



RISE Annual Conference 2022

23 June 2022 - 24 June 2022

Public-Private Partnerships in Education: Evaluating the Education Management Organizations Program in Sindh, Pakistan

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Introduction

What is PPPs in Education and Why ?

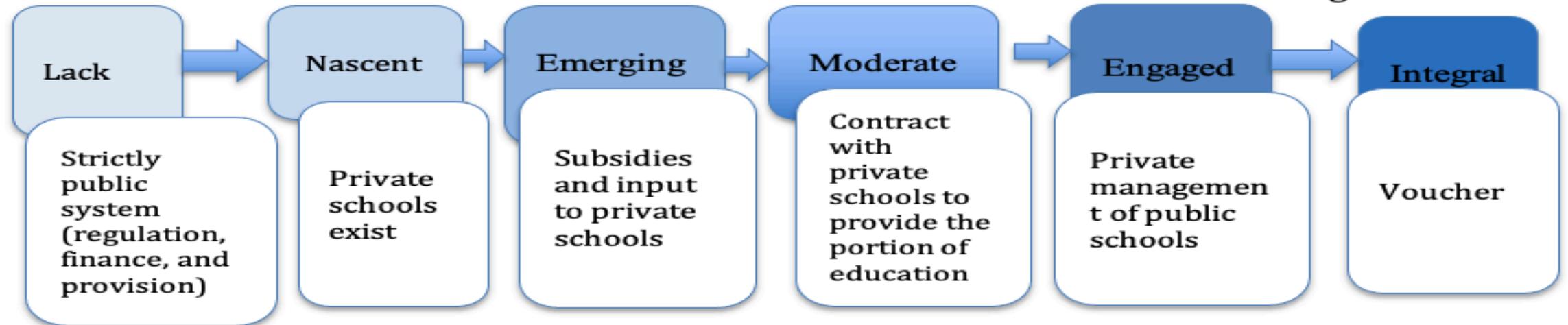
- Government financing and Private Provisions
- PPPs in Education and Global Phenomenon
- Educational Expansion: Goals of EFA and later revised
- Limited Government capacity
- Role of Donors funding and aid conditionality
- Policy convergences through International Standards
- Partnership discourse— Best practices (Gideon & Unterhalter, 2021; Verger, 2012)

PPP concepts in Education

World Bank PPPs in Education Continuum Concept/

Low PPP

High PPP



Source: Adapted from World Bank ([Patrinos et al., 2009](#), p. 16)



Emergence of PPPs in Sindh, Pakistan

- Foundation Assisted Schools—Subsidy/voucher schools
- EMOs— Private management of public schools like charter schools

Reasons of PPPs:

Low access to education and learning crisis

Poor governance of education in public sector

Attracting donors' funding

Research Questions

1. To what extent, how, and for whom does the PPP mode of education through EMOs improve accessibility to education in the Sindh province of Pakistan?

2. How effectively and efficiently do PPPs in education through EMOs in the Sindh province of Pakistan meet the objective of quality education?

3. To what extent and in what ways do PPPs in education address the issue of equity (as related to gender, income, context [rural, urban], and academic inequality) in education?

4. To what extent and in what ways are PPPs through EMOs sustainable in the Sindh province of Pakistan?

EMOs Operating in Sindh

Name of Organization(s)	Description(s)
Sukkur IBA University	A public sector university located at Sukkur also manages several community colleges and government schools funded by the government of Sindh.
The Citizen Foundation	A non-profit organization working in the education sector of Pakistan mainly focus on the less-privileged segment of the society
Indus Resource Centre	A Sindh-based NGO mainly works in education, health, and other social sector activities.
Charter for Compassion	A non-profit international organization operates in Pakistan in education, health, and other social-related activities.
Health and Nutrition Development Society (HANDS) Pakistan	An international NGO mainly focuses on disaster management, health, nutrition, and hygiene. Currently also operating in the education sector under PPPs mode
Beacon House School System	A private school system operates in eight countries, mainly in K-12 education.

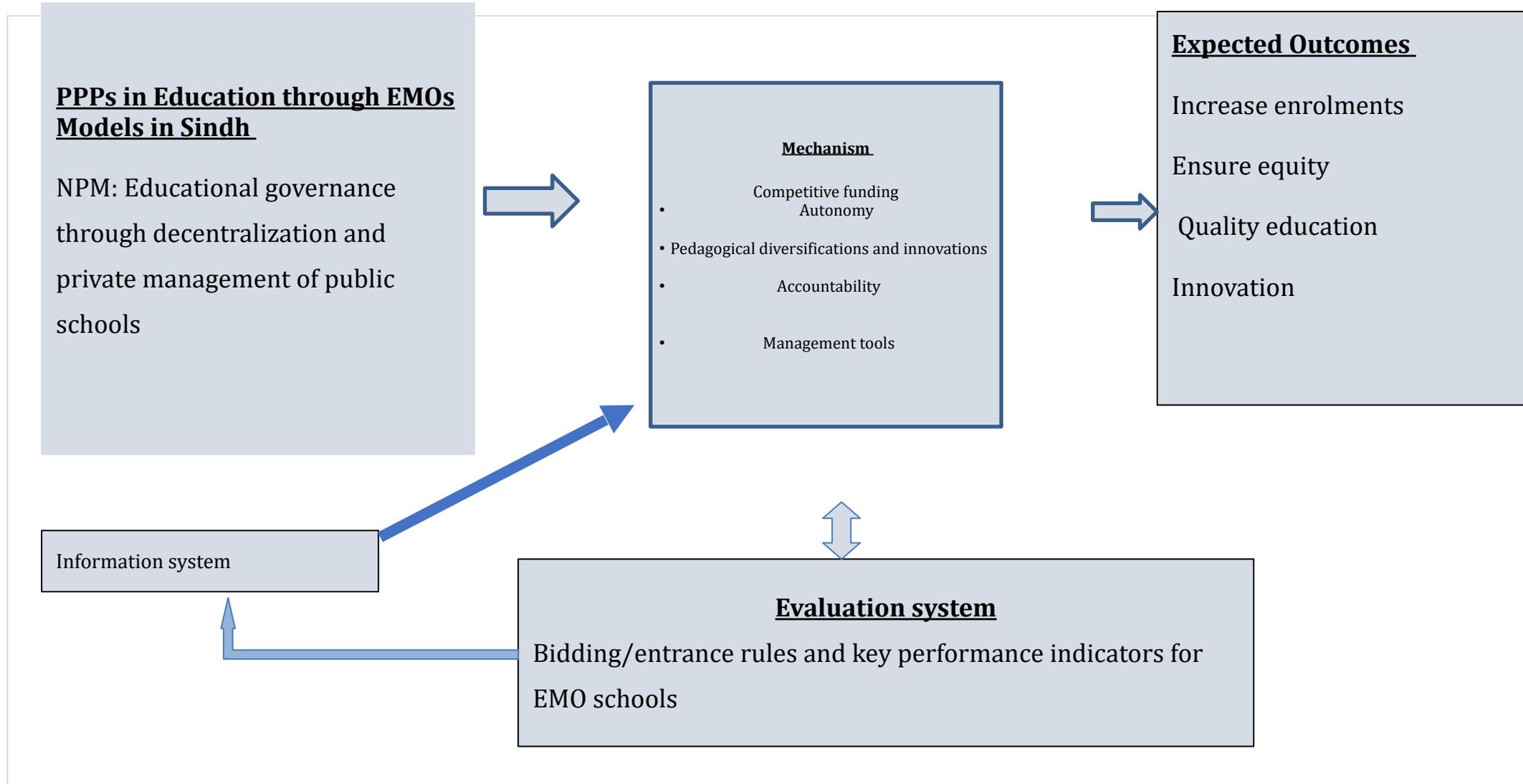
Application of New Public Management (NPM) in PPPs in Education

- NPM the values of accountability, managerialism, and decentralization ([Verger & Curran, 2014; Wilkins et al., 2019](#))
- School Based management
- Decentralization and increasing accountability also caused underfunding of schools and scandalization
- Out-come based approach.

Methodology– Realist Evaluation

- Realist Evaluation take in account of Real-World complexities in Policy evaluations (Pawson and Tilley 1997; Bamberger et al., 2012)
- Not only asks what works but also how, and for whom
- In configuration of cause and effect it also include context and mechanism
- It develops a theory of Change

PPP-EMOs Theory of Change/Logic Model in Sindh Based on NPM



Techniques and Fieldwork of the Research Project

Techniques	Fieldwork
Document analysis of legal contracts and bidding processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) PPP Guide and Toolkit by SELD and USAID (b) ADB Brief on EMOs in Sindh (c) National Education policy 2009 and 2017 (d) Sindh Education Sector Plan 2014-18 and 2019-21 (e) EMO bidding documents and contracts between SELD and EMOs
Interviews with key informants (policy level)	5 semi-structured interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 2 interview each policy developer from SELD (b) 2 interviews with donors (1 from USAID and one from ADB) (c) 1 Independent education expert
Interviews with EMO operators	7. semi-structured interviews: 1 interview with each of the 7 EMO operators
Semi-structured interviews (in EMO schools)	14 semi-structured interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 7 semi-structured interviews with 7 EMO Managers (b) 7 semi-structured interviews with 7 EMO school headteachers
Focus groups interviews (in EMO schools)	12 focus group interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 6 teachers focus groups (2-4 teachers from each EMO school) (b) 6 parents focus group (2-3 parents from each EMO school)
Statistical analysis of SEMIS, SAT, and PSLM survey data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) SAT test results of schools before and after EMOs and non-EMO schools within the same geographical areas. (b) SEMIS and PSLM survey data of districts: 7 districts where EMO schools operate

Data Analysis

- Realist Evaluation—Context-Mechanism-Outcome (CMO) configurations
- Qualitative data has been transcribed and coded and presented based on themes
- Quantitative data has been analyzed descriptively
- In the end , Data has been merged and triangulated based on themes

Findings and Discussion

Two Broader themes or Sections and sub themes

1. Evaluation of Educational Reform policy through PPP-EMOs in Sindh
1. PPP-EMOs for Access to Equitable Quality Education, and its Sustainability

Definition, Scope, and Objectives of PPPs in Education by Various Stakeholders

PPP definition and understanding varies at different stakeholders level Spillane (2006) discussed that policy at the top-level designed and not properly translated through administrative support and training often gets distorted and misunderstood.

The PPP in education is described as a framework where the government role would be more regulator and policy developer. Meanwhile, the private sector's role would be to deliver service efficiently and effectively (GoS, SELD, 2017).

I want to define PPPs [differently]. . . when [we] talk about PPP, people think infrastructure PPP, private finances to some groups of entity, get together and make consortium, to finance, construct, design, and operate big infrastructure road, high and railways... That's to be a very limited definition of PPPs. I worked with things like broader PPP: contracting schools, charter schools, voucher programs, private management of public schools. At the limit, you can consider anything PPP. [In] EMOs we are financing in the Sindh. Given that you can have any number of objectives of PPP: Access to quality, relevant skills just depend on the situation (Interviewee from ADB)

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- Perception of getting better services from prominent private sector
 - Within donor they have different priorities (Mainly WB, DFID, ADB)
 - Even they don't acknowledge each-others work
 - PPPs in one strategy not a panacea
 - Complexities in private sector investment— Make it different from infrastructure PPPs

EMOs Model and Challenges

- Relatively contextualized than other PPP model i.e., Foundation schools
- Still design is not fully acknowledged by various stakeholders
- Donor- driven (USAID and ADB) policy - Issues of local ownership
- Within donors such as ADB and USAID approaching with different conceptual lenses
- Some EMOs better know culture but others are really grappling
- Government teachers/staff and EMOs power struggles

Selection of Schools Process: Supply and Demand Mechanism

- Clear policy and competitive bidding process: Based technical and financial proposals but also many good EMOs could not succeed because of higher bidding
- Concession Agreement of EMOs, based on KPIs financial transparency, and legal certainty
- More supply side mechanism: Government incentives
- Motivation of NGOs to remain in social sector with government funding
- Financial incentives and well-established buildings motivated private sectors'
- More non-educators and consultants emerged

Governance Through Decentralization, Autonomy, Competition, and Accountability

- **Autonomy and accountability:** Better works in SBM— Need more clustered schools
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Reduced ghost teachers, but independent experts lack rigorous knowledge, KPIs are also contradictories
- **Competition, differentiation, and innovation:** Some schools have competitive advantages
- **Teachers Hiring Mechanism, Remuneration, and Security: Quick process but** Low paid teachers and quick job switching
- **Financing, Efficiency, and Equity:** High cost, Not targeted and especial incentives, inequitable distribution of funds
- **Community Participation:** Better than government schools but not legally empowered

Out Come of PPP-EMOs: Access and Equity in Education

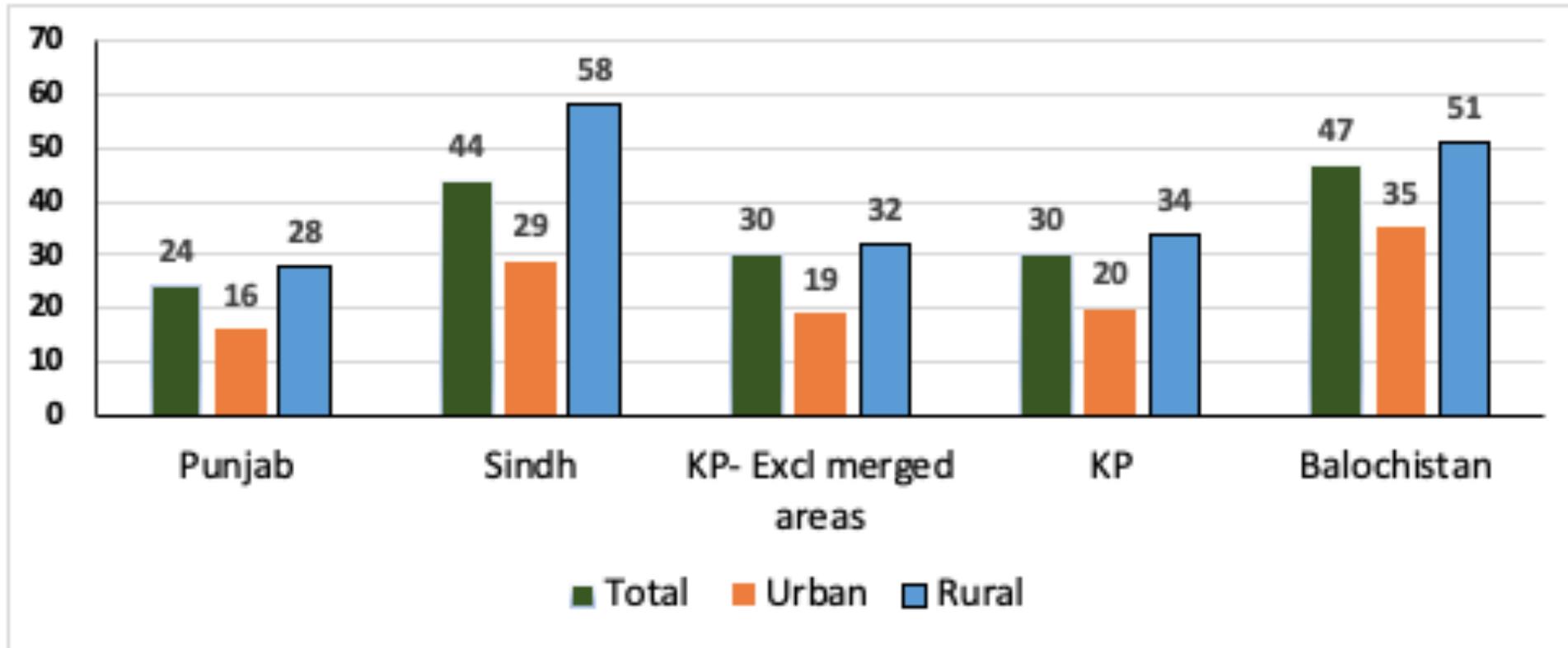
- More focused on post-primary schools
- Increased Students attendance and Girls' enrollment
- The larger impact of access still could not achieve
- Limited number of schools and with high cost
- Schools are already in maximum capacity; No more admission drive
- Admission test at many schools also cause the barrier for many students

Students Enrollment and Attendance

		Enrollment				Attendance			
EMOs	No of Schools	Baseline		Current		Baseline		Current	
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Beacon House	1	0	373	119	393	0	66%	96%	92%
CFC	14	2331	5472	3417	6608	59%	61%	100%	100%
HANDS	3	179	742	378	1039	43%	58%	77%	79%
Sukkur IBA	10	704	1616	1048	1940	58%	69%	56%	NR ³
IRC	4	649	2073	754	2366	25%	52%	57%	64%
SRCO	2	123	430	164	489	61%	65%	71%	70.50%
TCF	19	5701		6116		NR		71%	
Total	53	20390		24831					

Source: Data collected from PPP node of Sindh government based on the report of 2020-21

Out of School (4-16 Years Age) by Province and Region



Source: Adapted from PSLM Survey 2019-20²

Schools Monitoring Report of Selected Districts Before EMOs Intervention 2014-15

Districts	Students' enrollment		Total enrollment gender-wise			Primary completion rate			STR ⁴	OSC ⁵
	Primary+ pre-primary	Post-primary	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total		
Khairpur	222377	88530	192119	118784	310903	61	47	54	34	55
Sukkur	110690	43348	95092	58946	154038	53	38	46	30	47
Larkana	154196	101730	128924	90002	218926	73	60	67	31	50
Kamber- Shahdadkot	129848	42121	105785	66184	171969	60	49	55	31	71
Dadu	189381	48299	140520	97160	237680	68	61	65	35	42

Schools Monitoring Report of Selected Districts After EMOs Intervention 2019-20

Districts	Students' enrollment		Total enrollment gender-wise			Primary completion rate			STR	OSC
	Primary+pre- primary	Post-primary	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total		
Khairpur	258258	92353	217215	133396	350616	49	25	38	39	48
Sukkur	135585	50654	112273	73966	186239	99	68	85	41	48
Larkana	192352	73623	152861	113114	265975	54	42	48	38	56
Kamber- Shahdadkot	148549	50402	119194	79757	198951	51	35	44	39	46
Dadu	173952	58201	141682	90471	232153	69	54	62	38	40

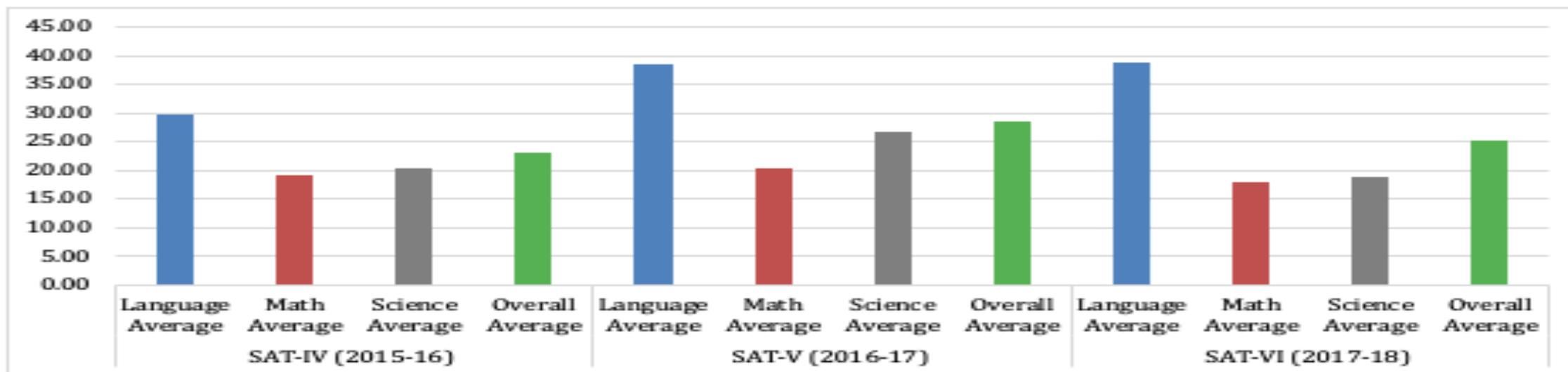
Sources: Authors compilation based on SEMIS Sindh and PSLM survey 2014-15 to 2019-20 data

Quality Education

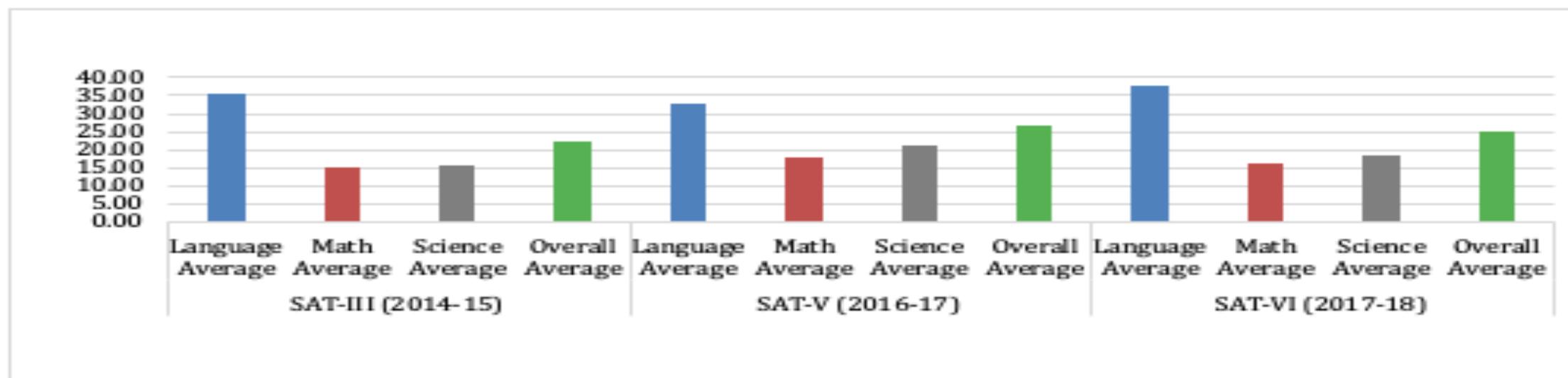
- Quality Education is contested and perceived differently among stakeholders
- PPPs gives better perception of quality due to accountability and better management
- It also created differences in quality due to differences in EMOs: Some performs extraordinary well and other relatively performed poorly
- It also increased standards and testing culture

SAT Results

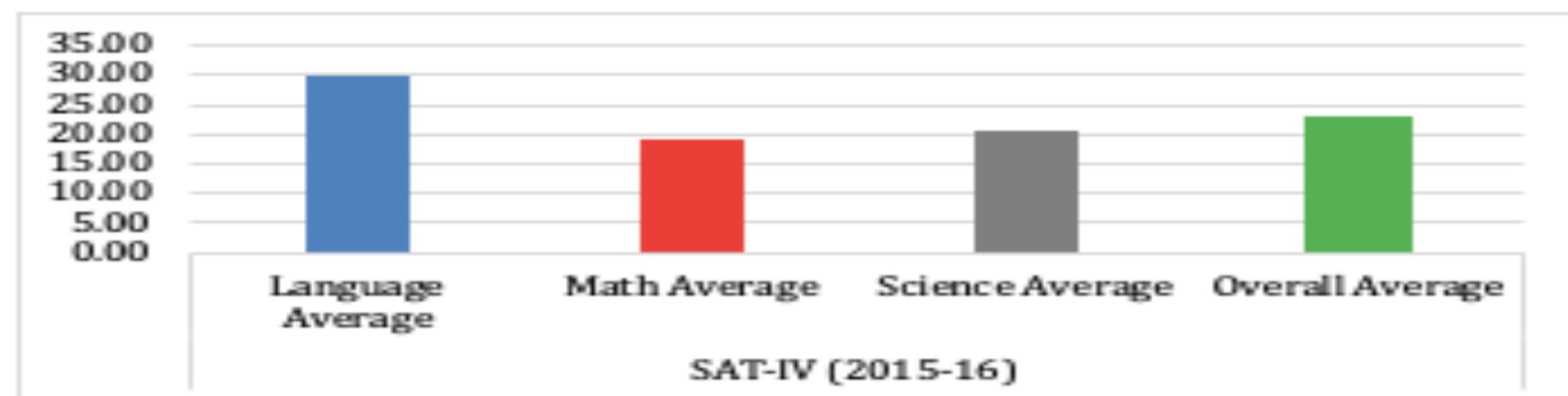
SAT Results of EMO Schools in Selected Districts



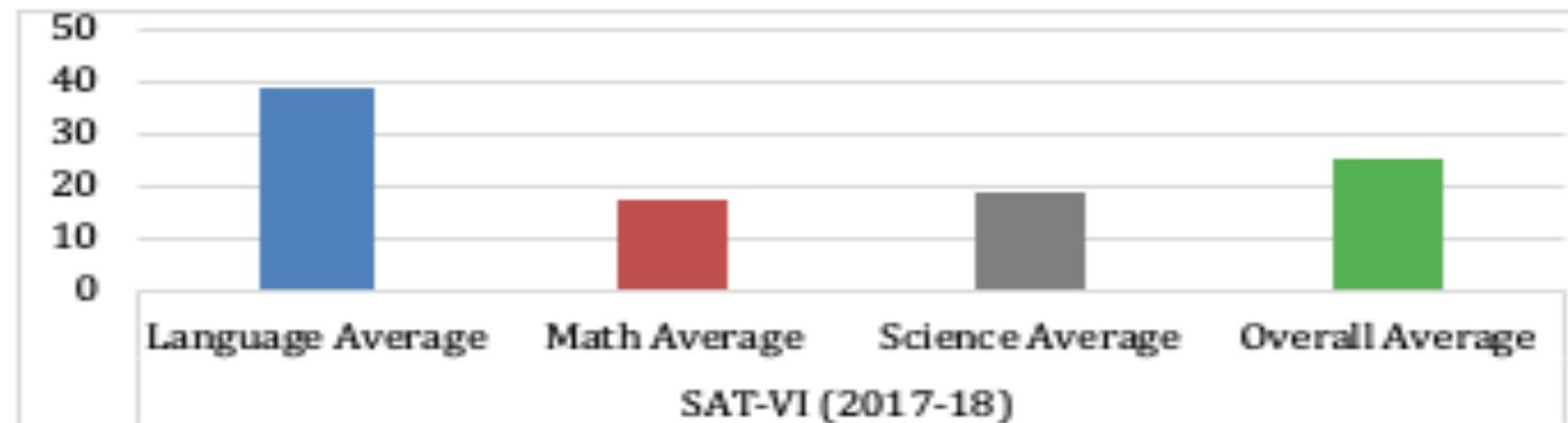
SAT result of Non-EMO Schools in Selected Districts⁶



SAT Results of Schools Before EMOs Interventions



SAT Results of Schools After EMOs Interventions



Source: Authors compilation based on the analysis of SAT Sindh results |

Sustainability of PPP-EMOs in Sindh

- Big concern among Stakeholders
- 10-year contract of USAID and ADB
- Externalities to existing government and low-cost private schools
- financial guaranty, stability, and availability of recurrent budget
- Local Governance body for future stability and operation
- PPPs Can not fill the government schools' gap
- PPPs may not work in large scale

Recommendations and Policy Implications

- Different PPPs models should be under one Umbrella/System.
- Right Design of PPP policies- more targeted subsidies
- Education Accountability and Regulations-Government role should be on top
- Availability of robust data for evidence informed decisions

Questions?