key informant from the public education system interviewed:

“The head first issues teachers, who are either absent often or are not performing according to guidelines, a few warnings internally before reporting to a higher authority. That report has go through a number of stages/ authorities before action, if any, is taken. For example, a high school head reports a teacher to the DEO that is then sent to the EDO, the DCO, the Secretary DPI i.e. through four more channels. This is a frustrating process for heads who give up after a while. It is often the case that teachers are issued 12 warnings

before anything is even done about it. There are even more channels that primary and middle school heads have to go through as the reporting chain here is longer and includes the AEO/ Deputy DEO/ DEO/ EDO/ DCO/ and Secretary DPI”

At the same time, almost all of the government school heads interviewed noted that they have cordial relations with teachers in their schools who are cooperative on the whole. Most conflicts with teachers are small and easily resolved by heads. Five of the 12 heads interviewed describe how they take teachers opinions into account and involve them in decision-making to promote a positive school environment. One head teacher notes:

“Democratic leadership is beneficial because without that there will be grouping against the head teacher”

In the absence of powers to remove teachers, however, heads also have to strike a balance between being friendly and firm towards teachers. As summed up by a government head teacher interviewed:

“It is important for the head to be strict with the teachers and he should not be ‘free’ with them. If the relationship is too friendly then the institution cannot work”

Government school heads have limited autonomy to hire part-time teachers. However, it seems that with the introduction of the NSB (discussed in more detail in Section 4.5), autonomy of head teachers in hiring part-time teachers, using these funds, has increased. Survey findings suggest that six primary standalone school heads; one primary attached to middle school head and two primary attached to high school heads used the NSB to hire contract teachers. Interview data reveals that five of the 12 government school heads interviewed did the same. As a government head teacher interviewed put it:

“The NSB is a very good initiative of the government. Three years ago, one of my teachers was transferred and we could not let the class be without a teacher. So I hired a teacher, and my teachers and I pooled five hundred rupees each from our salaries to pay him for three to four months”

Areas in which government school heads seems to have some, albeit limited, autonomy is hiring non-teaching staff and sanctioning teacher holidays. Some also report being able to determine course content for non-core curriculum (for example, one head interview described introducing short sessions in which children learn about religious rites and prayers so as to give the curriculum a ‘religious touch’), choose the language of instruction and decide what will be included on student tests and the frequency of testing.

Government school heads appear to have more autonomy when it comes to disciplining and suspending students, choosing teaching and learning materials in schools, devising learning strategies for struggling students, deciding the structure of the school day and planning co-curricular activities. Most heads also report developing the school improvement plan.

Heads interviewed were asked to reflect on initiatives they have taken of their own accord in their schools. One government head teacher noted limited space to do so:

“This is a government school. They have given you a system and if you work according to that, things go great. Otherwise they will not let you survive”

Others noted that they can take initiative as long as it does not disrupt or contradict guidelines issued by higher education authorities. Anything new that heads introduce in schools does, however, have to be run by district education officials. An example of such an ‘initiative’ was the setting up of a small library in the school by a head with support of interested college students.

Variations in autonomy of school heads across primary standalone, primary attached to middle and primary attached to high schools is summarized in box 5.

Box 5 Differences in autonomy of school heads across government schools

Decisions on hiring of non-teaching staff are largely taken at the school level for primary attached to high schools, and at the district level for primary standalone and primary attached to middle schools.

Interview data suggests that heads in primary attached to high schools have more autonomy in that they can ‘surrender’ teachers or withhold salary for poor performance.

Of the nine high school heads that reported suspending teachers in practice, eight were heads in primary attached to high schools.

Nominating teachers for promotion/bonuses takes place at the district level for primary standalone schools, and both at the school and district level for primary attached to middle and primary attached to high schools.

Course content for the non-core curriculum is determined at the school level for primary standalone schools, and at the provincial level for primary attached to middle and primary attached to high school.

How much curriculum will be taught each year is decided at the provincial level, except for primary attached to high schools where this decision is taken at both the school and provincial level.

4.4.2 Autonomy of Heads in NGO schools

NGO school heads appear to have no autonomy when it comes to developing teacher-training programs. They do not play a role in determining core curriculum, how much curriculum to teach in a year, which textbooks to use and frequency of student testing.

They appear to have autonomy in hiring teachers and suspending teachers. Apart from teacher recruitment undertaken at the beginning of the academic year, which is done centrally, it is NGO school heads who recruit during the year as the need arises. Interview data as well revealed that NGO school heads are able to hire teachers mid-year. These teachers are observed and their employment is finalized with approval of the area level academic support person. Some heads

also determine non-core curriculum content, teaching and learning materials to use in classrooms and language of instruction in schools. They have some autonomy to choose what to include on student tests and how to structure the school day.

NGO school heads have more autonomy in recommending teachers for promotions/ bonuses, managing teacher holidays and hiring non-teaching staff. As with government school heads, they have more autonomy in all areas pertaining to student management and support. They also develop their school improvement plans.

4.4.3 Comparison of Autonomy of Heads in Government and NGO Schools

As can be seen in the table below, there are differences in school head autonomy in the government and NGO systems most crucially in the area of teacher and staff management. While heads in neither system can appoint teachers, NGO heads have more autonomy relative to government school heads in hiring contract or part-time teachers, hiring non-teaching staff, suspending teachers, nominating teachers for bonuses, and managing teacher holidays. This should have implications for the ability of school heads in NGO schools to influence teacher behavior and attitudes compared with government school heads. Heads in the NGO system appear to have the power to incentivize teachers in addition to holding them accountable.

Autonomy across government and NGO school heads does not differ in the area of teacher development (heads in both have no autonomy when it comes to developing formal teacher-training programs) or in student management and support (heads in both types of schools have a lot of autonomy in all aspects relating to this).

There are minor differentials in the area of curriculum and textbooks (in that government heads report having relatively more autonomy in choosing teaching and learning materials) and planning/ organizing (more government heads report determining the frequency of student testing, the structure of the school day and organizing co-curricular activities).

Table 17 Comparison of autonomy of government and NGO school heads in management and instruction

Area ¹³	No or limited autonomy	Some autonomy	More autonomy
TEACHER & STAFF MANAGMENT			
Appointing teachers			
Govt			
NGO			
Hiring contract/part time teachers			
Govt			
NGO			

¹³ Where a third (or less) of heads in government or NGO schools report taking a decision at the school level it is classified as 'no autonomy'; up to two-thirds as 'some autonomy' and more than two-thirds as 'more autonomy'

Area ¹³	No or limited autonomy	Some autonomy	More autonomy
Hiring the non-teaching staff			
Govt			
NGO			
Suspending teachers			
Govt			
NGO			
Nominating teachers for promotions/bonuses			
Govt			
NGO			
Managing teacher holidays			
Govt			
NGO			
TEACHER DEVELOPMENT			
Developing teacher training programs			
Govt			
NGO			
STUDENT MANAGEMENT & SUPPORT			
Suspending students			
Govt			
NGO			
Establishing student disciplinary policies & procedures			
Govt			
NGO			
Making strategies for helping slow learners			
Govt			
NGO			
How to allocate students to sections			
Govt			
NGO			
Deciding whether/which students will repeat classes			
Govt			
NGO			
CURRICULUM & TEXTBOOKS			
Determining course content – for core curriculum			
Govt			
NGO			
Determining course content – for non-core curriculum			
Govt			
NGO			
How much curriculum will be taught each year			
Govt			
NGO			
Choosing the text books			
Govt			

Area ¹³	No or limited autonomy	Some autonomy	More autonomy
NGO	✓		
Choosing teaching & learning materials			
Govt			✓
NGO		✓	
What language to use for teaching			
Govt		✓	
NGO		✓	
PLANNING & ORGANIZATION			
Developing the SIP plan			
Govt			✓
NGO			✓
Planning/organizing the extra-curricular activities			
Govt			✓
NGO		✓	
Deciding which questions will be included			
Govt		✓	
NGO		✓	
How frequently students will be tested in a year			
Govt		✓	
NGO	✓		
Deciding the school calendar			
Govt	✓		
NGO	✓		
Deciding on the structure of the school day			
Govt			✓
NGO		✓	

4.4.4 A Closer Look at Head Teacher Autonomy in the Development of the School Improvement Plan

Heads surveyed were asked what was included in the school improvement plan and whether heads decided what to include or whether these instructions were received from higher education authorities. The table below shows that enrollment and learning targets are not set by heads in either government or NGO schools looked at as part of this study; instead they are received from higher education authorities. Government and NGO school heads do, however, set strategies for achieving these targets. Heads in both types of schools also decide repair and decoration needs in the school to include in the improvement plan. Assessments related decisions are also mostly outside of the ambit of heads (except in primary attached to high schools and in NGO schools where heads appear to be making decisions on student learning assessments as opposed to receiving instructions on assessments). Heads in both government and NGO schools do not decide teacher training needs to include in the plan.

Table 18 Role of head teachers in making school improvement plan

Annual School Improvement Plan (frequency)								
	Government School						NGO schools	
	Primary standalone		Primary with middle		Primary with high		received	set by principals
	received	set by heads	received	set by heads	received	set by heads		
Who makes?								
Enrolment targets for the next year	36	-	17	-	34	-	24	1
A strategy for achieving these targets	8	28	9	8	8	26	7	18
Learning targets for the coming year	33	3	12	5	24	8	21	9
A strategy for achieving these targets	10	26	7	10	6	27	7	23
Number of new teachers needed	17	12	7	4	20	10	6	8
Teacher training schedule/needs	21	5	10	3	24	6	16	7
Student learning assessments	25	10	10	7	16	18	14	14
Construction of new classrooms	20	6	9	2	19	7	6	-
Repairs/decoration around the school	8	27	5	11	11	22	4	8

**two government schools (one primary attached to high school and one primary attached to middle) said that they do not have a school improvement plan and are not included in above statistics.*

***totals will not equal the sample size because head teachers have an option to say these objectives are not a part of the school improvement plan.*

4.4.5 Key Points from this Section

1. In general, there are small differences between the autonomy of head teachers in policy and practice across both government and NGO schools.
2. School heads in both government and NGO schools lack autonomy in critical aspects of instruction- they cannot develop formal teacher-training programs, decide the core curriculum, or choose textbooks to use in the classroom. Heads in both schools do, however, have autonomy in matters relating to student management and support; they can set disciplinary rules, suspend students, and devise strategies to work with struggling students.
3. Autonomy of school heads in government and NGO schools differs when it comes to teacher and staff management in particular. NGO school heads have relatively more autonomy to hire teachers and non-teaching staff, suspend teachers, recommend teachers for bonuses, and manage teacher holidays. Effective decision-making, even where decisions are taken with support from regional and area support persons, is retained at the school level in NGO schools in these areas. In the government system, these decisions are not in the hands of the head teachers, rather retained more centrally either at the district or provincial levels.

4. Head teachers in the NGO system are able to wield both, carrots and sticks. Having a balance of both makes a difference to the nature of their interactions with teachers and the ability to bring about effective change. In the government system, head teachers' hands are tied.

4.5 Financial Autonomy of Head Teachers

All heads have access to the school's bank account(s). However, the majority of heads in both government and NGO schools are only able to access and operate the account(s) in conjunction with school council members in the case of government schools and the 'senior teacher' in the case of NGO schools. School accounts are externally audited in both types of schools with heads in NGO schools receiving an 'audit score'. An Accounts Assistant assists NGO school heads in maintaining financial records.

Table 19 Access of head teachers to school bank account(s)

Does the head teacher have access to the bank account?				
	Government school			NGO schools
	Primary standalone	Primary attached to middle	Primary attached to high	
Yes, without anyone's approval	3	2	6	3
Yes, with SMC's approval	31	15	29	-
Another authority	2	1	-	21 ^a
Total	36	18	35	24
a. This is 'senior teachers' in the case of NGO school heads				

Government and NGO schools have access to different types of funds¹⁴. Government schools have access to two main types of funds: the NSB and the FTF. The Punjab Government introduced the NSB in 2013/14 starting with nine districts. The NSB has since been introduced in all districts of the province. It is calculated according to a formula and comprises of five components: a fixed entitlement (which increases according to school level i.e. from primary to middle to high); a basic student entitlement (dependent on enrollment); a student retention premium (greater weightage is given to students enrolled in terminal grades i.e. 5, 8, 10 and 12); furniture needs; and building operations¹⁵. It is received in quarterly installments during the year- Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit disburses the NSB to districts who in turn disburse it to schools. The FTF is collected from students (whose parents are asked to contribute 20 rupees a month towards this fund if possible). Heads can only spend money from these two funds with

¹⁴ The salary budget is not included in this analysis as salaries are directly transferred to staff

¹⁵ The NSB entitlement works out to an average of 1000 rupees per student (Cambridge Education, 2015:45)

approval of school council members (sometimes in combination with approval of district officials such as the Deputy DEO or AEO). As a government primary school head interviewed stated:

“Even if we have to spend ten rupees we have to call a meeting of the student council”

See box 6 for details on what heads spend the NSB and FTF funds on.

NGO schools receive funds in the form of student fees, fees from sales of books and the subsidy received from the head office. In addition they receive a small amount every month to use on maintenance and purchase of stationary. If heads in these schools need additional funds they send a request to the head office through their area support person. Heads in NGO schools can only spend up to 2000 rupees in a month without the approval of higher education authorities. For use of funds above this amount, heads require the approval of the area (for expenditures between 2000 and 5000 rupees) and regional administrative support persons (for expenditures between 5000 and 200,000 rupees). According to interviews conducted with heads in NGO schools, these approvals are easy to come by as they are submitted with justification.

Box 6 Use of NSB and FTF funds in government schools in this study

Head teachers in government schools are provided with an NSB manual that outlines guidelines pertaining to the purpose of the fund along with how to use and monitor it. Heads have flexibility to choose what they would like to spend NSB funds on (along with school council members) and can spend on anything that improves teaching and learning processes in the school (Cambridge Education, 2015). In practice, heads tend to spend the NSB on improving the physical environment of the school- whitewashing, improving facilities and the school building/ classrooms, buying furniture, and financing utilities (Cambridge Education, 2015:38).

According to interviews conducted with heads as part of this study, NSB is used to expand infrastructure, purchase machinery and equipment, to hire part-time teachers and non-teaching staff; and to pay utility bills while the FTF is used on students' welfare and other needs. Heads interviewed were using the FTF to pay for children's uniforms and shoes, purchasing stationary and cleaning supplies and making laboratories functional. The FTF is at times used to cover the shortfall with funds being returned to it once the NSB installment is received and adjusted for expenses.

The NSB was welcomed amongst government school heads interviewed. Prior to the introduction of the NSB the main three sources of funds for schools were the FTF, a 20,000 or 50,000 rupee grant to the primary or elementary school council and DDEO approved discretionary funds from the district budget for certain operational costs incurred by the school- in practice, schools were receiving virtually nothing from the districts (2015:17, 48). One primary standalone school head commented:

“NSB is a good thing. It is very beneficial for schools. look at schools (now), they are shining. We have used it for important things like making a washroom and... installing lights.”

According to Cambridge Education's evaluation of the pilot of the NSB, school spending per student had increased 11-fold on average compared with before (2015:48).

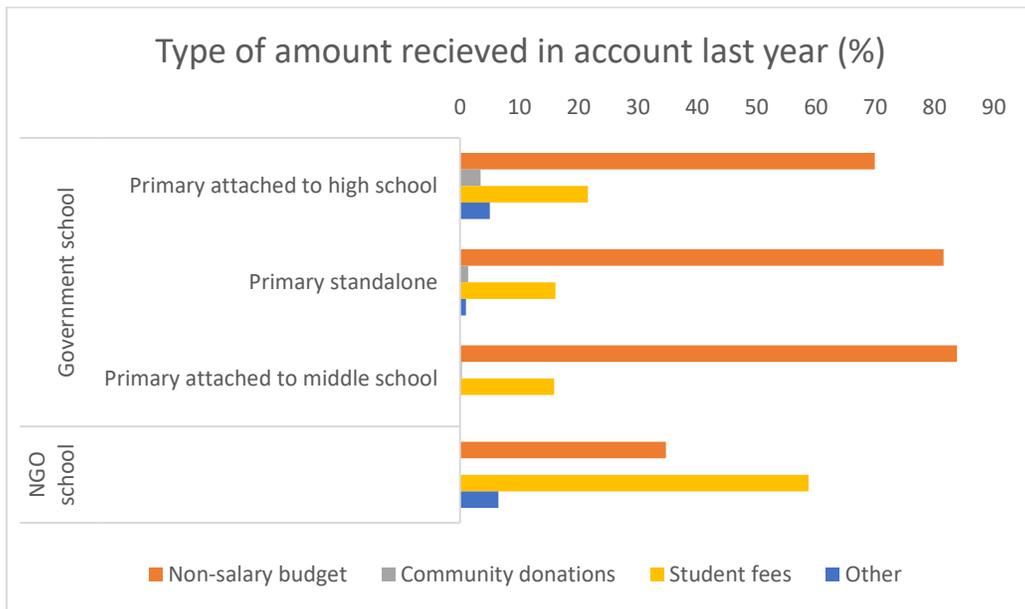
Another head of a primary attached to high school interviewed noted that the process of receiving the NSB was also easier as schools no longer had to go through a process of physical verification prior to receiving funds.

There were, however, some complaints regarding the small size of the NSB in primary standalone schools and the fact that it could not be spent on anything that the head wanted to spend it on. For example, one head noted he was not allowed to utilize NSB funds to establish a lab in his primary school by higher-level officials. Another constraint is the release of the NSB in installments, which limits the head's ability to plan and spend funds effectively. As described by a key informant interviewed:

“The whole NSB fund should be transferred at the start of the year. Often head teachers cannot plan use of funds properly and if anything is left over it has to be transferred back to the government.”

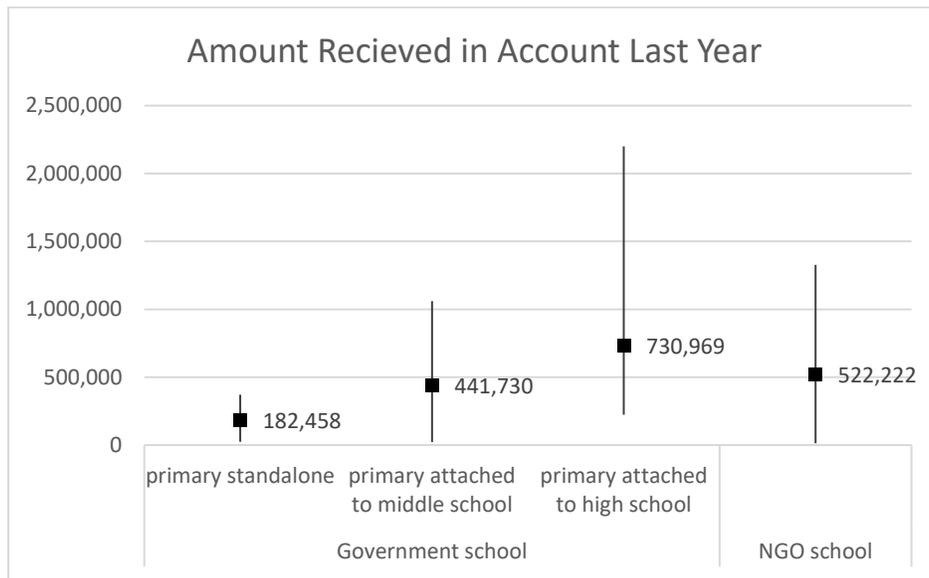
The figure below shows the composition of school funds received across each of the four types of schools looked at in this study. The NSB accounts for the bulk of funds available to a school in the case of government schools. For NGO schools, student fees account for the majority of funds.

Figure 6 Types of funds received by the school in the last year



The figure below shows the average amounts schools received in their bank accounts last year. Here, the black dot represents the mean while the line represents the range of values for the amount schools received in the last year. As expected, government primary schools attached to middle or high schools have larger budgets in comparison with primary standalone schools, as a result of the higher NSBs they receive (as per the formula used to calculate NSB entitlements of schools).

Figure 7 Average amount of funds received in last school year



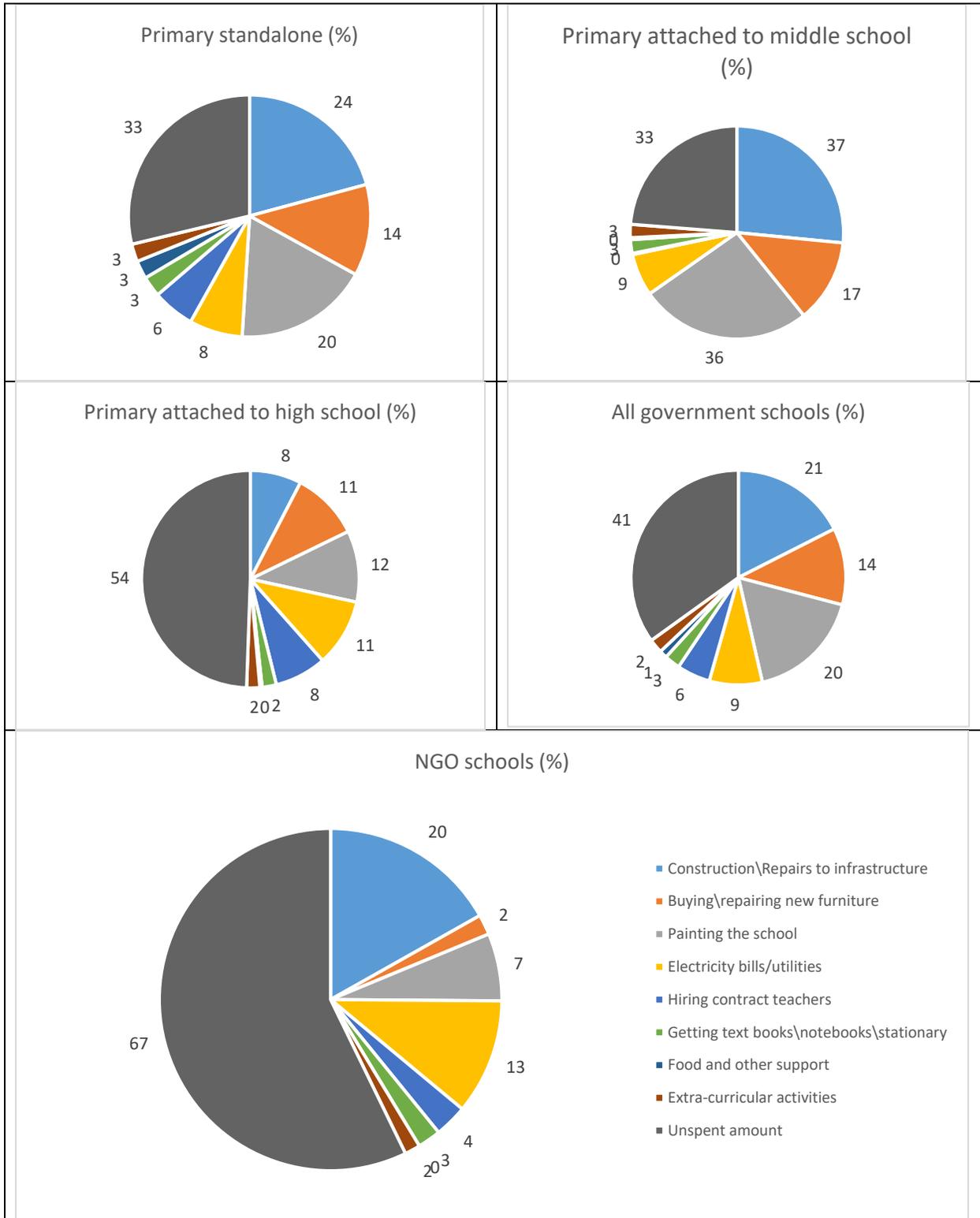
When comparing non-salary budget between schools types, NGO schools have the smallest amount while primary attached to high schools have the largest amount.

As seen in the figures below, a large portion of school funds remained unspent in each of the four school types¹⁶. Unspent funds are highest in government primary attached to high schools and NGO schools with 54% and 67% of funds remaining unspent.

In terms of spending, schools, on the whole, have spent less than the amount of funding received/available. In government schools, the largest amounts of funds that were spent were used on construction or infrastructural repairs; on painting the school; and on buying or repairing furniture in the case of primary standalone and primary attached to middle schools. In government primary attached to high schools the top three expenditures were on painting the school, paying utility bills and buying or repairing furniture. In NGOs, the largest amounts of funds were spent on construction or infrastructural repairs; paying utility bills and painting the school.

¹⁶ Heads were not asked whether funds were unspent. This was calculated as part of the analysis on the basis of funds they claimed they received in the previous year minus funds they later detailed as spending during the year. However, there are ambiguities about the timeframe- as one question asked about funds received in the last year while the other question asked about funds received in the last *academic* year.

Figure 8 Categories across which financial expenditure has been incurred by school type



School heads surveyed were asked to identify the main challenges they face when spending funds and to rank these as primary and secondary challenges. As shown in the figures below, approx. a third of school heads in both government and NGO schools reported experiencing no problems in using school funds (i.e. 30 government school heads and 12 NGO school heads). This was also reflected in the qualitative data collected/ interviews conducted. For example, one NGO school head commented that she was satisfied with the process and procedures in place when incurring expenditures and did not want more authority to spend school funds. Fear of audit was more pronounced in government schools with 24 heads citing this as the primary challenge they face in spending money (on the other hand only two NGO school heads this constituted a primary challenge for them). Insufficient funds were another impediment for both government and NGO school heads with 21 of the former and 13 of the latter citing this as the primary challenge they faced when spending funds. Within government schools, insufficient funds were especially problematic in the case of primary standalone and primary attached to high schools. It appears that the approval process (in terms of the number of approvals needed before spending) is not a significant challenge for either government or NGO school heads. In the case of the former, school council members also seem cooperative and do not hamper spending by heads. This was also echoed in the interviews conducted with one government primary standalone school head commenting:

“Negotiating with parents on the school council is not difficult for us because their own children study in our school.”

Figure 9 Main challenges faced by school heads in spending funds by school type



4.5.1 Key Points from this Section

1. School heads do not have full autonomy to operate school accounts and use schools funds in either government or NGO schools. Spending can only take place on the basis of approvals from school council members in the case of government schools and higher education authorities in the case of NGO schools. Both systems have very specific rules and procedures in place about how and when heads can utilize funds. Greater research is needed on the extent to which an overly prescriptive system with reference to spending is a hindrance to innovation and reform of schools.
2. It appears that a large chunk of school funds remain unspent by heads in all schools (especially government primary attached to high and NGO schools). A large number of heads have simultaneously reported, however, that they experience no problems in spending funds. More research should be conducted on why this gap exists. Of heads that do report challenges in using funds, most pertain to the fear of audit and lack of sufficient funds in the case of government schools; with the latter the main challenge in NGO schools as well. Lack of sufficient funds as a hindrance seems to contradict our observation that a large amount of school funds remain unspent in both systems.
3. Funds that are utilized are spent mostly on construction and infrastructural repairs; buying or repairing furniture, painting the school and for paying utility bills across both government and NGO schools. While heads are spending money to improve the physical school environment; they appear to be spending less on teaching and learning resources that could impact student learning and drive up the quality of education in schools.
4. More research needs to be conducted on perceptions, understanding and use of the NSB considering that it was recently introduced.

5. A Closer Look at Instructional Leadership Practices Across School Heads

Literature shows that there is greater, albeit varying, evidence of the positive impact of instructional leadership on student learning in comparison to other models of leadership. That is to say, teachers embodying the instructional leadership style or exhibiting behaviors common to this model of leadership have greater impact on student outcomes compared with transformational leaders. Instructional leadership, unlike transformational leadership, focuses on supervising, coordinating and monitoring curriculum and instruction in the classroom (Dumay et al, 2013). Robinson et al (2008), in their meta-analysis of studies on school leadership, found that the size of the effect of instructional leadership on student learning was 0.42 whereas the size of the effect of transformational leadership was 0.11. The impact of instructional leadership was, therefore, almost four times the size of transformational leadership on student outcomes (655).

Instructional leadership, as the name suggest is concerned with *instruction* and any teaching and learning processes related to it. It is concerned, primarily, with improvement in teaching practices and growth in student learning. Instructional leaders have also been described as “hands-on leaders, engaged with curriculum and instruction issues, unafraid to work directly with teachers, and often present in classrooms” (Horng & Loeb, 2010 as cited by Grissom et al 2013:2).

In Punjab, policymakers and government officials also emphasize the role of heads as instructional leaders in addition to that of administrators/ managers. The Punjab Education Code emphasizes the head teacher’s role in ‘instructional supervision’- i.e. observing teaching and learning in the classroom and reviewing what has been observed with teachers as a way of providing on the job training. It states that head teachers are to enable teachers to self-evaluate and lays down guidelines for how the head teacher can do so. The head teacher guide issued by the DSD similarly outlines the instructional role of the head in developing a school vision, goal-setting, and sharing of goals with teachers and students; motivating and supporting teachers and students; and coaching and mentoring members of staff in achieving personal and organizational goals. The head has to review teacher lesson plans; classroom teaching; marking of student homework by teachers and also has to conduct teacher appraisals.

For the sake of the analysis presented in this section of the report, instructional leadership practices are clustered across the following three areas: teaching practices, student learning, and curriculum and textbooks.

5.1 Teaching Practices

Survey data shows that heads in both government and NGO schools do in fact spend considerable time on instructional leadership activities related to improvements in teaching practices. The table below shows the responses of heads when asked how often they had engaged in activities

related to improvements in teaching practice in the last 12 months.

Table 20 Frequency with which heads engaged in activities related to improvements in teaching in the last 12 months

	Never	Every day	Every week	Every month	Twice a year	Total
Developing school goals that are understood by teachers						
Government	2	5	17	47	18	89
NGO	0	3	4	16	7	30
Providing assistance in setting and meeting teaching goals						
Government	2	15	27	41	4	89
NGO	0	3	9	15	3	30
Observing teacher instruction in the classroom						
Government	1	52	32	5	0	89
NGO	0	18	8	2	2	30
Supporting cooperation to develop new teaching practices						
Government	2	24	40	19	4	89
NGO	1	6	10	10	3	30
Providing teachers with individual support and feedback						
Government	5	15	33	32	4	89
NGO	3	5	12	18	2	30
Creating opportunities for teachers to talk about teaching						
Government	9	6	15	38	21	89
NGO	1	12	6	10	1	30
Discussing results to identify strengths and weaknesses						
Government	3	4	21	54	7	89
NGO	1	2	5	15	7	30

As seen in the table above, heads in government and NGO schools report being heavily involved in conducting classroom observations. 70 of the 119 school heads surveyed reported that they observed instruction in the classroom every day with 40 saying they do so every week. 50 of the 119 school heads surveyed report working with teachers to develop new teaching practices every week. 50 heads surveyed report providing teachers with individual support every month with a similar number (i.e. 45 heads) reporting that they do so every week. 60 school heads report discussing student results with teachers to identify their strengths and weaknesses every month. Heads were asked to reflect on their frequency of interaction with teachers, with a view to coaching them, in another section of the survey questionnaire as well and responded as follows:

Table 21 Frequency with which heads engage in listed activities

	Never	Every day	Every week	Every month	Yearly	Other	Total
Mentoring or counseling of teachers							

Government	1	18	35	29	4	2	89
NGO	0	3	14	10	2	1	30
Discussing new teaching methods with teachers							
Government	0	5	32	47	4	1	89
NGO	-	4	12	10	4	0	30
Staff meetings to discuss teaching strategies							
Government	3	0	21	59	6	0	89
NGO	0	-	7	18	4	1	30

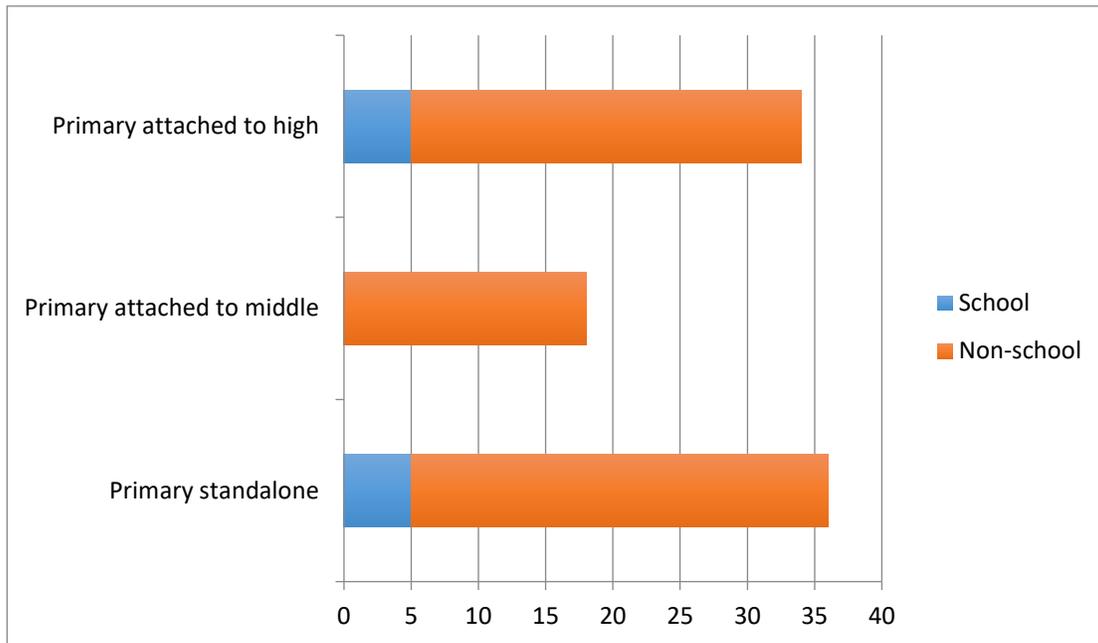
It seems, therefore, that heads are paying a great deal of attention to coaching teachers and do so on both a weekly and monthly basis. The quality of this coaching, however, is beyond the scope of this study.

It is important to note that qualitative data collected as part of this study, was not consistent with findings from the quantitative data in the case of government school heads with regard to mentoring teachers. Only three of the 12 government school heads interviewed said that they conduct classroom observations and only one interviewee said that he ‘guides teachers’. Interviews with NGO-school heads on the other hand showed sustained and intensive engagement of heads with teachers- classroom observations are conducted regularly; and heads often give detailed feedback to teachers and deliver demonstrative lessons to teachers to learn effective pedagogical practices from.

It is also important to note that school heads reported that apart from themselves other actors in both the government and NGO system also play a role in observing, coaching and mentoring teachers. This includes DTEs, AEOs and DEOs in government schools and area-level academic support persons in the NGO-schools. Leadership as practiced by these other school leaders and educational managers were, however, beyond the scope of this study.

Responsibility for designing and implementing formal professional development programs for teachers, however, rests with the district and provincial education authorities. The majority of heads surveyed (i.e. 71 out of 119) report that the teacher-training schedule is received from higher authorities (primarily the DSD and its DTEs in the case of government schools and the head office in the case of NGO-schools) and are not set by heads themselves at the school level (see figure below). It is unclear how much input heads have in determining the content of these programs i.e. whether they can convey to higher authorities what ought to be focused on in the formal teacher training programs.

Figure 10 Level at which decisions regarding teacher training are taken in practice (frequency of responses)



5.2 Student Learning

Apart from trying to raise the quality of teaching and, thereby, student learning, heads also adopt measures to directly affect and drive up student learning. When asked who takes decisions regarding strategies for slow learners in practice, 81 government school heads and 28 NGO-school heads reported that they do at the school-level. This indicates that heads receive little to no direction from education authorities above on how to assist slow learners. When asked how often heads had engaged in developing a remedial teaching strategy for struggling students in the last 12 months, almost a third of both government and NGO school heads said they did so every week. Half of the government school heads (46 out of 89) and a third of NGO school heads (i.e. 10 out of 30) said they do so every month.

Another practice of school heads surveyed, with direct bearing on student learning, is to determine the language in which students are taught. As per policy Urdu is the medium of instruction in public schools till grade 4 after which English has to be introduced as the medium of instruction. Urdu is the language of instruction in the NGO-schools studied in this project. Regardless of policy, however, three-fifths (i.e. 53 out of 89) of the government school heads and half of the NGO-school heads (16 out of 30) surveyed said that they set the language of instruction in their schools in practice.

The role of government school heads in determining which language is used for teaching is borne out by findings from the interviews conducted, with six of the 12 school heads interviewed saying that they use a mix of English, Urdu and Punjabi in schools. One head remarked:

“Most children feel comfortable in their mother tongue. We teach in Urdu or Punjabi depending on the environment”.

Another commented:

“They (the government) send us instructions that use English medium or shift (back) to Urdu medium. They don’t let children stick to one pattern. Every teacher knows how the student will understand better. It is better to allow students to study in Urdu rather than have them drop out”.

The qualitative data collected from NGO-school heads suggests less flexibility with only one of the nine heads interviewed saying that she chooses the language of instruction in her school.

Heads also reported engaging in counseling of students frequently. Close to three-fourths of all government and NGO school heads surveyed (i.e. 66 of 89 and 21 of 30 respectively) reported doing so every day or every week.

5.3 Curriculum and Textbooks

In both government and NGO-schools core curricular content is not decided at the school level, though decisions regarding non-core curricular are sometimes made at the school level. How much curriculum will be taught each year is also not decided at the level of the school by heads, although trends differ slightly for government primary attached to high schools which exhibit greater ability to do so compared with primary standalone and primary attached to middle schools. All school heads surveyed do report, however, that they adjust the pace at which the curriculum is taught so that students can keep up with it. According to a key informant, in the public education sector, interviewed:

“It is important to decentralize decisions regarding core curriculum to some extent so that local wisdom can be integrated into the curriculum at the discretion of the head teacher. 60% should be decided at the federal level; 20% at the provincial level and 20% at the school level”

Decisions regarding which textbooks to use in classrooms are centralized with heads having little to no input in this. This holds for all school types. Heads do, however, have autonomy in choosing teaching and learning materials in government schools. These materials are not determined at the district or provincial level. However, it is not certain what heads interpreted teaching and learning materials to mean i.e. whether they were referring to supplementary reading or other materials or resources such as audio-visual aids in the classroom. When asked whether they had introduced new books to the regular curriculum in the last 12 months approx. two-thirds of government school heads (56 out of 89) and half of the NGO-school heads (15 out of 30) surveyed reported they had not done so. According to interviews conducted, it seems, however, that NGO-school heads are more proactive in this regard. According to one such head:

“Our NGO has its own textbooks that we have to use. But I motivate teachers to use additional material. We have a library full of books. I encourage them to use these. I also check the library register on a monthly basis to see if they are issuing books”.

Table 22 Level at which decisions regarding curriculum & textbooks are taken in practice (frequency of responses)

	Government schools						NGO-schools	
	Primary standalone		Primary attached to Middle		Primary attached to High		School	Non-school
	School	Non-school	School	Non-school	School	Non-school		
Determining course content – for core curriculum	6	29	3	15	7	27	4	24
Determining course content – for non-core curriculum	18	2	5	8	13	11	7	21
How much curriculum will be taught each year	7	26	4	13	13	21	3	23
Choosing the text books	1	34	-	18	2	32	2	23
Choosing teaching & learning materials	30	5	14	3	26	9	4	13

5.4 Key Points from this Section

1. Instructional leadership or behaviors and activities associated with this model of leadership has positive impact on student outcomes and school performance; both the government and NGO systems explored in this study envisage the role of the school head as an instructional leader in addition to that of an administrator or manager.
2. Instructional leaders take measures to improve classroom instruction by one or more of the following ways: improving teaching, driving up student learning and determining and monitoring curriculum and textbooks that are used in the classroom.
3. This study shows that school heads in both government and NGO-schools report spending a great deal of time working with teachers to improve the quality of teaching; they do so by conducting classroom observations, mentoring and providing feedback to teachers, and encouraging them to change teaching practices. The qualitative data collected suggests that this is especially so in the case of NGO-school heads. However, formal professional development programs are designed and implemented by higher education

authorities in the case of both government and NGO-schools and not by heads at the school level. In respect of the latter, therefore, teacher professional development is divorced from school heads.

4. School heads in both government and NGO-schools also take more immediate measures to drive up students learning. They do so by developing strategies to deal with struggling students and by choosing the language of instruction within the school. The latter is especially true of government school heads, who allow use of the students' mother tongue or a mix of languages for teaching in the classroom to ensure student learning regardless of official government policies on language in education.
5. School heads in both government and NGO-schools do not determine curricular content or how much curriculum is taught in the year (though they do adjust the pace at which it is taught). Nor do they decide which textbooks are used in the classroom as part of the syllabus. These powers have not been devolved to heads at the school level. The majority of government school heads say that they do, however, choose teaching and learning materials used in the classroom. However, it is not sure what they have interpreted teaching and learning materials to mean.
6. Instructional leadership practices are common to both government and NGO-school heads. However, subsequent research should focus on the quality of this instructional support (this was beyond the scope of this study).
7. Instructional leadership is shared across multiple actors in both the government and NGO system in respect of teachers and improving teaching. In the former it is shared amongst school heads, DTEs, AEOs and DEOs. In the latter it is shared across school heads and the Assistant Education Manager. It is important, therefore, to look at instructional leadership as enacted by all these actors holistically.

6. Conclusion

Head teachers can play an important role in improving school performance in Pakistan. It is evident from the literature, policy documents and findings of this study that head teachers ought to and are playing the role not just of education administrators or managers but also that of instructional leaders. There are, however, five critical gaps in school management practices in the public sector in Punjab that limit the effectiveness of head teachers and that must be considered for policy design.

1. An absence of designated posts and lack of positional recognition of head teachers at the primary school level in the government sector is creating a leadership vacuum

At present there is no designated post for a head teacher in government primary schools. Lack of staff in such schools is said to prohibit the establishment of a coherent managerial structure—with most primary schools in the past having had just one or two teachers; one of the two teachers was simply asked to assume the administrative responsibilities of a head. However, with the implementation of a new policy in 2017 that calls for a minimum of four teachers to be present in each primary school, it becomes all the more important to establish this post. Not having designated posts affects the authority of heads and how they are able to bring about change in their schools.

Primary standalone schools are the most resource poor (in terms of infrastructure, finance and human resource)¹⁷. They also perform poorly on student assessments relative to other schools¹⁸ and are most in need of reform. Arguably the most important rung of the schooling ladder, primary schools are also the first point of contact for communities – particularly the poorest ones. These schools have the potential to become focal hubs for spearheading coordinated efforts to increase enrollment, retention, and learning. But these changes cannot be triggered in the absence of a recognized post for head teachers, vested with effective authority and resources to address challenges.

¹⁷ Programme Monitoring and Implementation Unit (2016) Annual School Census data, Retrieved from: <http://www.pesrp.edu.pk/datacenter>

¹⁸ Punjab Examination Commission, Grade- 5 student assessment data from 2013-2014

2. Design gaps in professional development mechanisms (pre- and in-service) may be compromising the level of preparedness of head teachers in the government system for doing their jobs

Training of school heads, at the time of assuming the role and after, is neither universal nor inclusive in the government system. Primary school head-designates are systematically excluded from participation in training programs. This is because training in the government sector is linked with seniority and promotion/ progression to higher BPS'. Heads in middle and high schools, by virtue of their seniority, are most often recipients of these trainings. Training programs such as PEELI, which dovetail with QAED's promotion-linked training program, are also not offered to primary head-designates. The exclusion of primary school heads from training programs emerges as a significant policy blind spot. Primary school head-designates, often new recruits, relatively inexperienced and most junior in the hierarchy of the teaching and management, stand to benefit the most from training and must be equipped with the requisite skills to successfully manage and lead.

While there are forums where head teachers convene on a regular basis, the meetings are not intended for capacity building.¹⁹ School-based pedagogical support and capacity building was provided, until recently by District Teacher Educators and at present by AEOs, however, this is only to teachers and not to school heads. QAED is currently working with the British Council to design and implement a more comprehensive mandatory leadership-training program for heads starting in 2017. As of 2018, the program will be extended to cover primary school head-designates.

A universal system of training would help heads at all levels to have clarity of purpose, a strong understanding of standard operating procedures, build organizational trust, and reduce variation in capacities and asymmetry of knowledge within school management systems.

The training model of school heads in the NGO system examined in this study is an example of a regular, sustained and responsive training regime; one that the government sector could learn from. All NGO school heads irrespective of school level are trained before assuming headship responsibilities. Heads are then trained regularly on an annual basis in 'academies' comprising of weeklong training sessions that are informed by the needs of school heads.

Substantive changes should also be made in the areas of training provided to head teachers at all levels in the government system. A key finding of this study is that a greater proportion of NGO school heads, compared with government school heads, have received in-service training in areas such as child psychology, teaching slow learners, teaching children from poor households, school administration, instructional leadership, human resource and finance management. More government school heads, compared with NGO school heads, have received

¹⁹ Head teachers in government schools gather every month for a cluster-level training. Most of the meeting is spent, however, reviewing teacher attendance registers and communicating new education policies or directives to school heads.

in-service training in multi-grade teaching reflecting conditions of schools in the government sector. Government school heads also need to be trained more broadly on having a vision for their schools, distinguishing between managing and leading, and how to support teachers in their work.

3. The current policy and governance setup is effectively clipping the wings of head teachers blunting their authority and capacity for responding to challenges

Head teachers' autonomy or ability to take decisions at the school level is limited and varies across areas of administration, finance and instruction. The administrative autonomy of heads in the government system is virtually absent when it comes to human resource and staff management. Heads cannot hire or fire teachers. Allowing them to do so would require a complete reconfiguration of service and other rules, steps that the government is unlikely to take. However, it is important to think through other ways in which head teachers can retain some level of control over teacher management at the school level to ensure that they function and perform well.

At present, heads cannot suspend teachers. Making complaints and reporting teachers to higher-level officials is a long and tedious process and often with no consequence to the teacher in question leaving the head worse off in terms of further undermining her/his authority. The situation is particularly worse in the case of primary standalone head teachers. While head teachers in government schools do review their teachers' annual performance in an Annual Confidential Report (ACR) that can potentially be used as an accountability check, interviews reveal that the ACR is considered to be an ineffective measure.

NGO school heads on the other hand can hire teachers, suspend teachers, and recommend them for bonuses and promotions. Heads can, consequently, influence the career path of their teachers. Where NGO school heads do require the approval of higher officials, they are supported instead of challenged in their decision-making.

Financial autonomy of heads in government schools has arguably increased since the province-wide introduction of the NSB in 2015/16. Even though heads can only spend these funds after convening, discussing and having expenditures approved by school council members, they have considerable space to choose which of the schools needs to spend the NSB on. Heads can use the NSB for anything as long as they improve teaching and learning in the school. However, our study found that heads underutilize school funds and that where spent, funds are used on infrastructural improvements and provision of facilities. Financial autonomy, as afforded by the NSB, can, therefore, be bolstered by sensitizing and encouraging heads to spend and to spend on more diverse activities and resources (i.e. not just on infrastructure, furniture, whitewashing and utilities which is what heads are currently using it on but also on teaching and learning materials and products). One area in which heads will have greater control, as a result of the NSB, is in

hiring part-time teachers, especially useful in the context of high teacher turnover. The government should also release the NSB in one go instead of in installments so that heads can plan use of the funds effectively.

Heads in government schools should also be given greater space to exercise instructional autonomy, in particular, when it comes to planning, designing and implementing teacher training programs for its staff. While heads in government schools do observe teachers in the classroom, the primary responsibility for teacher development rests with the QAED and AEOs. Excluding responsibility for teacher training from the mandate of heads could be detrimental to their ability to influence teaching in the classroom.

4. Burdensome reporting and accountability measures can negatively affect head teacher motivation

It is evident that government school heads spend a considerable amount of time in reporting to various education officials at the district and provincial levels at various intervals (on progress against targets related to teacher attendance, student attendance and performance, enrolment and retention and so on). Accountability measures in place are burdensome and constrain the head teacher in terms of reducing the time that is available to him/her to spend on other headship responsibilities. Requirements to report are not intended to facilitate or support head teachers in their work, rather to hold them accountable. Such top-down directives and excessive reporting are detrimental to organizational trust. The frequency and extent of reporting requirements signals to heads that they are being watched closely and that they need to meet targets irrespective of the lack of support or challenges that they may face.

5. Feedback loops that facilitate information flows within management hierarchies and improve organizational trust are missing

The establishment of effective feedback loops and communication channels between heads and higher authorities in the government system is crucial. Governance and policy making in the government sector tends to be top-down. Head teachers need to be engaged by higher-level officials at both the district and provincial levels when formulating priorities and education reforms. Head teachers are keenly aware, by virtue of their placement within the school, of challenges and solutions and their voices need to be heard at such forums. This will also help in creating head teacher buy-in and ownership of government policies that need to be implemented at the school level.

To recap, a weak enabling environment, inadequate training opportunities, limited autonomy, onerous reporting and insufficient feedback loops negatively impact the motivation of head

teachers and hold them back in the government system. Recommendations emerging from this study are as follows:

- Particular attention must be paid to addressing structural and policy gaps causing neglect of primary standalone schools; starting with the creation of a dedicated and recognized post of head teacher in these schools
- Recruitment of head teachers as a special cadre of government servants, with coherent career progression possibilities needs to be considered
- Universal coverage of job specific pre- and in-service capacity building support for head teachers at all school and seniority levels within the government systems needs to be ensured. The importance of training primary school heads must be recognized by both government and donors or international organizations working in this area
- Substantive changes should be made in the areas of training provided to head teachers at all levels in the government system
- Decision-making authority at the school level in the government system in a number of areas, particularly in human resource and staff management needs to be increased, even if gradually
- Rolling back on reporting requirements and rethinking the objectives of such reporting needs to be undertaken
- Feedback loops with improved information flows within governance hierarchies must be established in the government system

7. References

- Aslam, M., B. Jamil, and S. Rawal. "Teachers and School Quality: Some Policy Pointers from Rural Punjab." (2011): 1-4. Web.
- Blair, Maud. "Effective School Leadership: The Multi-Ethnic Context." *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 23.2 (2002): 179-191. Web.
- Blank, Rolf K. "The Role Of Principal As Leader: Analysis Of Variation In Leadership Of Urban High Schools." *The Journal of Educational Research* 81.2 (1987): 69-80. Web.
- Canada. CIDA. Canada Pakistan Basic Education Project. Compendium for Rules and Regulations for District Education Officers. Lahore: Jadeed Educational Services, 2009. Print.
- Pakistan. DSD, Punjab Lahore. DSD, Wahdat Colony, Lahore. Head Teachers' Guide for Primary and Elementary Schools. Lahore: DSD, n.d. Print.
- Creating Effective Teaching And Learning Environments. Paris: OECD Pub., 2009. Print.
- Dumay, Xavier, Tinneke Boonen, and Jan Van Damme. "Principal Leadership Long-Term Indirect Effects on Learning Growth in Mathematics." *The Elementary School Journal* 114.2 (2013): 225-51. The University of Chicago. Web.
- Galloway, David et al. "Sources Of Stress For Primary School Head Teachers In New Zealand." *British Educational Research Journal* 12.3 (1986): 281-288. Web.
- Goddard, Roger D., and Robert J. Miller. "The Conceptualization, Measurement, And Effects Of School Leadership: Introduction To The Special Issue." *The Elementary School Journal* 111.2 (2010): 219-225. Web.
- Grissom, J. A., and S. Loeb. "Triangulating Principal Effectiveness: How Perspectives Of Parents, Teachers, And Assistant Principals Identify The Central Importance Of Managerial Skills." *American Educational Research Journal* 48.5 (2011): 1091-1123. Web.
- Grissom, Jason A., and Susanna Loeb. "Triangulating Principal Effectiveness: How Perspectives Of Parents, Teachers, And Assistant Principals Identify The Central Importance Of Managerial Skills." *American Educational Research Journal* (2017): n. pag. Print.
- Grissom, Jason A., Susanna Loeb, and Ben Master. "Effective Instructional Time Use for School Leaders: Longitudinal Evidence from Observations of Principals." Stanford University, n.d. Web.
- Hallinger, Philip, and Ronald H. Heck. "Collaborative Leadership and School Improvement: Understanding the Impact on School Capacity and Student Learning." *School Leadership & Management* 30.2 (2010): 95-110. Web.

Hartley, David. "The Emergence of Distributed Leadership in Education: Why Now?" David Hartley, *The Emergence of Distributed Leadership in Education: Why Now?* - PhilPapers. Taylor & Francis, Ltd. on Behalf of the Society for Educational Studies, 01 Jan. 1970. Web.

Hipp, Kristine A. "The Impact Of Principals In Sustaining Middle School Change." *Middle School Journal* 28.5 (1997): 42-45. Web.

Khora, Sthabir. "Education Management and Leadership in a School District in Odisha." *Indian Sociological Society*, n.d. Web.

Leithwood, Kenneth et al. *How Leadership Influences Student Learning*. 1st ed. Minnesota: The Wallace Foundation, 2004. Print.

Mitchell, Coral, and Joyce B. Castle. "The Instructional Role of Elementary School Principals." *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne De L'Éducation* 28.3 (2005): 409. Print.

Monk, Daniel. "(Re)Constructing The Head Teacher: Legal Narratives And The Politics Of School Exclusions." *Journal of Law and Society* 32.3 (2005): 399-423. Web.

Nettles, Stephen M., and Carolyn Herrington. "Revisiting the Importance of the Direct Effects of School Leadership on Student Achievement: The Implications for School Improvement Policy." Taylor & Francis, Ltd., n.d. Print.

Pakistan Education Statistics, National Education Management Information System (NEMIS): Academy of Education Planning and Management (AEPAM), Government of Pakistan

Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education and Scientific Research. *The New Education Policy of The Government of Pakistan*. Islamabad: n.p., 1970. Print.

Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education. *National Education Policy*. By Syed Fakhar Imam. Islamabad: n.p., 1992. Print.

Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education. *Report of The Commission on National Education 1959*. Karachi: Manager of Publications, 1961. Print.

Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education. *Report of The Commission on Student Problems and Welfare 1966*. Karachi: Manager of Publications, 1966. Print.

Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Education. *The Education Policy 1972-80*. Islamabad: n.p., 1972. Print.

Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Interior (Education Division). *Proceedings of the Pakistan Educational Conference*. By Fazl Ur Rehman. Karachi: n.p., 1947. Print.

- Pakistan. Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Interior (Education Division). Proceedings of the Pakistan Educational Conference. By Fazl Ur Rehman. Karachi: Manager of Publications, 1951. Print.
- Pakistan. Government of The Punjab. School Education Department. Empowerment of Heads of Educational Institutions. By Nadeem Ashraf. Vol. FS/SSE/Misc/2009/81. N.p.: n.p., 2009. Print.
- Pakistan. School Education Department. Government of Punjab. Punjab School Education Sector Plan. N.p.: n.p., 2013. Print.
- Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, Paul. "Leading Leaders." *The Phi Delta Kappan* 93.3 (2012): 70-71. Print.
- RAND Corporation. *Laying The Foundation For Successful School Leadership*. RAND Corporation, 2017. Print. RAND Corporation Research Report Series.
- Robinson, Viviane M. J., Claire A. Lloyd, and Kenneth J. Rowe. "The Impact of Leadership on Student Outcomes: An Analysis of the Differential Effects of Leadership Types." *Educational Administration Quarterly* Vol. 44, No. 5 (December 2008) 635-674, n.d. Print.
- Ross, John A., and Peter Gray. "School Leadership And Student Achievement: The Mediating Effects Of Teacher Beliefs." *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue canadienne de l'éducation* 29.3 (2006): 798. Print.
- Shaked, Haim, and Chen Schechter. "Seeing Wholes: The Concept of Systems Thinking and Its Implementation in School Leadership." Springer, n.d. Print.
- Sindhi, Ms.Swaleha. "EDUCATION AN AGENCY FOR CREATING SAFE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACH." The M.S.University of Baroda Vadodara, Gujarat, India (2017): n. pag. Print.
- Spillane, James P., and Chong Min Kim. "An Exploratory Analysis of Formal School Leaders'™ Positioning in Instructional Advice and Information Networks in Elementary Schools." *American Journal of Education* 119.1 (2012): 73-102. Print.
- Supovitz, Jonathan. "School Leadership Lessons from England." *Phi Delta Kappan* 97.3 (2015): 38-41. Print.
- Tanner, C. Kenneth, and Vivian Ruth Dennard. "Leadership Behavior Of The High School Principal And Assistant Principal For Instruction." *The High School Journal* 78.3 (1995): 172-173. Print.
- Wahlstrom, Kyla L et al. *Learning From Leadership*. Alexandria, VA: Educational Research Service, 2010. Print.
- Witziers, Bob, Roel J. Bosker, and Meta L. Krüger. "Educational Leadership and Student Achievement: The Elusive Search for an Association." *Educational Administration Quarterly* 39.3 (2003): 398-425. Print.

York-Barr, J., and K. Duke. "What Do We Know About Teacher Leadership? Findings From Two Decades Of Scholarship." *Review of Educational Research* 74.3 (2004): 255-316. Print.

APPENDIX

With reference to selection of districts with low, middle and high performing schools, districts rankings are indicated in the table below. These rankings show that there is considerable intra-district variation in the PEC examination scores of schools. This implies that we have good, mediocre and low-performing schools (with reference to PEC exam performance) in all districts.

In parallel, we also undertook a mapping exercise to plot where the province’s top 20 percent and bottom 20 percent schools were located (based on PEC exam scores). We arrived at a similar conclusion- each of the province’s districts has all types of schools (see figure below). This meant, therefore, that each and any of Punjab’s districts would provide us with schools of all quality.

Figure 3 Quality of schools across Punjab based on PEC performance

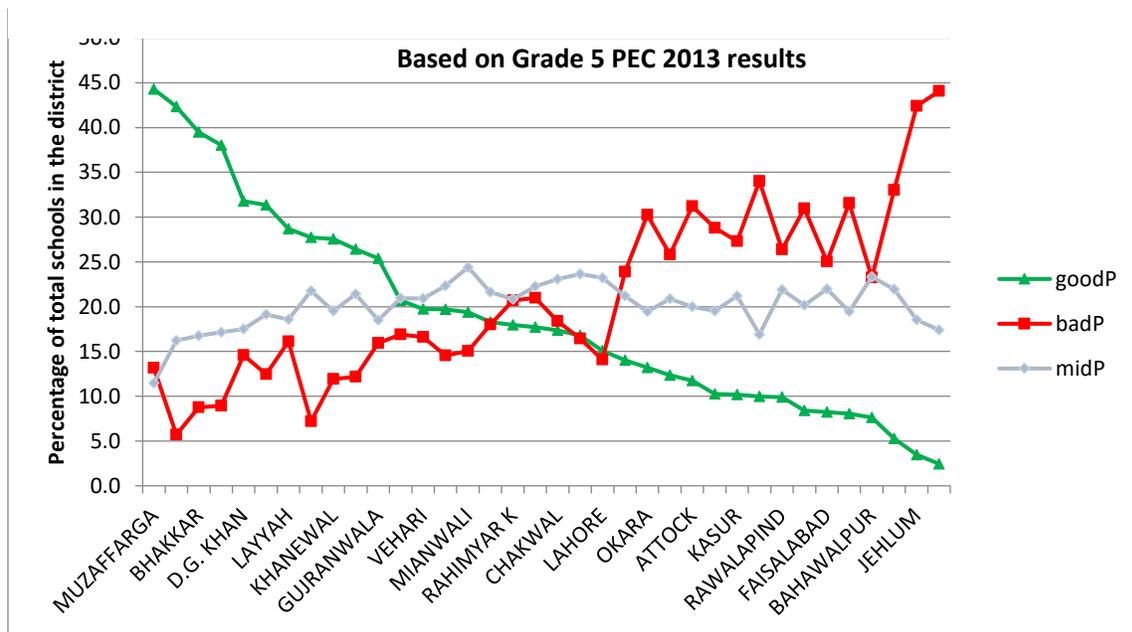


Table 2 Snapshot of districts: PEC score averages and presence of NGO-schools

Government Schools PEC District Average (Grade-5)	Number of NGO schools
---	-----------------------

District	District Average Score	Score_Rank	Dist_Std_Dev	Std_rank	Total
Muzaffargarh	57.3	2	12.4	1	24
D.G. Khan	54.3	7	11.7	2	4
Layyah	53.5	10	11.5	3	0
Gujranwala	53	11	11.1	4	0
Sialkot	50.4	21	11	5	0
Rajanpur	46.4	32	11	6	0
Multan	55.1	5	10.9	7	0
Attock	47	30	10.9	8	16
Okara	48	24	10.7	9	0
Bhakkar	56.7	3	10.5	10	0
Khanewal	53.9	8	10.5	11	24
Rahim Yar Khan	50.5	20	10.5	12	4
Jhang	51.8	13	10.4	13	18
Chiniot	53.7	9	10.3	14	0
Bahawalnagar	50.9	17	10.3	15	0
Sheikhupura	56.7	4	10.3	16	14
Lodhran	48.5	23	10.2	17	6
Khushab	49.2	22	10.1	18	20
Chakwal	50.8	19	10	19	43
Jhelum	43.3	35	10	20	3
Gujrat	46.4	33	9.9	21	2
Mianwali	51.7	14	9.9	22	13
Sargodha	57.9	1	9.9	23	41
Rawalpindi	47.9	25	9.8	24	34
Pakpattan	47.5	29	9.8	25	0
Kasur	47.9	26	9.8	26	31
Narowal	52.1	12	9.8	27	25
Mandi Bahauddin	46.7	31	9.7	28	0
Vehari	51.5	15	9.7	29	17
Sahiwal	50.9	18	9.6	30	0
Toba Tek Singh	55.1	6	9.2	31	0
Bahawalpur	47.7	27	9.1	32	5
Hafizabad	45.9	34	9.1	33	0
Faisalabad	47.6	28	9	34	39
Lahore	51.1	16	9	35	62
Nankana Sahib	42.9	36	8.8	36	0

Our next consideration was to select districts where at least 10 NGO-schools²⁰ existed. We asked the NGO in question to share data with us on where their schools are located. We found that there were 15 districts of Punjab in which the selected NGO had more than 10 schools. These districts are indicated in red in table 2.

²⁰ We considered schools run by one education NGO in particular. Details are provided in section 1 of the report.