

Perception of Teachers about Planning of Single National Curriculum in Public and Private Schools at Primary Level in Rawalpindi

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Received: 21-11-2025

Revised: 30-11-2025

Accepted: 18-12-2025

Published: 27-12-2025

ABSTRACT

The social, political and economical progress of a nation highly depends on its educational system. To achieve its aims and goals a dynamic educational system having sustainable curriculum is imperative for a country, which also reflects its development, prosperity and social structure. To provide equal opportunity, uniform educational achievements to all pupils and to minimize disparities and fragmentation among different social sectors first phase of Single National Curriculum implemented in public and private primary schools by Pakistan in 2021. This study examines and compares the planning of implemented SNC at primary level in public and private schools in District Rawalpindi of Punjab. The planning of SNC was delimited to the three elements of curriculum objectives, content and teaching methods. The quantitative and descriptive approach was utilized to accomplish this study. Through stratified sampling 188 public and 143 private school teachers from heterogeneous population of all primary school teachers of Tehsil Kahuta and Kallar Syedan from District Rawalpindi were selected. A self-developed questionnaire for survey to collect data was utilized. The descriptive mean, standard deviation, frequency and inferential statistics t-test through SPSS were used to compare the planning of SNC. The major findings of the study are that SNC is well planned. It recommends that the next phases of Single National Curriculum may be after improving the content implemented in all schools.

Key Words: Single National Curriculum, Curriculum, Curriculum Objectives, Teaching Methods.

INTRODUCTION

In any educational system curriculum is valued as the primary source to reach the destination of educational aims and goals. The Curriculum of a country is classified differently it expresses beliefs, traditions, values, ethics, ideology of life, mindset and educational aims. The single curriculum for entire nation redirects the nation's direction, approach, mindset, attitudes, behaviors and mentality to the same destination. The society having various educational systems and curricula causes enormous disparities, differences, complexes and breaches among different strata of society. The national curriculum ensures to cover past, present and future of a nation. One of the main agenda of the manifesto is the Single National Curriculum of current government Pakistan (SNC, 2022).

The implementation of Single National Curriculum planned phase wise by the government of Pakistan. As per the step by step strategy it considered to apply the first phase of Single National Curriculum at primary level in all public, private and madaris from April 2021 across the country (Ackland, et al, 2017).

Curriculum is the focal point of any education system. Traditionally pupils attend school for an objective and that is to learn and what the school intends for them to learn is embodied in the curriculum. The origin of the “curriculum” word is from Latin language “currere” word meaning ‘to run’. Therefore curriculum is taken as a “run away”, covered by a person to reach desired destination. Different subjects taught in school comprise a curriculum (Shahid, 2002). “The program having all the experiences that the learner encounters under the direction of the school” is considered as curriculum (Shahid, 2002).

Punjab School Education Department implemented “Single National Curriculum” in all schools of public and private sector including Madaris in Punjab from August 02, 2021. All over the country single educational approach having uniform curriculum, selected same instructional medium and a standardized assessment platform is a step in direction to ensure that all learners may avail a fair chance and equal opportunity to get access to quality education (Azhar, Ziarab and Safdar, 2023).

The implementation of planned SNC will provide an opportunity to all children across board quality education without any discrimination. It will develop Social cohesion and National Integration by imparting same values in all areas to develop strong national integration and cohesion. To minimize the gulf of disparities exist in educational learning material and content currently being enforced in various educational systems in society is one of the key aim of creating a national curriculum.

This proposed “Single National Curriculum” will provide opportunities to all that will help every segment of community to enhance skills and personality development that will help to enhance their social economic status in society. It will not only provide equality but it will also provide education to learners as per need of learners. The main object of Single National Curriculum is comprehensive and overall physical, social and intellectual development of child as per contemporary social needs, emerging national and international expectations and trends.

The curriculum has important elements which sets its direction and reflect the comprehensiveness. The selection and formulation of objectives keeping in view the social and national aspirations is very important it is the base of any educational system and curriculum as the whole structure is constructed on this base.

The selection of content is another important element of curriculum. This selection is done to achieve the objectives of educational system. The content selection is very important as different aspect need to be considered for the selection of updated content. Therefore the proper and comprehensive planning if required to select the desired content. The selection of content is a process which is done very carefully keeping in view the objectives, social, cultural, religious and contemporary requirements of the society.

To implement the curriculum in classroom and to bring desired change in learners different teaching / learning methods are adopted by the teachers. Therefore the selection of teaching methods has critical importance. If proper planning has been done for formulation of objectives and selection of content but the necessary material and opportunity are not considered during the planning of curriculum it will not produce desired results. Therefore the planning of selection for set objectives with required content along with appropriate teaching learning methods are very important elements of curriculum which determine its comprehensiveness and effectiveness.

Research Objectives

1. To compare the opinion of teachers regarding objective formulation of Single National Curriculum in Public and Private Schools at primary level.

2. To compare the opinion of teachers regarding content selection of Single National Curriculum in Public and Private Schools at primary level.
3. To compare the opinion of teachers regarding Teaching Methods of Single National Curriculum in Public and Private Schools at primary level.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in opinion of public and private school teachers regarding the objective formulation of Single National Curriculum at primary level in District Rawalpindi.
2. There is no significant difference in opinion of public and private school teachers regarding the content selection of Single National Curriculum at Primary level in District Rawalpindi.
3. There is no significant difference in opinion of public and private school teachers about teaching Methods of Single National Curriculum at primary level in District Rawalpindi.

Delimitations

The constraint of resources and time led the researcher to delimit the study to two Tehsils of District Rawalpindi; Tehsil Kahuta and Kallar Syedan selected randomly from all Tehsils of district. The planning of curriculum is delimited in current study to its only three elements objectives, content and teaching methods

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Concept of Curriculum

The curriculum of any educational system covers all the academic activities, lessons to taught and academic content with related material used in an educational setting. It is mostly defined as a “school's courses The intended learning objectives along with aims that learners are supposed to attain, all learning material and content divided in chapters and lessons to be taught, individual work in the form of the assignments and group activities (projects) for learners, audio video learning aids and different methods of assessments are integral part of curriculum (Sinnema et al, 2020).

Planned teaching learning activities in a specific academic surrounding for learners having all necessary elements to create required social and personal skills for specific age level pupils aiming to achieve set targets is called curriculum (Mkandawire, 2010, Mojkowski, 2000 and Cobbold, 1999). In any educational system curriculum is the one of the basic component of its structure which determines its usefulness as it has a role of guide which leads to success and ensures the effectiveness and relevance with requirements of that society (Apsari, 2018). Curriculum as a core of any academic system must include such type of knowledge, information, values and interpersonal skills that taught must get familiar with in their area of interest (Muskin, 2015).

The curriculum is very important element of education system as it determines and guides teacher way forward for lesson planning, delivery of content in classroom and assessment of learners' understanding (Nevenglosky, 2018). The curriculum is so important that it sets the direction of all teaching learning process any change made it results in a series of changes in all other educational parameters (Retnawati, et al., 2016). The curriculum of constructivist approach has adopted process base and performance oriented

assessment replacing product oriented assessment, the use of portfolios and different projects has increased replacing traditional techniques (Akkoç, et al., 2008).

Choosing content, applying methods and planned and unplanned activities involving student participation is called curriculum. Targeted goals can be achieved ensuring the progress of community by providing a well planned, revised and tested curriculum makes possible the interaction of students and teachers in an educational environment with physical facilities and resources of the school (Olamo, et al. 2019). The model of curriculum with all its elements provides the bases for teachers to decide the best teaching learning methods and process accordingly along with the responsibilities of society and authorities are determined (McLachlan, et al., 2018).

The curriculum must manifest the concept and perception of society about knowledge, making preferences from available choices of knowledge according to the needs aspirations of society, selecting the job description of teachers and authorities and the learners' holistic development (Hickey, 2005). The educational curriculum is always based on some philosophy followed by that particular society which specifies the job descriptions and responsibilities of administration, school, teacher, parents and students (Akkoç, et al. 2008). What kind of education, what technology, best process and standard of textbook writing, selection and organization of teaching learning content and materials along with methods, techniques all reflect the philosophy curriculum is based upon (Mkandawire, 2010). The socio-economic, cultural and political factors may influence the curriculum philosophy of a society. The attitude, value and interest of learners within same society are always different which may be effectively incorporated in curriculum (McLachlan, et al. 2018; Mkandawire, 2010 and Mojkowski, 2000).

The curriculum is a specific strategy highlighting the content, learning material, and documents to be read and the process methods of teaching learning used prescriptions for learning environment to create positive educational scenarios (Romiszowski, 2016). The teaching aids and learning material used in class are closely related to school system or school which works as a machine which helps in formulation of syllabus, strategies, selecting and organizing content and perceptions utilized within the literacy process is the focal point of academic process. It also helps in developing instructional strategies in any academic settings (Khan and Law, 2015).

SNC's Development

After the 18th constitutional amendment Education, including curriculum development in Pakistan was delegated to the provinces which resulted in a negative impact on overall educational standards and quality. To construct a united nation, it was imperative to develop a uniform curriculum. The National Education Policy 2009 had remained a shared national document. Monitoring and reviewing educational development is one of the several duties delegated under the National Education Policy 2009 to the Inter Provincial Education Ministerial Conference (IPEMC). It was decided to create the National Curriculum Council (NCC) on February 11, 2014 in the IPEMC meeting with the objective to create a basic curriculum that should ensure Minimum National Standards in subject areas and focused on social needs and national ideology. The NCC reactivation was in 2019 to aid in the progress of SNC development. To ensure that all stakeholders had a voice to be heard all committees have representation from all provincial and regional areas. To discuss the SNC development Provincial and regional gatherings were held. A National Conference was held to debate SNC's merits and shortcomings. The stakeholders such as the private schools, STEP, APS and others were kept informed at every stage of developing the curriculum. After consulting with experts, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training put this on their webpage to get their thoughts on it (www.mofept.gov.pk). After consulting with experts, the document of SNC was amended and completed (NCF, 2017).

In traditional curriculum the opinion are forced into brains of students this brainwashing will result in compromising the potential of learners to think rationally and logical. The desired ability will not develop as per intended objectives so it was decided to inculcate the skill of critical thinking through SNC (Azhar, Ziarab and Safdar, 2023).

The Single National Curriculum (SNC) since its announcement has been a topic of debate among scholars, educator and the media. The main theme of discussion that federally decided curriculum is implementable although education was devolved to the provinces in 2010 under the 18th constitutional amendment. Some of the critics assert that the SNC is a vehicle to reverse this amendment at the will of the strong military establishment. It is has been observed that it has opposed the 18th Amendment by arguing that it is nothing more than a tool to further indoctrinates an already conservative society (Khan and Nadeem, 2020).

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Design of Research

The design of research this discussion was quantitative, “descriptive in nature” and “survey” method was employed. “In order to characterize the views, opinions, behaviors, or features of the population, researchers may use survey research designs, which are methods in quantitative research”. (Creswell, 2012).

Population

All public and private school teachers at primary level (2410) in Tehsil Kahuta and Kallar Syedan of District Rawalpindi compromised the population of this study. The population of public schools and teachers was taken from official website of School Education department of Punjab (sis.punjab.gov.pk) and the data of private institutes and teachers was collected from the Deputy District Education Officers (M-EE) Tehsil Kahuta and Kallar Syedan who were focal persons at Tehsil level for District Registration Authority Rawalpindi for private educational institutions in District Rawalpindi (SED, 2024).

Total population size is given in table below:

Table 1: Population of Study

S.No	Institutions	Schools	Teachers
1	Govt. Schools Tehsil Kahuta	202	661
2	Private Schools Tehsil Kahuta	109	530
3	Govt. Schools Tehsil Kallar Syedan	200	709
4	Private Schools Tehsil Kallar Syedan	104	510
	Total	613	2410

Sample

In survey research, choosing a sample size as big as feasible is necessary to maintain an adequate figure that may present as sample properly targeted population (Creswell, 2012).

“For descriptive research the sample should be 10% of population. But if the population is small then 20% may be required” (Gay, 2002). For the heterogeneous population of 2400 the sample size should be 331 as per his description of sampling table. Stratified sampling technique from sampling was used to select

sample from given heterogeneous population which was divided into two strata public and private sector schools.

Table 2 Sample of Study

S. No.	Institutes	Population	Sample
1	Govt. Schools Tehsil Kahuta & Kallar	1370	188
2	Private Schools Tehsil Kahuta & Kallar	1040	143
	Total	2410	331

Instrument used for Data Collection

For the purpose of data gathering a self-constructed questionnaire using Likert five point scales was formulated and utilized after approval as a research instrument. Self constructed questionnaire was distributed to teachers through whatsapp to gather data and also researcher also paid field visits where telephonic connection was not available. All the questions of the said research instrument were aligned with the objectives of research project in order to examine planning, implementation and usefulness of SNC in both public and private sector of Tehsil Kahuta and Kallar Syedan at primary level.

DATA ANALYSIS

As this study was a quantitative study. SPSS software was used for data analysis. The selected techniques of “Inferential statistics” and “descriptive statistics” were used to analyze data collected. The mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage were calculated as for as descriptive statistics is concerned. For inferential statistics “T-Test” for groups’ comparison was applied.

Analysis Related to Objective I

“To compare the opinion of teachers regarding planning of Single National Curriculum in public and private schools at primary level” was the first objective of the study.

Table 3: Objectives Frequency Comparison

Public Sector			Private Sector		
Opinion	Frequency	Percent	Opinion	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	295	19.614	Strongly agree	222	19.406
Agree	923	61.370	Agree	738	64.510
Partially Agree	232	15.426	Partially Agree	165	14.423
Disagree	27	1.795	Disagree	19	1.661
Strongly Disagree	27	1.795	Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	1504	100.0		1144	100.0

Table 3 depicted that score of teachers from public schools i.e.19.614 % of the participants “strongly agreed”, 61.370 % of respondents “agreed” that SNC objects were related with national aims, 15.426 percent partially agree 1.795 percent disagreed and 1.795 strongly disagreed. Private school teachers’ perceptions i.e.19.406 % “strongly agreed”, 64.510 % of the respondents “agreed” that SNC objects were related with national aims, 14.423 percent partially agreed and no teacher disagreed. 96.41% public schools and 98.34 % private schools implemented SNC; it revealed that SNC objectives were related with national aims.

Table 4: Objectives Comparison of SNC

Sector	N	Mean	SD	T	P
Public	188	31.62	4.924	1.08	.283
Private	143	32.13	3.359		

The table 4 explained that considerable differences of opinion on the objectives of SNC, the respondents from public sector replied that (“Mean”=31.62, “SD”=4.924) as compared to private sector schools data (“Mean”=32.13, “SD”=3.359) “t = 1.08” and “p = .283” showed that there was difference between two sectors but it was not significant.

Analysis Related to Objective II

“To compare the opinion of teachers regarding content selection of Single National Curriculum in public and private schools at primary level” was the second objective of the study.

Table 5: SNC Content Frequency Comparison

“Public Sector”			“Private Sector”		
Opinion	Frequency	Percent	Opinion	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	307	20.412	Strongly agree	285	24.913
Agree	945	62.832	Agree	729	63.723
Partially Agree	212	14.096	Partially Agree	117	10.227
Disagree	20	1.330	Disagree	13	1.136
Strongly Disagree	20	1.330	Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	1504	100.0	Total	1144	100.0

The tabulated data in 5 depicted the perception of teachers in both sectors and the numbers were 20.412 % from the participants “strongly agreed”, 62.832% “agreed”, 14.096 % “partially agreed”, 1.330% “disagreed” and 1.330 % strongly disagreed about the content and objectives relation of SNC from public sector. Private school teachers’ perceptions i.e.24.913 % of participant “strongly agreed”, 63.723 “agreed” that relationship existed, 10.227 percent partially agreed 1.136 percent teachers disagreed and no teacher strongly disagreed. 97.34% public sector as compared to 98.864 % private sector “agreed” that there was a relationship between content and the objectives of SNC.

Table 6: Content Comparison of SNC

Sector	N	Mean	SD	T	P
Public	188	31.97	4.787	2.166	.031
Private	143	32.99	3.393		

The table 6 explained that considerable differences of opinion about the content of SNC, public school showed (M=31.97, SD=4.787) and private schools showed (M=32.99, SD=3.393) t = 2.166 and p = .031 showed that there was significant between two sectors. The “p value” 0.031 was less than critical value “0.05 level of significance” and “t value” was 2.166 which were greater than 1.96 critical values indicated that private sector ranked content higher as compared to public sector. The mean of private sector was higher the mean value of public sector schools and SD value of private school teachers was also lower as compared to the SD value of public sector.

Analysis Related to Objective III

“To compare the teaching/ learning methods of Single National Curriculum in public and private schools at primary level” was the third objective of the study.

Table 7: SNC Teaching Methods Frequency Comparison

“Public Sector”			“Private Sector”		
“Opinion”	“Frequency”	“Percent”	“Opinion”	“Frequency”	“Percent”
Strongly agree	275	18.285	Strongly agree	250	21.853
Agree	988	65.691	Agree	766	66.958
Partially Agree	206	13.697	Partially Agree	113	9.878
Disagree	21	1.396	Disagree	14	1.224
Strongly Disagree	14	0.931	Strongly Disagree	01	0.087
Total	1504	100.0	Total	1144	100.0

The data tabulated in 7 depicted that 18.385 % of the respondents “strongly agreed”, 65.691% “agreed” that teaching methods used and prescribed for SNC were affective, 65.691 percent partially agreed 1.396 percent disagreed and 0.931 strongly disagreed about SNC teaching learning methods. Private school teacher’ perceptions i.e.21.853 % of the participants “strongly agreed”, 66.958 % “agreed”, 9.878 % “partially agreed” 1.224 percent disagreed and 0.087 percent teachers strongly disagreed. 97.693% public schools and 98.689 % private school teachers agreed that the teaching and learning method used and suggested in SNC were affective.

Table 8: Teaching Methods Comparison of SNC

Sector	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Public	188	31.92	4.390	1.891	.059
Private	143	32.74	3.175		

The table 8 indicated that considerable differences about the teaching methods used for teaching of SNC, “t = 1.891” and “p = .059” showed that there was difference but it was not significant between two sectors.

DISCUSSION

The under discussion study was conducted to “examine and compare the planning of SNC implemented in public and private schools at elementary level in District Rawalpindi” in view of teachers. For the assessment of SNC was done on the variables of planning. The planning of SNC was judged through the assessment of important elements of curriculum objectives, content and teaching methods by the implementers the teachers of public sector schools and the teachers from privately managed schools of selected Tehsils.

The objectives were very important for any curriculum. The statement wise mean of public and private schools was 3.95 and 4.02 respectively which means that private school teachers were of the view that objectives were appropriate as compare to public school teachers. The value of standard deviation (SD) calculated from the data of the opinion of teachers serving in government schools was more diverse than that of private teachers. 96.41% public and 98.34% private schools teachers thought that objectives of SNC were appropriate. The comparison of both sectors showed that although there was difference between the two sectors but it was not significant.

Previous literature about SNC raised some reservation for example “the weakness lies in the fact that instead of laying emphasis on teaching and learning techniques such as reasoning and critical thinking, rote learning is considered as an easy way” (Hoodbhoy, 2020). The opinion of teachers from both sectors about the selection of content showed that content is interesting but needs revision.

As far as the content was selected for SNC the statement wise mean score of government teachers was “3.40” and for teachers from private schools was “4.14” it meant that they ranked it at higher level as compared to public sector. The comparison of both sectors revealed that “there was a significant difference between these scores two existed. The t value was 2.166 which meant that difference of opinion was significant on the selection of content for SNC”. The private sector school teachers believed that the content selected for objectives formulated to achieve the aims of SNC were appropriate while public school teachers thought that content selected was not as relevant as it should be to achieve maximum output.

The selection of teaching methods for selected content and objectives for SNC data showed that statement wise mean of public school teachers was 3.99 and standard deviations was 0.675 as compared to 4.09 and 0.601. The comparison revealed that the t-value was 1.891% shows that difference of opinion exists but it was not significant. The selected methods purposed for teaching leaning process by SNC were useful as per comparison of both sectors.

CONCLUSIONS

Following are the conclusions of study:

1. By comparing the results of data it was obvious that private schools teachers thought that Objectives of SNC were more aligned with national educational policies and aims as compared to public school teachers. The standard deviation of public school teacher was higher which mean their score was more dispersed. It revealed that SNC objectives were related with national aims.
2. By comparing the results of data it was obvious that private schools teachers argued that the selection of content was as per Objectives of SNC which were aligned with national educational policies and aims as compared to public school teachers. The standard deviation of public school teacher was higher which meant their score was more dispersed. The data showed that the public and private sector “agreed” that there was a relationship between content and the objectives of SNC.
3. By comparing the results of data it was obvious that private schools teachers responded that the selection of teaching methods or learning experiences was as per objectives and suitable for selected content of SNC and aligned with national educational policies and aims as compared to public school teachers. There was a significant difference of opinion on the selection of content. The standard deviation of public school teachers was higher which meant their score was more dispersed. That there was difference between two sectors but it was not significant.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The formulations of objectives are satisfactory as per opinion of teachers at primary level so it may be implemented with improvement to elementary and secondary level.
2. There is relevance of content to the concerned grade level may be ensured by catering the needs and abilities of that age group.

3. The difference of opinion reflected in selection of content may be addressed as the selection of content should be made according of modern day needs and it is suggested that the opinion of stakeholders especially teachers' may be taken into consideration before selection of content for SNC at any level.

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