



Education Decentralization and Policy Implementation in Pakistan: The Role of District Governance and School Accountability

Amna Riaz¹, Azmat Riaz Shah², Dr. Riffat Ahmad³, Sana Usman⁴, Asad Ullah⁵

¹ SST (General), Worker's Welfare School (Girls), Saho ki Malian, Sheikhpura, Pakistan.

Email: aashi0630@yahoo.com

² PhD Scholar, Faculty of Education, University of Lahore, Lahore, Pakistan.

Email: 70191917@student.uol.edu.pk

³ School Education Department, Gujranwala, Punjab, Pakistan.

Email: riffatahmad78@gmail.com

⁴ CEO, Ghaniya Arts Cafe.

Email: Sanausman960@gmail.com

⁵ Department of Educational Research & Assessment, University of Okara, Okara, 56300, Pakistan.

Email: asadullahsial786@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1823-5743>

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ABSTRACT

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Corresponding author:

Amna Riaz

Email: aashi0630@yahoo.com

Educational decentralization aims to enhance responsiveness and accountability; however, its implementation is often limited by disparities in school resources. This study investigates administrative structures and educational service provision in the Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur districts of Sindh, Pakistan. This study used a quantitative descriptive-comparative approach, supplemented by documentary policy analysis; the research draws on available data from the Sindh Annual School Census 2023–24 and official government records. District- and taluka-level aggregates were examined using frequencies, percentages, and percentage-point comparisons. Across the three districts, 245 campus-school and 422 merged-school classifications were identified, resulting in 667 administrative classifications. The proportion of schools with buildings was 95.1% in Hyderabad and 90.9% in Sukkur. Notable within-district disparities were observed; for example, electricity availability ranged from 23.6% in Rohri and Salehpat to 95.2% in Sukkur City. In Karachi East, among 180 government schools, 27.2% had science laboratories, 18.9% had computer laboratories, and 12.8% had libraries. Total reported enrolment was 53,663 students, with girls comprising 52.4%. Documentary evidence confirmed formal monitoring and school-management arrangements, although their effectiveness was not assessed. The findings reveal significant geographical inequalities in educational facilities within a unified provincial governance structure. Enhancing geographically targeted resource allocation, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms may improve implementation outcomes. Aggregate cross-sectional data do not permit causal inference regarding the effects of decentralization or accountability on service provision. Future research should employ school-level longitudinal data and direct measures of discretion and accountability performance.

Introduction

Educational reform relies not only on policy design but also on the institutional arrangements that turn policies into everyday school practices. While governments may set ambitious objectives for access, equity, and learning, effective implementation requires

coordinated decisions regarding resources, personnel, supervision, and administrative support. The World Bank (2018) notes that educational progress is limited when incentives and relationships within education systems are not aligned with learning. Educational decentralization addresses this governance challenge by shifting decision-making authority closer to the institutions and communities that deliver education. Its significance extends beyond administrative restructuring to whether local actors possess the authority, capacity, and accountability necessary for effective policy implementation.

The theoretical justification for decentralization is based on the premise that local decision-makers possess superior knowledge of community needs and can respond more effectively than distant authorities. However, proximity does not inherently ensure responsiveness. Bardhan (2002) contends that the advantages of decentralization depend on institutional factors, such as the distribution of political influence and the potential for local elite capture. Faguet (2014) also emphasizes the roles of political competition and public accountability in shaping the relationship between decentralization and governance. These perspectives indicate that decentralization should be evaluated by the changes it produces in decision-making and accountability, rather than by the formal transfer of responsibilities alone. In the educational context, this requires distinguishing between responsibilities assigned to local institutions and the discretion those institutions can actually exercise.

International evidence cautions against the assumption that increased autonomy consistently leads to educational improvements. Hanushek et al. (2013) found that the relationship between school autonomy and student achievement varies by countries' levels of development and educational performance, suggesting that autonomy functions differently across institutional contexts. Similarly, Galiani et al. (2008), in their study of school decentralization in Argentina, observed overall improvements in achievement but noted that disadvantaged populations did not benefit equally. While these studies focus on educational outcomes rather than policy implementation, they provide a critical foundation for this inquiry: decentralization must be analyzed alongside local capacity and social inequality. Transferring authority may create opportunities for improvement but can leave under-resourced communities unable to benefit fully.

Pakistan offers a particularly relevant context for examining these relationships, as its decentralization reforms have entailed distinct changes at multiple levels of government. The 2001 devolution reforms expanded local government responsibilities, while the Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment of 2010 enhanced provincial authority. These developments represent different forms of decentralization and should not be considered equivalent. Shah's (2012) analysis of Pakistan's constitutional restructuring highlights both the opportunities arising from provincial empowerment and the ongoing challenges of governance reform. This distinction matters in education: transferring responsibilities from the federal government to provinces does not automatically confer meaningful decision-making authority on districts or schools. Therefore, the implementation implications of decentralization depend on how authority, resources, and oversight are subsequently structured within provinces.

Evidence from Pakistan further underscores the importance of distinguishing between improvements in service provision and broader educational governance. Aslam and Yilmaz (2011), using panel data from 183 villages, found that the provision of several local services, including school facilities, increased after the 2001 decentralization reforms, although these improvements were not consistent across all services. These findings suggest that decentralization can affect public service provision, but do not demonstrate that all aspects of school management or policy implementation improve concurrently. For example, a school may receive additional facilities yet still face challenges in planning, coordination, or meeting administrative requirements. Thus, evaluating decentralization requires careful attention to the processes that link institutional reform to service delivery. District governance is a critical component in this context, as district education offices serve as intermediaries between provincial policy directives and school-level practices. Komatsu's (2009) qualitative study of local education administration in Pakistan highlights the constraints district education offices face and underscores the need to understand local administrative conditions. In addition, Ali (2011) identifies inadequate policy communication as a significant obstacle in capacity-building reforms in Sindh. Collectively, these studies indicate that assigning implementation responsibilities alone is insufficient if officials lack a shared understanding of policy objectives or the organizational support needed to achieve them. District governance should therefore be evaluated based on practical capabilities such as communicating policy requirements, coordinating activities, providing timely support, and addressing challenges schools encounter. Challenges encountered by schools.

School accountability represents a related yet distinct aspect of decentralized governance. It encompasses the mechanisms by which schools justify their decisions, disclose pertinent information, and respond to oversight and community concerns. Bruns et al. (2011) distinguish among information-based accountability, school-based management, and teacher incentive reforms, showing that accountability can operate through multiple institutional channels. UNESCO (2017) further asserts that accountability involves interdependent responsibilities among governments, schools, teachers, and other stakeholders. Accordingly, effective accountability goes beyond inspections or collecting performance reports. It requires clear expectations, reliable information, opportunities for

explanation, and the capacity to address identified weaknesses. This distinction is particularly relevant when schools are expected to fulfill policy requirements while relying on higher administrative levels for resources and authorization.

Research conducted in Pakistan demonstrates that specific accountability and decision-making structures can affect educational performance. Andrabi et al. (2017) found that providing school and child performance information through report cards improved test scores and enrolment in the educational markets studied. These results highlight the potential benefits of accessible information, though the intervention does not directly assess district administrative accountability. Rahim (2019), in a study of public primary schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, found that reforms to procedures for spending parent-teacher council budgets were linked to increased student retention. Collectively, these studies emphasize the importance of the substantive features of local governance arrangements: the usability of information, the exercise of financial authority, and the connection between participation and decision-making affecting schools.

Nevertheless, participatory structures do not necessarily produce effective community influence. Banerjee et al. (2010) found that interventions intended to encourage participation in school oversight in India did not improve community involvement, teacher effort, or learning within schools, although a separate volunteer-led reading intervention benefited participating children. In contrast, Pradhan et al. (2014) found that strengthening institutional links between school committees and village councils in Indonesia could improve learning. These contrasting findings suggest that participation depends on citizens' opportunities to act and on the responsiveness of the institutions they engage with. For Pakistan, they support examining whether school accountability mechanisms provide meaningful channels for parental involvement and administrative follow-up, rather than measuring participation solely through committee membership or meeting frequency.

Collectively, this body of literature provides a clear rationale for analyzing educational decentralization, district governance, and school accountability within a unified analytical framework. The reviewed studies highlight constitutional restructuring, local administration, service provision, information disclosure, and school-level financial procedures. This study integrates these dimensions by focusing on policy implementation as the process by which formally assigned responsibilities are translated into observable school practices. It differentiates between exercised authority and formal decentralization, and considers governance capacity separately from accountability. Furthermore, it treats implementation as analytically distinct from student achievement: completion, timeliness, and consistency of required policy activities are immediate concerns, while changes in learning represent longer-term outcomes. Accordingly, this study investigates the association between educational decentralization and policy implementation in selected public schools in Pakistan, with a particular focus on district governance and school accountability. The study aims to assess the decision-making authority exercised by local actors, examine the relationship between district administrative capacity and implementation, and analyze how school monitoring, transparency, and community participation influence the fulfilment of policy requirements. By integrating these institutional dimensions, the study seeks to explain why formal decentralization may result in varied implementation experiences across schools and districts. The intended contribution is to inform reforms that align local responsibilities with effective authority, administrative support, and accountable decision-making.

Literature Review

Educational decentralization involves shifting authority, resources, and responsibilities among administrative levels. The relationship between decentralization and policy implementation depends on how these changes shape the decisions and practices of district officials, school leaders, and communities. The literature integrates three key perspectives: decentralization as an institutional process, implementation as an organizational and interpretive activity, and accountability as a relationship between decision-makers and those with the right to scrutinize their actions. Taken together, these perspectives offer a framework for understanding why comparable policy commitments can yield divergent implementation experiences across districts and schools.

Decentralization does not represent a uniform intervention with a fixed institutional definition. Falleti (2005) differentiates among political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization, emphasizing that the sequence of these reforms influences the distribution of power across government levels. For example, transferring administrative responsibilities before granting financial resources or political authority can yield different outcomes than implementing reforms in the reverse order. Her comparative analysis challenges the presumption that decentralization inherently empowers subnational governments. In Pakistan's education context, this perspective suggests evaluating district responsibilities against the authority given to carry them out. A district may be tasked with implementation yet remain reliant on provincial decisions regarding expenditure, personnel, or approval processes.

Fiscal federalism offers an additional perspective on the advantages and constraints of local decision-making. Oates (1999) argues that decentralized provision can accommodate variations in local preferences and conditions, while also highlighting the need to

assign functions appropriately among government levels. In education, this rationale supports local discretion where school needs vary, but it does not suggest decentralizing all functions. Achieving resource equalization and maintaining common standards may require coordination beyond individual districts. Therefore, effective decentralization involves aligning responsibilities with resources, rather than merely increasing local autonomy. Financial discretion should be assessed against the specific obligations districts and schools are expected to fulfill.

At the school level, De Grauwe (2005) challenges the assumption that school-based management automatically improves education. His review underscores that autonomy must be supported by adequate resources, performance feedback, and management assistance. This perspective critiques reform strategies that transfer responsibilities without concurrently strengthening the recipient institutions. It also highlights the ongoing significance of district administration: decentralization may shift the district's function from direct control to supporting schools in fulfilling their responsibilities. Thus, district governance and school autonomy should be viewed as potentially complementary, rather than inherently oppositional, arrangements.

Implementation theory explains why formal policy adoption may not lead to consistent practice. Matland (1995) identifies policy ambiguity and conflict as central dimensions shaping implementation. Where objectives and procedures are clear, and disagreement is limited, resources and administrative arrangements become particularly important. Where ambiguity or conflict is greater, local circumstances and competing interests assume a stronger role. This framework helps distinguish different explanations for implementation difficulties. Delayed activities may reflect inadequate funding, but they may also arise from unclear responsibilities or disagreement over priorities. For district education governance, identifying the nature of the implementation problem is therefore necessary before attributing it to weak commitment or administrative inefficiency.

Spillane et al. (2002) advance this perspective by framing implementation as an interpretive process. Officials and educators interpret policy based on their prior knowledge, experiences, and organizational contexts. As a result, policy directives may take on different practical meanings as they move across administrative levels. This view implies that variation in implementation does not necessarily indicate intentional resistance; it may instead reflect differing understandings of requirements. In decentralized education systems, district offices can foster shared interpretations through guidance, dialogue, and ongoing support. Accordingly, policy clarity and communication should be considered integral components of governance capacity, alongside staffing and financial resources.

Research on district leadership further demonstrates that administrative capacity encompasses the quality of professional support provided. Honig (2012), through comparative research in three United States school districts, identifies specific practices by which central-office administrators facilitated principals' development as instructional leaders. The study emphasizes the importance of district personnel's actions in supporting schools, rather than relying solely on administrative titles or organizational structures as indicators of leadership. Although the institutional context differs from Pakistan, limiting the direct applicability of its findings, the study offers a valuable distinction between supervision focused on compliance and support aimed at building school leaders' capacity to address implementation challenges.

Evidence from Pakistan underscores the importance of distinguishing between formal authority and authority exercised in practice. Farooqi and Forbes (2020) analyzed education policy implementation during local government reforms from 2001 to 2009 and found that significant structural decentralization was accompanied by limited practical discretion. Local managers operated within organizational weaknesses, resource limitations, and ongoing provincial oversight. The concept of enacted management discretion highlights how administrators navigated these constraints to deliver services. This suggests that district governance should not be assessed solely by organizational charts or assigned roles; research must also consider the decisions officials can make and the constraints they face in implementing policy.

Accountability extends beyond providing information. Bovens (2007) defines accountability as a relationship in which an actor is required to explain and justify actions to a forum capable of questioning, evaluating, and potentially sanctioning those actions. In the educational context, this framework differentiates between simple reporting and substantive accountability. For instance, a school may submit records without receiving feedback or being required to address deficiencies, and a parent committee may exist without meaningful opportunities to question decisions. This conceptualization supports a comprehensive examination of accountability relationships, including who provides explanations, who scrutinizes them, and the outcomes after concerns are raised.

Fox (2015) develops this argument. Fox (2015) advances this discussion by distinguishing between interventions based solely on information and broader strategies that integrate citizen participation with institutional responsiveness. His synthesis

demonstrates that information alone rarely leads to collective action or improved public services. More effective approaches link organized citizen engagement with responsive public institutions. In the context of school accountability, this implies that community concerns must be addressed through effective administrative channels. While parents may identify issues, their participation has limited impact if school leaders or district authorities lack the authority, resources, or motivation to respond. Therefore, accountability should be analyzed as the connection between community participation and administrative action. Participation also matters. Mansuri and Rao (2013) show that participatory development is shaped by local inequalities, elite influence, institutional context, and the quality of implementation. Their analysis cautions against assuming that formally open community arrangements automatically represent disadvantaged groups. In education, participation may be uneven when parents differ in literacy, confidence, time, or access to influential officials. This perspective adds a sociological dimension to school accountability: evaluating participation requires attention to whose concerns enter decision-making and whose remain excluded. Committee membership and meeting attendance are therefore incomplete measures of community influence.

Research from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa reinforces the significance of these distinctions. Nasrullah et al. (2019) investigated accountability and monitoring through interviews with education administrators, principals, and parent-teacher council members. Their findings highlight community awareness, access to information, empowerment, and trust in community capabilities as prerequisites for effective local oversight. As a qualitative study, it offers insights into participants' experiences rather than causal estimates of accountability outcomes. Nonetheless, its findings are directly relevant: participatory institutions do not guarantee effective operation, and community oversight should be assessed based on the practical opportunities available to participants.

Financial decentralization poses a further implementation challenge. Nasrullah et al. (2021), in a qualitative study of fiscal decentralization in Pakistan's education sector, found that continued local financial authority remained limited and provincial influence over education budgets persisted. Their findings indicate that administrative decentralization can occur without corresponding financial empowerment. In the studied context, this disconnect limited local budgetary decision-making. Consequently, research should differentiate between budget allocation and actual financial authority. Receiving funds, securing permission to spend them, and having the capacity to manage expenditures are interconnected yet distinct elements of implementation. A framework linking school autonomy with accountability across budgeting, personnel management, school council participation, assessment, and accountability arrangements. The framework is useful because it treats governance as multidimensional. A school can have discretion in one area while remaining tightly controlled in another. It also helps determine whether accountability arrangements match the decisions schools are authorized to make. However, these frameworks provide assessment criteria rather than proof that particular institutional arrangements improve outcomes. Their application in Pakistan therefore requires attention to provincial rules and the actual practices of district and school personnel.

Broader empirical evidence underscores the conditional character of school-level decision-making. Carr-Hill et al. (2016), in a systematic review of low- and middle-income countries, found that school-based decision-making reforms yielded positive outcomes for some educational indicators. Still, results varied across contexts and population groups. The review noted less favorable outcomes in disadvantaged communities where parents had limited education or lower status relative to school personnel. These findings indicate that identical governance structures may function differently across schools and caution against interpreting average reform effects as evidence that all communities are equally equipped to assume decentralized responsibilities.

Recent research from Pakistan further highlights the importance of distinguishing among different stages of reform outcomes. Xie and Sarwar (2026) evaluated Punjab's non-salary budget reform, a decentralized school grant initiative. They found no significant effects on student enrolment, attendance, or test scores in the short to medium term. This result does not suggest that financing is unimportant; rather, it shows that additional decentralized funding should not be expected to yield immediate improvements in participation or learning. For implementation research, key questions include whether resources reach schools, whether they are utilized as intended, and whether expenditures are linked to activities designed to enhance educational outcomes.

The reviewed literature supports a comprehensive interpretation of educational decentralization. While local authority can improve responsiveness, its effectiveness depends on administrative capacity, financial autonomy, policy understanding, and strong accountability mechanisms. The evidence also highlights significant differences in the focus of existing studies. Institutional theories examine power distribution; implementation research explores interpretation and managerial practices; participation studies identify conditions for community influence; and reform evaluations assess specific educational outcomes. These approaches are complementary, but their findings should not be regarded as interchangeable. They examine how local authority is exercised, district governance capacity, and school accountability relate to implementing specific education policy requirements. Its contribution lies in focusing on the processes connecting decentralization to school practice, rather than assuming that formal reform represents effective implementation. Examining school records alongside the experiences of officials, educators, and

community representatives can help distinguish administrative compliance from substantive action. This approach also permits analysis of whether differences across schools reflect unequal resources, limited discretion, weak support, or ineffective accountability, thereby providing a clearer basis for context-sensitive policy recommendations.

Methodology

Research Design and Setting

The study used a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design, supplemented by documentary policy analysis, to examine educational decentralization and policy implementation in Pakistan, with particular attention to district governance, administrative accountability, and school-level service provision. The analysis utilized available secondary data obtained from official education statistics and government policy documents. The research examined geographical differences in school consolidation, educational infrastructure, basic facilities, resource availability, and student enrolment as observable dimensions of the administrative environment within which decentralized education policies operate.

The research concentrated on Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur districts in Sindh Province, Pakistan. These districts were purposively selected to capture geographical and administrative diversity within a unified provincial education system. Karachi East served as a representative metropolitan context, while Hyderabad and Sukkur offered additional urban and peri-urban administrative settings with varying school infrastructure and service delivery conditions. Comparisons were limited to available district- and taluka-level indicators. The study employed an observational and descriptive design, without establishing causal relationships between decentralization and educational outcomes.

Data Sources and Study Period

The investigation relied on secondary data from the School Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh, and associated official education-information systems. The principal source was the **Annual School Census (ASC) 2023–24**, published through the Reform Support Unit and the Sindh Education Management Information System (SEMIS). The census provided district-level school consolidation statistics, infrastructure classifications, and taluka-level information concerning electricity, drinking water, and sanitation facilities.

Additional administrative information was obtained from the Provincial Assembly of Sindh's official education-sector questions and answers for the sitting held on February 20, 2026. These records provided information on government-school facilities in Karachi East, including science laboratories, computer laboratories, and libraries, along with district enrolment figures from the Annual School Census 2023–24.

Official School Education and Literacy Department publications concerning school consolidation, school monitoring, SEMIS, and school management committees were examined to establish the institutional context of decentralization and administrative accountability.

The primary statistical reference period was the 2023–24 academic year. The February 2026 parliamentary response was used as a supplementary documentary source. Its publication date was distinguished from the reference period of the underlying statistics, and figures from different reporting periods were not treated as repeated observations of the same schools.

Study Population and Selection of Administrative Records

The target population comprised government schools covered by the official education statistics for Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur. Because the published administrative reports included primary, elementary, middle, secondary, and higher secondary institutions, the analysis covered public schooling across these levels rather than being restricted to secondary schools.

A purposive geographical selection strategy was adopted. District-level observations were extracted for the three selected districts, while taluka-level comparisons were conducted for Hyderabad and Sukkur, where relevant facility indicators were reported. Karachi East was included in analyses of school consolidation, specialized educational resources, and student enrolment.

This study did not directly sample or recruit teachers, headteachers, students, or education officials. The analysis relied exclusively on administrative totals and percentages reported in published sources. As a result, respondent sampling, recruitment rates, and questionnaire nonresponse were not relevant to this study.

The number of schools represented differed across indicators, depending on the relevant government record. School consolidation figures described campus-school and merged-school classifications. School-building statistics referred to the schools included in the infrastructure reporting categories, while the Karachi East resource indicators used the 180 government schools reported in the parliamentary response. These reporting populations were retained separately rather than combined into a single school sample.

Unit of Analysis

The principal units of analysis were district-level and taluka-level administrative aggregates. District-level indicators were used to examine school consolidation, building availability, specialized facilities, and enrolment. Taluka-level percentages were used to assess differences in basic school infrastructure within Hyderabad and Sukkur.

The school constituted the fundamental institutional unit for compiling official education statistics. However, because reported information is aggregated, we did not analyze individual schools as independent observations.

School consolidation classifications were analyzed according to their definitions in the Annual School Census. Campus-school and merged-school counts were reported separately, and their combined totals were interpreted as administrative classifications rather than an independently verified count of unique schools.

Study Variables and Operational Definitions

The analytical framework distinguished educational decentralization, district governance, school accountability, and observable conditions relevant to policy implementation.

Educational decentralization was examined through the documented school consolidation and clustering arrangements established by the School Education and Literacy Department. The number of campus schools and merged schools in each district described the recorded distribution of these administrative arrangements. These indicators represented documented organizational structures rather than direct measurements of the decision-making discretion exercised by school authorities.

District governance and administrative capacity were examined through the availability of school infrastructure and educational resources. Indicators included the number of schools with buildings, shelterless schools, and reported provision of electricity, drinking water, and toilet facilities. Specialized educational facilities, including science laboratories, computer laboratories, and libraries, were also considered relevant to the operational capacity of district education systems.

School accountability was assessed at the institutional and documentary levels using official descriptions of education monitoring, reporting arrangements, SEMIS, and school management committees. These documents served to identify formal accountability mechanisms and administrative responsibilities, but were not considered direct evidence of accountability effectiveness, parental participation, complaint resolution, or corrective action at individual schools.

Policy implementation conditions were evaluated using documented school consolidation arrangements and observed provision of educational infrastructure and services. Infrastructure and resource indicators were interpreted as measures of service provision related to implementation, rather than as direct assessments of compliance with all provincial policy requirements. Student enrolment was included as a contextual indicator of educational service provision, not as a direct measure of implementation effectiveness.

Data Extraction and Measurement

A structured secondary-data extraction framework was applied to the selected official publications. Information was organized according to geographical location, reporting period, administrative category, and educational indicator.

School consolidation data were extracted as reported counts of campus schools and merged schools for Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur. Building availability was recorded using the published numbers of schools with buildings and shelterless schools in Hyderabad and Sukkur.

Taluka-level data included published percentages of schools with electricity, drinking water, and toilet facilities. These percentages were retained in their original reported form. For Karachi East, the numbers of schools with science laboratories, computer laboratories, and libraries were extracted from the parliamentary education-sector response.

Student enrolment information was organized by sex using the officially reported numbers of male and female students in Karachi East.

For indicators reported as counts, percentages were calculated using the relevant published denominator:

Percentage = (Number of schools or students in the specified category / Total reported schools or students) × 100

Infrastructure availability percentages were calculated separately for the districts with available numerator and denominator information. Specialized facility coverage was calculated using the total number of government schools specified in the Karachi East parliamentary record.

Data Quality and Source Verification

Data quality assessment focused on source authenticity, indicator definitions, reporting periods, geographical consistency, and the availability of appropriate denominators. Priority was given to publications issued by the Government of Sindh and its official education administration.

Reported counts were checked against their corresponding totals where possible, and calculated percentages were reviewed for arithmetic consistency. District-level and taluka-level information were distinguished to avoid comparisons between incompatible geographical units.

The analysis also differentiated administrative classifications from distinct school counts. Differences in reporting coverage, particularly between the Annual School Census and parliamentary records, were considered when interpreting the findings.

No imputation was undertaken for information unavailable in the published sources. Indicators without a sufficiently defined numerator, denominator, or geographical classification were excluded from percentage calculations. The published aggregate records could not be used to independently audit the accuracy of the original school submissions.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and geographical comparisons. Frequencies and percentages summarized school consolidation classifications, school-building availability, specialized facilities, and student enrolment.

For Hyderabad and Sukkur, building availability was assessed by calculating the proportion of schools with buildings and the proportion classified as shelter less. Taluka-level facility percentages were compared to identify geographical differences in electricity, drinking-water availability, and sanitation.

Absolute percentage-point differences were used to describe the magnitude of observed contrasts in infrastructure coverage. Karachi East resource availability was summarized as the proportion of government schools with the specified educational facilities, while enrolment composition was presented as frequencies and sex-specific percentages.

The findings were organized into five analytical components: school consolidation, district-level building availability, taluka-level basic facilities, specialized educational resources, and student enrolment.

No Pearson correlation, multiple regression, reliability analysis, or hypothesis testing was conducted because the published aggregate statistics did not contain linked observations or valid direct measures of exercised decentralization authority, governance performance, accountability effectiveness, and policy implementation outcomes. Descriptive differences were not interpreted as statistically significant or causal relationships.

Documentary Policy Analysis

A structured documentary review was undertaken to relate the administrative statistics to Sindh's education decentralization and accountability arrangements. Official policy information was examined under four predefined analytical categories: administrative restructuring, district governance responsibilities, institutional monitoring and accountability, and educational resource provision.

The documentary review focused on the formal functions of school consolidation, SEMIS, school monitoring, and school management committees. Relevant administrative descriptions were compared with the quantitative findings to identify how the reported indicators related to the provincial governance framework.

This component established the institutional context needed to interpret administrative statistics. It did not include interviews, participant observation, or thematic analysis of primary qualitative data.

Integration and Interpretation of Findings

The quantitative and documentary findings were integrated through a descriptive analytical framework that linked institutional arrangements to observable education-service indicators. School consolidation figures were considered alongside official policy descriptions of administrative restructuring, while infrastructure and resource data were interpreted in relation to the responsibilities of district education administration.

The analysis distinguished formal governance arrangements from demonstrated governance performance. Differences in resource availability and school infrastructure were examined as evidence of geographical variation in educational service conditions, rather than attributed directly to decentralization or accountability mechanisms.

Because the analysis covered three purposively selected districts and relied on aggregated administrative information, the findings were interpreted within the selected geographical and institutional contexts. They were not generalized to all districts of Sindh or used to infer relationships at the individual-school level.

Ethical Considerations

The study relied exclusively on accessible secondary statistics, official government documents, and published administrative records. The study involved no direct interaction with human participants, administration of primary questionnaires, or collection of identifiable individual-level information. The analysis utilized aggregate school and enrolment indicators and did not require access to confidential student, teacher, or administrative personnel records.

Results

Results

This analysis focuses on Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur, aligning with the defined geographical scope of the study. It evaluates documented school consolidation, infrastructure provision, educational resources, and administrative monitoring as measurable aspects of decentralized policy implementation.

Implementation of School Consolidation Policy

School consolidation represents a distinct education policy intervention within Sindh's decentralized administrative framework. The provincial Annual School Census 2023–24 provides district-level classifications of campus schools and merged schools, offering a foundation for analyzing variations in the documented implementation of consolidation policies.

Table 1. Documented school consolidation arrangements in selected districts, 2023–24

District	Campus schools	Merged schools	Combined reported count
Karachi East	71	141	212
Hyderabad	113	208	321
Sukkur	61	73	134
Total	245	422	667

Source: Government of Sindh, Annual School Census 2023–24, addressing key policy questions on school consolidation.

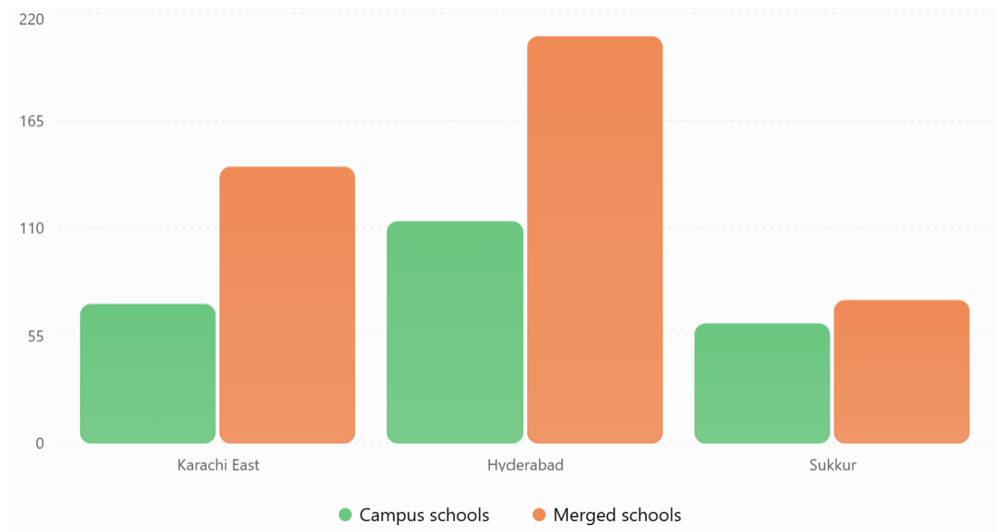


Figure 1 School consolidation arrangements across selected districts

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Administrative records identified 667 campus-school and merged-school classifications across the three districts, comprising 245 campus schools and 422 merged schools. Hyderabad reported the highest combined total (321), followed by Karachi East (212) and Sukkur (134).

These differences reflect variation in the recorded scale of school consolidation across district education systems. However, these figures represent administrative classifications and should not be interpreted as 667 unique, independently operating schools or as a measure of completed versus planned implementation.

The findings confirm that consolidation arrangements are documented in all three districts. However, they do not provide independent evidence regarding improvements in district decision-making authority, school management efficiency, community accountability, or learning outcomes.

School Infrastructure and Operational Capacity

School infrastructure constitutes a critical operational condition for implementing education policies. The Annual School Census 2023–24 provides district profiles that detail school buildings and basic facilities.

Table 2. School building availability in Hyderabad and Sukkur, 2023–24

Indicator	Hyderabad	Sukkur
Schools with buildings	841	1,044
Shelterless schools	43	105
Total reported schools	884	1,149
Schools with buildings (%)	95.1	90.9
Shelterless schools (%)	4.9	9.1

Source: Sindh Annual School Census 2023–24, Hyderabad District Profile, p. 50, and Sukkur District Profile, p. 185.

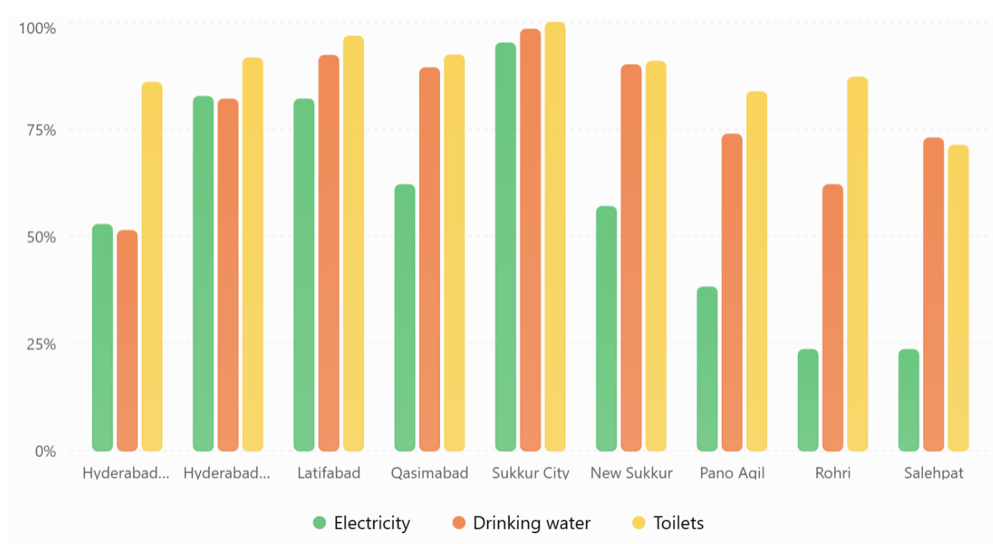


Figure 2: Basic school facilities across selected talukas

District Profile

Administrative data indicate disparities in school building availability between Hyderabad and Sukkur. Hyderabad reported 841 schools with buildings and 43 shelterless schools, resulting in a shelterless proportion of 4.9%. In contrast, Sukkur reported 1,044 schools with buildings and 105 shelterless schools, accounting for 9.1% of the district's reported schools.

Although Sukkur had a larger school system in absolute terms, the proportion of shelterless schools was higher than in Hyderabad. This finding highlights disparities in physical infrastructure conditions between the two district education systems.

These disparities are significant for policy implementation, as the availability of adequate buildings can affect the feasibility of school improvement initiatives. However, the published figures do not clarify whether infrastructure differences are attributable to decentralization, historical resource allocation, geographical conditions, or other factors.

Variation in Basic Facilities Across Local Administrative Units

The Annual School Census documented differences in electricity, drinking water availability, and toilet facilities across talukas within Hyderabad and Sukkur. These indicators demonstrate variation in local service provision.

Table 3. Basic school facilities by taluka, Annual School Census 2023–24

District and taluka	Electricity (%)	Drinking water (%)	Toilet (%)
Hyderabad			
Hyderabad Taluka	52.8	51.4	86.0
Hyderabad City	82.7	82.1	91.7
Latifabad	82.1	92.3	96.8

Qasimabad	62.1	89.4	92.4
Sukkur			
Sukkur City	95.2	98.4	100.0
New Sukkur	57.0	90.1	90.9
Pano Aqil	38.2	73.9	83.8
Rohri	23.6	62.1	87.2
Salehpat	23.6	73.0	71.3

Source: Sindh Annual School Census 2023–24, district profiles of Hyderabad and Sukkur. These are published taluka percentages, not independently calculated school-level estimates.

RSU Sindh

Electricity availability showed substantial variation across administrative areas. Within Hyderabad, the reported proportions ranged from 52.8% in Hyderabad Taluka to 82.7% in Hyderabad City. In Sukkur, electricity availability ranged from 23.6% in Rohri and Salehpat to 95.2% in Sukkur City.

Figure 3. Electricity availability across selected talukas, 2023–24

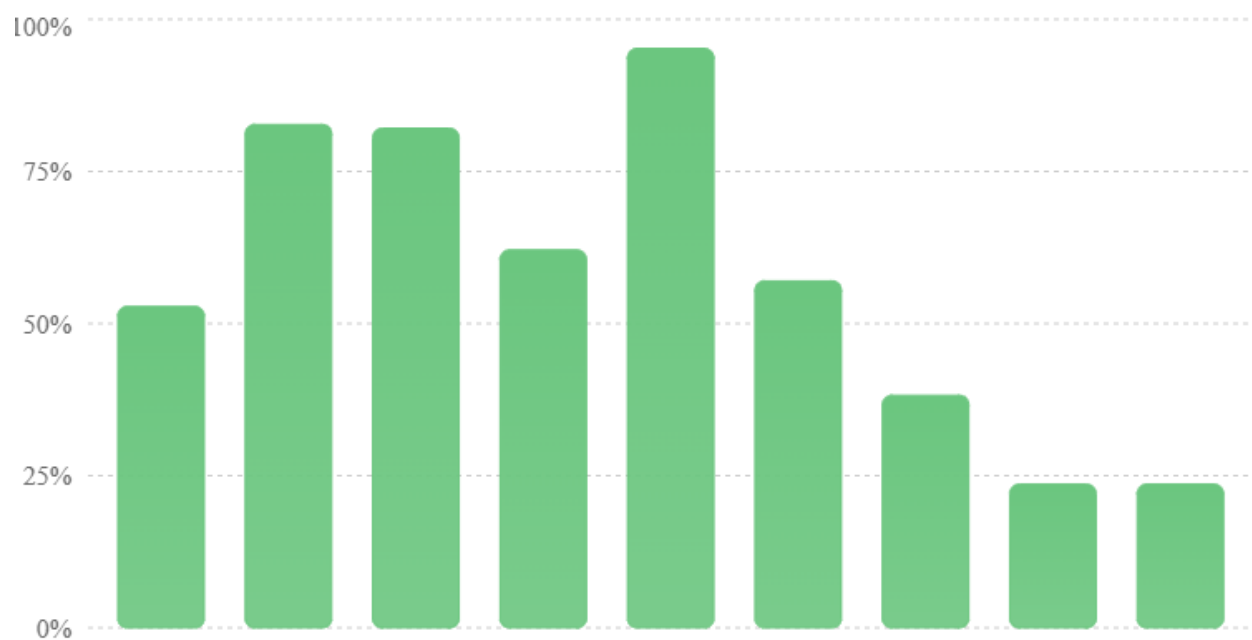


Figure 3 Within Sukkur, the difference between the highest and lowest reported percentages is 71.6 percentage points.

Variation was also observed in the availability of drinking-water and sanitation facilities. In Hyderabad, drinking-water availability ranged from 51.4% to 92.3%, and toilet availability ranged from 86.0% to 96.8%. In Sukkur, drinking-water availability ranged from 62.1% to 98.4%, while toilet availability ranged from 71.3% to 100%.

These differences suggest that schools within the same district operate under unequal infrastructure conditions. This variation supports the possibility that local implementation environments differ substantially, even when a common provincial policy framework is in place.

However, these data represent aggregate administrative indicators and do not establish whether schools with stronger district governance or accountability mechanisms achieved better infrastructure outcomes.

Educational Resources and School Accountability

Official information presented to the Provincial Assembly of Sindh on February 20, 2026, offers further evidence regarding educational facilities in Karachi East. in Karachi East.

Table 4. Reported educational facilities in government schools of Karachi East

Indicator	Reported value
Total government schools	180
Schools with science laboratories	49 (27.2%)
Schools with computer laboratories	34 (18.9%)
Schools with libraries	23 (12.8%)

Source: Provincial Assembly of Sindh, School Education and Literacy Department, answer to Question 52, sitting of February 20, 2026. Percentages calculated using 180 reported schools.



Figure 4 Availability of specialized educational facilities in Karachi East

Pakistan Administrative Service

The official response indicated that 49 out of 180 government schools in Karachi East were equipped with science laboratories, 34 had computer laboratories, and 23 had libraries. These figures correspond to facility coverage rates of 27.2%, 18.9%, and 12.8%, respectively.

The results indicate that specialized learning resources were not universally available in government schools throughout the district. These disparities in resource availability are significant when assessing whether district authorities and individual schools have the operational capacity to implement educational development policies.

However, the published statistics address only facility availability and do not measure the effectiveness of school accountability mechanisms. The presence or absence of a laboratory or library does not, by itself, demonstrate whether school management committees were active, whether parents engaged in oversight, or whether district authorities responded to complaints.

Student Enrolment and Educational Service Provision.

The same parliamentary record included figures from the Annual School Census 2023–24 regarding enrolment in government schools in Karachi East.

Table 5. Government school enrolment in Karachi East, 2023–24

Student category	Enrolment	Percentage
Boys	25,528	47.6%
Girls	28,135	52.4%
Total	53,663	100.0%

Source: Provincial Assembly of Sindh, School Education and Literacy Department, Answer 269, citing the Annual School Census 2023–24. Percentages calculated from reported enrolment.

Pakistan Administrative Service

The available enrolment figures showed 53,663 students attending government schools in Karachi East during the 2023–24 reporting period. Female students accounted for 52.4% of enrolment, while male students represented 47.6%.

These figures indicate the scale and gender composition of government-school enrolment within the district. However, they do not provide evidence that decentralization reforms increased enrolment or improved gender equity, as this analysis does not include comparable pre-reform data or an appropriate evaluation design.

Documentary Evidence of Governance and Accountability Arrangements

Available administrative evidence confirms that Sindh has established institutional mechanisms for collecting school information and managing education-sector activities.

The School Education and Literacy Department describes SEMIS as a system that facilitates annual school census reporting, infrastructure mapping, enrolment monitoring, teacher information, and school-specific administrative records. The department further identifies school consolidation, teacher allocation, and school management committees as policy areas supported by education-management information.

These sources demonstrate the existence of formal systems for information reporting and education administration. However, they do not provide sufficient comparable data across the three selected districts to assess the quality of policy communication, administrative responsiveness, parental oversight, complaint resolution, or enforcement of corrective actions. Administrative monitoring arrangements should be distinguished from demonstrated accountability performance.

Overall Findings

Analysis of the reported administrative statistics identified three principal patterns.

First, school consolidation arrangements were documented in all three selected districts, with variations in the recorded numbers of campus and merged schools. Second, infrastructure conditions differed between Hyderabad and Sukkur and, for certain indicators, more substantially between talukas within the same district. Third, administrative records for Karachi East indicated uneven availability of specialized educational resources.

Collectively, these findings demonstrate that the operational context of education policy implementation varies across the selected administrative areas of Sindh. This supports the importance of examining resource availability, local administrative capacity, and the allocation of implementation responsibilities when assessing decentralized education governance.

The available secondary data do not demonstrate statistically significant relationships between educational decentralization, district governance capacity, school accountability, and policy implementation. Establishing such relationships would require linked school-level or district-panel data containing valid measures of both explanatory constructs and implementation outcomes.

Discussion

This study investigated educational decentralization and policy implementation in Pakistan by comparing available administrative education data from Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur districts in Sindh. The results identified geographical disparities in school consolidation arrangements, physical infrastructure, basic educational facilities, specialized learning resources, and student enrolment. These findings indicate that schools function within unequal administrative and resource contexts, even under a unified provincial education framework. The analysis underscores the need to distinguish between formal decentralization structures and actual institutional capacity to deliver educational services. However, reliance on aggregated secondary data precludes attributing observed differences directly to district governance effectiveness or school accountability.

School consolidation statistics revealed variation in the distribution of administrative restructuring arrangements across the three districts. Of the 667 reported campus-school and merged-school classifications, Hyderabad accounted for 321, Karachi East for 212, and Sukkur for 134. These figures show that school consolidation was documented at varying scales across districts. However, the number of schools within these arrangements alone does not demonstrate the effectiveness of consolidation, the degree of financial or administrative authority transferred, or improvements in educational service delivery.

This distinction aligns with Barrera-Orsorio et al. (2009), who emphasize that school-based management arrangements vary with how decision-making authority is distributed among school leaders, teachers, parents, and education authorities. Their analysis suggests that decentralization should be evaluated by examining the responsibilities and authority delegated to local institutions, rather than solely by the presence of administrative reforms. In Sindh, school consolidation may offer an organizational structure for resource coordination and administrative responsibilities, but its practical effectiveness depends on implementation processes not directly captured in the available data.

Pritchett (2015) similarly contends that educational performance relies on coherence among delegated responsibilities, financing, information, and institutional incentives. This perspective underscores that administrative restructuring should not be equated with successful implementation. The Sindh findings document the distribution of consolidation arrangements, but additional evidence on school-level authority, resource allocation, and administrative decision-making is needed to assess whether these arrangements enhance governance. The results thus support conceptualizing decentralization as a multidimensional institutional process rather than a structural reform with inherently positive outcomes.

School-building availability showed differences between Hyderabad and Sukkur. School-building availability differed between Hyderabad and Sukkur. Hyderabad reported 841 schools with buildings and 43 shelterless schools, resulting in building availability of approximately 95.1%. Sukkur reported 1,044 schools with buildings and 105 shelterless schools, corresponding to building availability of approximately 90.9%. While most schools in both districts had buildings, the higher proportion of shelterless schools in Sukkur indicates a relatively greater infrastructure deficit. sic operational conditions for education service provision. Nevertheless, building availability alone cannot establish whether district administrations have adequate staffing, financial discretion, monitoring systems, or implementation capacity. The difference between Hyderabad and Sukkur may reflect historical infrastructure investment, settlement patterns, geographical conditions, school-system composition, or other unobserved influences.

Glewwe and Muralidharan (2016), in their synthesis of education interventions in developing countries, demonstrate that the relationship between educational resources and outcomes depends significantly on the type of intervention and the institutional context in which resources are utilized. Their analysis cautions against assuming that increasing conventional school inputs will

automatically improve educational performance. In relation to the present findings, this implies that physical infrastructure should be evaluated alongside the administrative arrangements that govern its allocation, maintenance, and use.

Further support comes from Mbiti et al. (2019), whose experimental investigation iAdditional evidence is provided by Mbiti et al. (2019), whose experimental study in Tanzania found that combining school grants with teacher-performance incentives resulted in greater learning improvements than either intervention alone. Although the institutional and educational contexts differ from those in Sindh, these findings highlight the potential significance of complementarities between resources and governance arrangements. In this study, the identified infrastructure gaps indicate areas needing administrative attention, but do not determine which combination of financing, monitoring, and school-management reforms would be most effective—ilities across talukas within the same district. In Hyderabad, electricity availability ranged from 52.8% in Hyderabad Taluka to 82.7% in Hyderabad City. Drinking-water availability ranged from 51.4% to 92.3%, while toilet availability ranged from 86.0% to 96.8%. These variations show that essential school facilities vary within a shared district administrative environment.

The disparities were especially pronounced in Sukkur. Electricity availability was 95.2% in Sukkur City but only 23.6% in Rohri and Salehpat, a difference of 71.6 percentage points. Drinking-water availability ranged from 62.1% to 98.4%, and toilet availability ranged from 71.3% to 100%. These findings suggest that geographical inequality in basic school facilities cannot be fully understood using district-level averages alone. These differences raise questions about resource allocation, infrastructure maintenance, geographical accessibility, and the ability of administrative institutions to respond to school-specific needs. The results do not establish which administrative processes produced the disparities, but they demonstrate the importance of geographically disaggregated monitoring. District-wide reporting can conceal substantial inequalities between local administrative areas, particularly when facilities are concentrated in better-served urban locations.

The findings also indicate that administrative evaluations should distinguish between overall service coverage and service distribution. A district may report high aggregate infrastructure availability, yet individual talukas may experience significant deficiencies. Monitoring systems that capture these differences provide a stronger foundation for equitable resource planning than relying on district averages. However, determining whether these disparities result from socioeconomic inequalities, unequal fiscal allocations, or implementation weaknesses would require additional data on school location, household conditions, public expenditure, and administrative decisions.

The Karachi East findings revealed significant gaps in specialized educational resources. Of the 180 government schools reported in the administrative records, 49 had science laboratories, 34 had computer laboratories, and 23 had libraries, corresponding to facility availability rates of 27.2%, 18.9%, and 12.8%, respectively. These results indicate that specialized educational facilities were not universally available across the government-school population. Because some curriculum and instructional activities require appropriate physical and material resources, the availability of laboratories and libraries can shape opportunities for practical instruction, independent study, and resource-supported teaching. However, their absence cannot automatically be interpreted as a violation of policy requirements because facility standards may differ according to school level, institutional classification, and applicable curriculum.

Das et al. (2013) show that the educational impact of school-resource interventions can depend on household responses to changes in public provision. Their findings caution against assuming a direct relationship between school inputs and student achievement. Similarly, Glewwe et al. (2009), in their study of textbook provision in Kenya, found that additional learning materials did not improve average test performance, although higher-performing students benefited. Collectively, these studies suggest that resource availability and effective educational utilization are distinct aspects of school performance.

In Karachi East, the findings establish disparities in the reported provision of specialized facilities but do not assess their functionality, frequency of use, teaching quality, or impact on student achievement. Therefore, a more comprehensive evaluation of policy implementation would need to examine whether facilities are appropriately distributed, operational, staffed, and integrated into instructional activities. This distinction matters for accountability, as reporting the existence of facilities does not confirm their effective use.

The documentary analysis identified formal administrative structures for education monitoring, school information reporting, and school management committees within Sindh's education system. These mechanisms establish an institutional foundation for administrative oversight and potentially for school-level participation. However, their documented existence does not confirm the quality of accountability relationships, parental influence, or district authorities' responsiveness to identified issues.

Gertler et al. (2012), in their study of parental participation in school management in rural Mexico, found that involving parents in school-grant management reduced grade failure and repetition among younger primary-school students. However, these benefits did not extend uniformly to the poorest communities. Their findings suggest that community participation can enhance educational outcomes under specific institutional conditions. However, this evidence does not establish that school management committees in Sindh have produced comparable effects.

Duflo et al. (2015) also provide evidence regarding the significance of school governance arrangements. Their randomized evaluation in Kenya demonstrated that empowering parents through school committees reduced resource capture by locally recruited teachers. This finding indicates that accountability mechanisms may be more effective when community representatives have substantive opportunities to scrutinize and influence school decisions.

The importance of accessible administrative information is further illustrated by Reinikka and Svensson (2011), who found that an information campaign about school grants in Uganda reduced the diversion of public funds and improved educational outcomes. Their findings indicate that public access to information can strengthen monitoring when stakeholders can use it to hold authorities accountable. Ampuga (2005) similarly reported that knowledge of mechanisms for reporting inappropriate administrative behaviour was associated with reduced corruption and improved public-service quality in Uganda. Their findings reinforce the distinction between establishing accountability institutions and ensuring citizens have the information and opportunities to use them.

These studies offer valuable interpretive perspectives for Sindh, where official education-management systems produce administrative information about schools and their facilities. However, the present analysis lacked school-level data on committee activity, parental participation, complaint resolution, administrative sanctions, or corrective follow-up. The findings therefore support identifying accountability as a key area for further research, rather than attributing observed differences in infrastructure or service provision to existing accountability mechanisms.

Karachi East enrolment records indicated 53,663 students in government schools during 2023–24, including 25,528 boys and 28,135 girls. Female students accounted for approximately 52.4% of enrolment, while male students represented 47.6%.

These figures describe the gender composition of enrolment in government schools. Although female enrolment exceeded male enrolment both numerically and proportionally, this should not be interpreted as evidence of gender parity in educational access. Assessing gender equity requires data on school-age populations, enrolment rates, attendance, retention, transitions between educational levels, and exclusion from schooling.

The findings also highlight the need to distinguish between service coverage and educational quality. Enrolment reflects participation in the education system but does not indicate whether students receive sufficient resources, effective instruction, or achieve expected learning outcomes. In this analytical framework, enrolment is treated as contextual evidence of educational service provision rather than a direct indicator of successful decentralization.

The findings have several implications for improving education policy implementation in Sindh. First, variation in basic facilities supports the need for geographically targeted infrastructure planning. District education authorities may benefit from analyzing taluka-level shortages instead of relying solely on district averages. This approach could better identify schools and administrative areas that require priority attention.

Second, school consolidation arrangements should be assessed using indicators that go beyond the number of schools assigned to administrative categories. Relevant measures include the actual transfer of decision-making authority, availability of operational funding, provision of technical guidance, school monitoring, and completion of defined policy activities.

Third, administrative accountability could be enhanced by linking existing education-management information with documented follow-up procedures. Monitoring systems should ideally record not only the presence or absence of facilities, but also identified deficiencies, responsible administrative offices, allocated corrective resources, and verification of completed improvements.

Finally, evaluations of school management committees should assess their actual functioning, including participation in decision-making, access to school information, representation of disadvantaged families, and responsiveness to community concerns. These recommendations are based on observed service disparities and the broader research literature, rather than on interventions tested in this study. The study used available official administrative statistics, which permitted transparent descriptions of school

consolidation, infrastructure availability, specialized resources, and enrolment. The inclusion of both district-level and taluka-level indicators also enabled the identification of inequalities that may be obscured by aggregate reporting.

However, several limitations should be considered. The study focused on three purposively selected districts, which limits geographical generalizability. The administrative data were primarily cross-sectional, preventing assessment of changes before and after decentralization reforms. Some indicators came from the 2023–24 census, while supplementary information appeared in a February 2026 parliamentary record, so caution is needed regarding differences in reporting periods and populations.

Additionally, the source statistics encompassed multiple educational levels, and variations in school composition could affect comparisons of infrastructure and educational resources. The school consolidation counts reflected administrative classifications rather than direct measures of implementation success. The analysis also lacked linked school-level data on financial allocations, actual decision-making authority, school management committee performance, and policy compliance. Consequently, the study could not estimate independent associations between district governance, school accountability, and implementation outcomes or establish causal mechanisms. The results should therefore be understood as a descriptive assessment of geographical service-delivery conditions within Sindh's education governance framework.

The findings indicate that formal educational governance arrangements coexist with significant geographical disparities in school infrastructure and resources across selected districts of Sindh. While school consolidation and education monitoring systems provide an administrative framework for policy implementation, the available evidence does not show whether these arrangements lead to more effective local decision-making or accountability. of the study lies in demonstrating why administrative restructuring, operational capacity, and institutional accountability must be examined as related but analytically distinct dimensions of education governance. The observed inequalities identify areas in which more detailed monitoring and institutional evaluation are warranted. Future research incorporating linked school-level records, financial information, governance indicators, and longitudinal implementation measures would provide a stronger basis for determining how decentralization and accountability influence education policy implementation in Pakistan.

Conclusion

This study examines educational decentralization and policy implementation in Pakistan, focusing on district governance, school accountability, and educational service provision in Karachi East, Hyderabad, and Sukkur districts of Sindh. Utilizing official secondary data from the Sindh Annual School Census 2023–24 and government administrative records, the research identifies geographical disparities in school consolidation arrangements, infrastructure availability, educational resources, and student enrolment. The results indicate that educational institutions experience unequal resource conditions, even though they operate within a unified provincial governance framework.

The analysis identified 667 campus-school and merged-school classifications across the three districts, illustrating variations in the scale of school consolidation arrangements. Infrastructure comparisons showed that 95.1% of reported schools in Hyderabad had buildings, compared to 90.9% in Sukkur. Significant inequalities were also observed within districts, particularly regarding electricity, drinking water, and sanitation facilities. In Sukkur, electricity availability ranged from 23.6% in Rohri and Salehpat to 95.2% in Sukkur City, underscoring substantial geographical disparities in essential school infrastructure.

Findings from Karachi East also showed disparities in specialized educational facilities. Of the 180 reported government schools, 27.2% had science laboratories, 18.9% had computer laboratories, and 12.8% had libraries. These data highlight gaps in educational resource provision that district planning and school improvement initiatives must address. The reported enrolment of 53,663 students offers additional insight into educational service coverage and gender composition.

The study underscores that effective educational decentralization necessitates more than the formal redistribution of administrative responsibilities. Institutional arrangements should be supported by sufficient resources, transparent monitoring, responsive administration, and effective accountability mechanisms. However, the available aggregated data do not establish whether differences in infrastructure and educational services are directly attributable to decentralization, district governance capacity, or school accountability practices.

These findings yield several policy implications. Provincial and district education authorities are advised to prioritize geographically targeted resource allocation, enhance infrastructure monitoring, and improve documentation of school-level implementation activities. Administrative information systems should help identify underserved schools and support corrective measures.

Additionally, school management and community accountability arrangements require systematic evaluation to assess their practical contributions to policy implementation.

In summary, the study highlights the need to align decentralized administrative responsibilities with institutional capacity and equitable resource provision. Future research that incorporates longitudinal school-level data and direct governance indicators is required to determine how district governance and school accountability affect policy implementation and educational equity in Pakistan.

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