# Framework for analyzing Competitiveness of Primary Education in the Private Sector of Pakistan

Qazi Mohammed Ahmed*, Mohammad Yasir and Muhammad Ghufran Janjua
Department of Management Sciences, National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad, Pakistan.

**ABSTRACT**
This paper aims to develop and analyze a framework for measuring the competitiveness of a primary school. In order to evaluate the competitiveness the qualitative analysis has been adopted. The competitiveness of City School and Roots School System was evaluated using the developed competitiveness framework. Roots School was evaluated as more competitive. City School needs to focus more on grooming of students, faculty employment, retention and feedback mechanisms. The framework can be used to further improve the private sector primary schools.

## Introduction

Education is the logical process of directions that provide a platform for the development of one's character and personality. Without any doubt, education is the third eye of a man and is a tool through which one can handle the challenging problems of life. Primary Education is the first stage of obligatory education where a child is transformed into a student[1-2].This student will then continue to learn and progress in all stages of his or her life. The sound development of a child at this stage will enable him to raise the standard of his character and dignity.

Ministry of Education governs the education system in Pakistan. The provincial governments are responsible for the academic institutions whereas the federal government oversees the curriculum progress, financing of research and accreditation [3]. Primary education starts from grade one to five and lays down the foundation of a child's education .It is quite sad to say that our regulatory bodies have overlooked the importance of this level. The structure of primary education has been drafted on the principles of the colonial era and both the public and private sectors are publishing books which are against the psychological level of the subject. Most of the ideas lack indigenous research and have been copied from the rest of the world. Parents on the other hand also do not question the validity of the curriculum and opt for tuitions that hamper the educational learning of the child.

The private schools provide a different school system for the varied class of the society. There are cases where the private school authorities are only concerned with good salaries rather than the intrinsic development of the child [4]. The private sector school needs to root out these tendencies and concentrate on the education they are imparting to the future of Pakistan[5-6]. The private schools need not compromise on the competitiveness and quality of primary education delivered [7-9]. The proposed framework provides a comparison of Competiveness between two private schools that operate in a country like Pakistan with limited resources and lack of competent management. This evaluation will encourage primary schools in the private sector to achieve regional success and modernize their educational policies.

## Methodology

The proposed framework is developed to highlight the dimensions and items required for measuring the competitiveness of the two primary schools in Islamabad, Pakistan. Two major competitors in the Islamabad primary education sector are The City School and Roots School System. The qualitative analysis of different criteria of each school has been done using SPSS Text Analysis. The sample consists of twenty people, consisting of five administration, five teachers and ten parents of each school. Fig 1. indicates the dimensions and items that are used to analyze the competitiveness relevant to the schools.
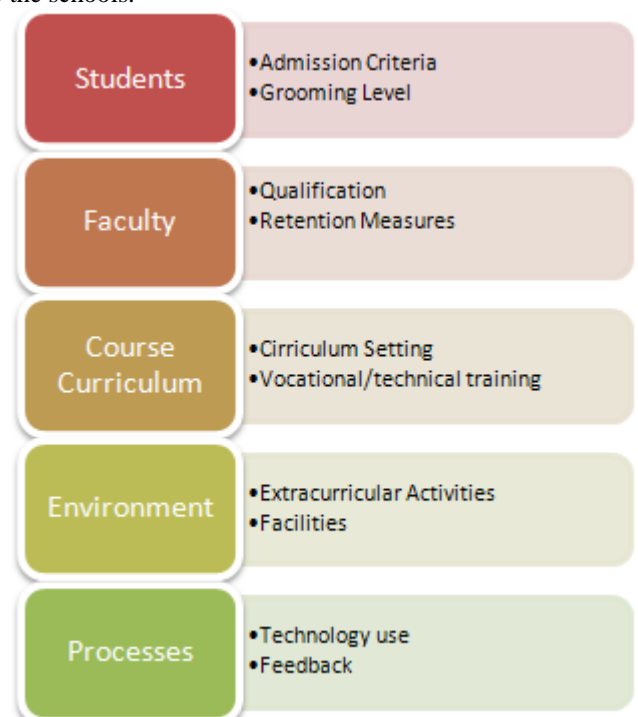


**Figure 1: Dimensions and Items**

## Results

For the SPSS Category Websincluded, the key has been shown in Fig. 2. The rest of the bar charts are self explanatory.
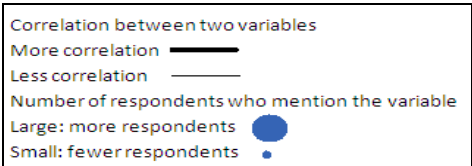
Tele:
E-mail addresses: ahmedqazi@hotmail.com
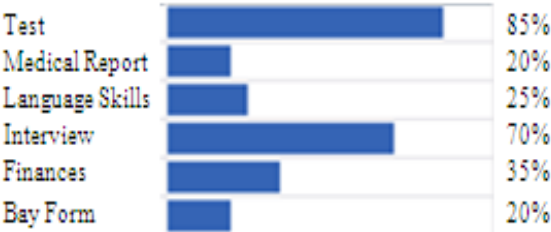
**Figure 1 Key for Web Category**

**Students**

**Figure 2: Admission Criteria - City School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Test | 85% |
| Medical Report | 20% |
| Language Skills | 25% |
| Interview | 70% |
| Finances | 35% |
| Bay Form | 20% |
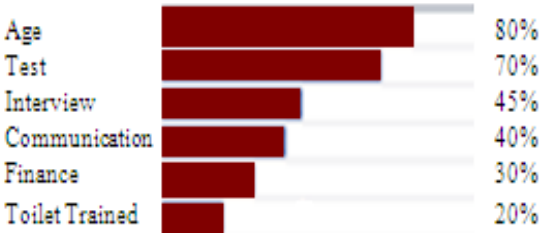
**Figure 3: Admission Criteria – Roots School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Age | 80% |
| Test | 70% |
| Interview | 45% |
| Communication | 40% |
| Finance | 30% |
| Toilet Trained | 20% |

**Figure 4: Grooming Level – City School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Verbal, Written | 25% |
| Punctuality | 35% |
| Manners | 80% |
| Confidence | 55% |
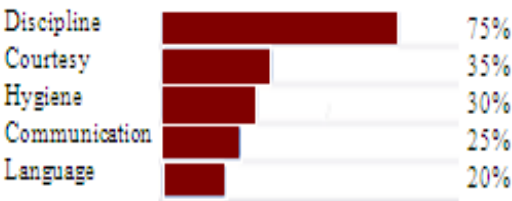
**Figure 5: Grooming Level – Roots School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Discipline | 75% |
| Courtesy | 35% |
| Hygiene | 30% |
| Communication | 25% |
| Language | 20% |

**Faculty**
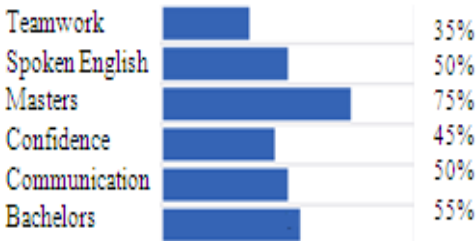
**Figure 6: Qualification Criteria - City School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Teamwork | 35% |
| Spoken English | 50% |
| Masters | 75% |
| Confidence | 45% |
| Communication | 50% |
| Bachelors | 55% |
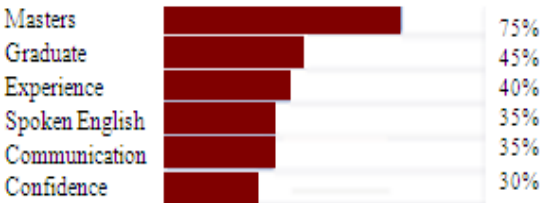
**Figure 7: Qualification Criteria - Roots School**

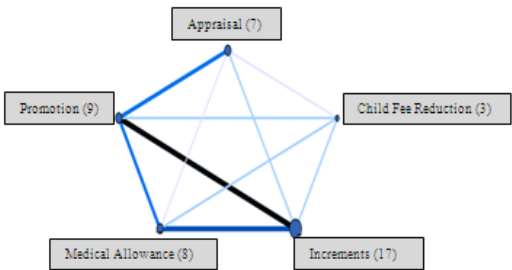| | |
|---|---|
| Masters | 75% |
| Graduate | 45% |
| Experience | 40% |
| Spoken English | 35% |
| Communication | 35% |
| Confidence | 30% |

**Figure 8: Retention Measures - City School**

As retention measures, 45% respondents said promotions, 30% medical allowance, 85% increments, 15% child fee reduction, 25% appraisals.
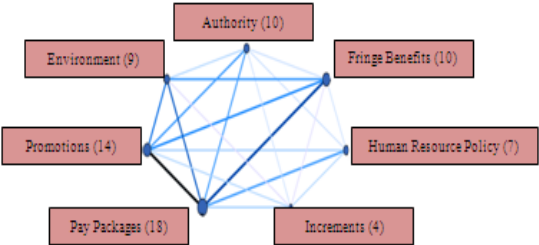
**Figure 9: Retention Measures - Roots School**

As retention measures, 90% respondents said pay packages, 70% promotions, 60% fringe benefits, 45% environment, 35% HR policy, 25% authority, 20% increments.
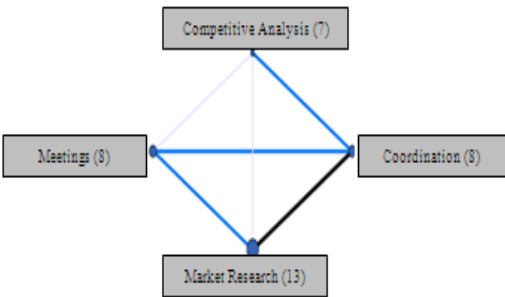
**Course Curriculum**

**Figure 10: Curriculum setting - City School**

As a method for curriculum setting, 40% respondents said meetings, 60% market research, 40% coordination and 35% competitive analysis.
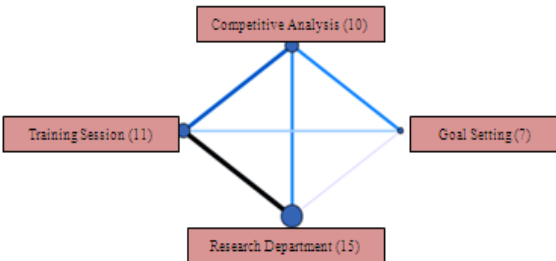
**Figure 11: Curriculum setting - Roots School**

As a method for curriculum setting, 55% said training sessions, 50% competitive analysis, 35% goal setting and 75% said research.

| | |
|---|---|
| Wood Work | 20% |
| Painting | 50% |
| Home Economics | 40% |
| EPL | 70% |

**Figure 12: Vocational/Technical training - City School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Computer Skills | 80% |
| Painting | 50% |
| Music | 25% |

**Figure 13: Vocational/Technical training - Roots School Environment**

| | |
|---|---|
| Story Reading | 22% |
| Sports | 85% |
| Poems | 15% |
| Music | 25% |
| Karate | 10% |
| Debate | 40% |
| Dance | 10% |
| Assemblies | 30% |
| | 55% |
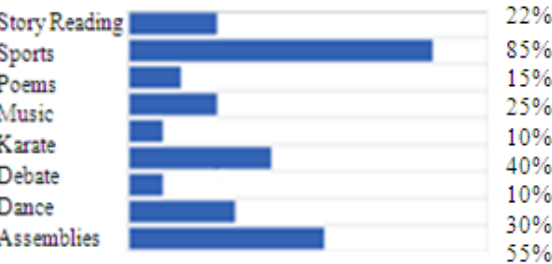
**Figure 13: Extracurricular activities - City School**

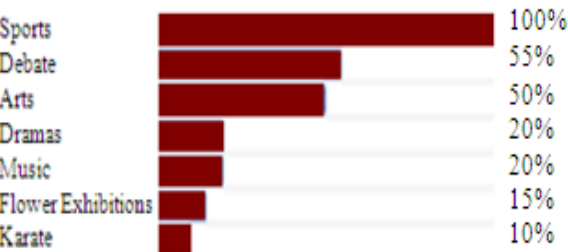| | |
|---|---|
| Sports | 100% |
| Debate | 55% |
| Arts | 50% |
| Dramas | 20% |
| Music | 20% |
| Flower Exhibitions | 15% |
| Karate | 10% |

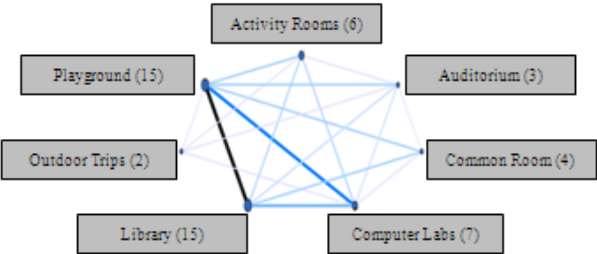**Figure 14: Extracurricular activities - Roots School**

**Figure 15: Facilities - City School**

Regarding facilities, 75% respondents said playground, 10% outdoor trips, 75% library, 35% computer labs, 20% common rooms, 15% auditoriums, 30% activity rooms.
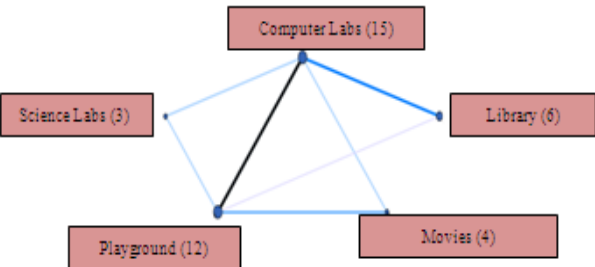
**Figure 16: Facilities - Roots School**

Regarding facilities, 75% respondents said computer labs, 60% playground, 30% library, 20% movies, 15% science labs.

**Processes**

| | |
|---|---|
| Internet | 55% |
| ERP System | 20% |
| Computer Databases | 85% |

**Figure 17: Technology Use - City School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Online System | 60% |
| Computer Databases | 55% |
| Online Games | 20% |

**Figure 18: Technology Use - Roots School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Result day | 40% |
| Parent Teacher Meeting | 60% |
| Homework | 30% |
| Class participation | 30% |

**Figure 19: Feedback - City School**

| | |
|---|---|
| Weekly Assessments | 65% |
| Result day | 60% |
| Parent Teacher Meeting | 50% |

**Figure 20: Feedback - Roots School**

**Discussion**

The students at private schools enter their respective schools only after they meet a certain admission criteria. Roots consider primary level admissions as being more dependent on age of the child. In a system where the entry test at schools checks the basic abilities of students, it is normally higher priority as done by City School. Other factors such as interview, medical reports, and language skills are all supporting criteria. It is evident that the finances that come into these schools dominate both the players admission criteria. Private schools are known to impart a certain level of grooming to its students[13]. The students at City School are groomed at a basic level where manners are the dominating force. Roots School System has a wider array of grooming levels that it imparts to its students. The more grooming that is imparted to the students, the better it is for the school.

The private schools faculty is a major contributor to the effectiveness of a school. Both City School and Roots have more or less the same faculty qualification criteria. However, Roots considers the experience of the faculty as an important character. For primary level, experience matters because the faculty has to mold the minds of the future leaders of the country. The students at primary level have an affiliation with their teachers; hence the teachers have to be retained. Therefore, once you have a competent, qualified faculty member, it is important to retain them. City School has increments as it's major measure for retention while Roots School has the pay packages initially designed as retention measures. In other words, by looking at the array of different measures to retain faculty, it is evident that Roots School concentrates more on retention as compared to City School.

The course curriculum at private schools is comparatively better than that of public schools. They have a method determined to set the curriculum. City School and Roots both give emphasize more on market research. The concept of training and greater importance to competitive analysis shows that Roots School is more updated when it comes to curriculum setting.Most schools in Pakistan do not give importance to vocational and technical training at the primary level. However, City School majorly imparts EPL (exercises of practical life) which is considered as a great help to students. Since the young generation is more technology savvy, Roots caters to this and imparts technical training of computer skills. This is a more tangible and effective for students.

The environment of a school builds the personality and confidence of a child. Schools are not only for studying. Students spend majority of their time at school at the primary stage, hence they cannot be studying all the time. Schools have to find a balance between studies and extracurricular activities. A student's school life will be better if more extracurricular activities are imparted to broaden their horizons. City School has a range of extracurricular activities while Roots School has sports as it's dominant extracurricular activity. Keeping this in context, the playground and library facilities are more prominent at City School. Since Roots imparts computer skills as technical training, it gives more importance to computer labs as compared to playground and library. However, a wider array of facilities ensures better environment because of variety provided to students. This wider variety is shown by City School when it comes to facilities.

Efficient Processes will lead to better school. Currently, technology is of prime importance. Private schools use technology to further improve the functions and operations of the school. Any school that does not use technology in its system is lagging behind in the race for being the best. City School has used technology in it's operations by ensuring that they have more computer database, carrying student information. Roots also has computer database but their technology usage is more based on the online system that they have created. City School has a more comprehensive technology use as compared to Roots School. At the Primary Level, feedback is one of the key ways to evaluate the education. Parents need to know how their child is performing in the school. City School has different ways of doing this, but Parent Teacher Meetings is known as the most effective for this school. Roots give more importance to weekly assessments. Parent Teacher Meetings are normally held less frequently, hence weekly assessments are a better way to ensure continuous feedback to parents, faculty and administration.

## Conclusion

On the basis of the above findings, it is concluded that Roots School is comparatively better than City School as Roots has most positive aspects. Roots School gives due importance to admission test, and the level of grooming imparted to students at Roots is more, compared to City School. The faculty at Roots School is experienced and the administration takes care of the retention of the faculty. The curriculum design is set after a lot of research and analysis and student are taught computer skills more commonly. City School may have more extracurricular activities but the difference is negligible. The method of feedback to all stakeholders in the school (that is administration, faculty, parents) is more comprehensive and effective in Roots School. All in all Roots School outweighs City School in major areas of the dimensions that have been used to evaluate the schools.

Primary Schooling is dependent on the some very basic factors that need to be good in order to ensure its competitiveness. These factors are pre-dominantly present in Roots School hence, it is concluded that Root School is more competitive.

City School may need to improve its faculty qualification criteria, curriculum setting measures and feedback mechanisms in order to be at par with other schools. City School being an international player as well has to continuously revise and it's update it's policies.

Pakistan's private school sector has to start realizing the importance of the implications of the education they are providing to the future of the country. These schools need to be less dependent on the finances of elite parents who do not pay heed to the quality of education that is being imparted to their children. It is surprising that the importance of the presence of a reference for admission did not come up in the research. References and external pressures also dominate the private schools in the country. These external variables affect the operation of the school. This tendency of private schools needs to be checked and the administration has to change their ways.

Children are admitted into private schools thinking that the school is responsible for the child's wellbeing. It has to be a collaborative effort of the private sector school and parents. The lives of innocent children are in the hands of the schools administration and faculty; hence each step has to be made cautiously.

## References

[1] UNESCO-APNIEVE, 2002. Learning to Be: A Holistic and Integrated Approach to Values Education for Human Development. UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, Volume 2, pp. 5-9.

[2] Behlol, M. G., 2011. Concept of Supervision and Supervisory Practices at Primary Level in Pakistan.. International Education Studies, 4 (4), pp. 28-35.

[3] Nabi Bux Jumani, M. A. P. D. P. M., 2010. Evaluation of the literacy projects functioning under federal ministry of education in Pakistan. International journal of academic research, 2(5), pp. 5-8.

[4] Mirza Arshad Baig, H.-u.-R., 2012. Teachers' opinion/ perception about the National Professtional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan.. Interdisciplinary journal of contemporary research in business, 3(12), pp. 10-12.

[5] Hussain, M., 2012. Problems Faced by the Private Sector at the Primary Level in Pakistan.. Language in India, 12(1), pp. 172-185.

[6] Farah, I. R. S., 2007. Public–Private Partnerships: Implications for Primary Schooling in Pakistan.. Social Policy & Administration, 41(4), pp. 339-354.

[7] Hussain, I. A. M. A. S., 2011. Role of Private Schools' Teachers in the Enhancement of Quality Education at the Primary Level in District Kohat, Pakistan.. Language in India, 11(9), pp. 219-226.

[8] Khan, S. B., 2010. Problems in Universalization of Primary Education in Pakistan.. Pakistan Journal of Commerce & Social Sciences, 4(2), pp. 147-155.

[9] Murtaza, H. M. D. M. N., 2011. Inter-Province Comparison of Private Sector in Primary Education.. Language in India, 11(5), pp. 335-345.