

A Critical Appraisal of the Social Status of Teachers in Peshawar, Capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates perception of the people about teachers, their social status and people's rating of the teaching as compared to other professions in Peshawar, Pakistan. Descriptive research design was employed, (check list) & completion type of questionnaire was used for collecting data. The questionnaire was distributed among teachers, students, parents in Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtoon khawa through random sampling, Pakistan. The researchers have selected the teachers, students, parents, administrator of the local high schools and people belonging to different professions as population. Ten public high schools were selected randomly out of 40 in the district, 100 parents, 40 teachers. The data was collected, tabulated, analyzed, interpreted and conclusion was drawn. As a result of the study it was concluded that most of the people are not satisfied with the present social status and teaching profession of the teachers. On the basis of the conclusion it was also said that teaching profession is not enjoying the facilities as compared to other professions. The study is to investigate the social status, social ranking of different profession, and job satisfaction of high school teachers and comparison of teaching with other profession in Peshawar in Pakistan.

Key words; social status, teacher, ranking of teaching profession

Introduction

"The expression 'status' used in relation to teachers' means regard given to their functions competence, working conditions, remuneration and other material benefits". (Recommendations of the Inter-Governmental Conference, ILO/UNESCO', p. 196)

The status of a profession is usually determined by the prestige, wealth and authority it possesses. A comparison of the social status of teaching by these criteria in different countries may reveal the significance attached to teaching and the amount of respect given to teachers in each society. The topic under discussion is important because the social status of teachers and teaching profession is directly proportional to the quality education in each country.

Teaching is a noble and dignified profession. Teachers are the torch bearers in the universe. Great scholars owe their success to the efforts of the teachers. Teachers are the philosophers of mind. Gupta (1996) describes that the task of teachers is central to education. Hart, the writer of the hundred put the Holy Prophet (SAW) on the top when he made ranking of the 100 big personalities of the world.

According to many writers social status of the teachers is determined by the personal qualities and conduct of the individual teachers. McGinnis is of the view that social status of the teachers is fixed by students' judgment regarding the conduct of their teachers. Similar Hay says that teachers are respected or repelled according to their own conduct. Richardson says that those teachers are respected who are helpful and having square dealing attitude towards their students. Gesell states that humorous, good discipline and careful teachers possess great social status in society. (Review of Educational Research c 1943. American Educational research Association. Henry L. Smith). The Holy prophet was a teacher and as such teaching profession must be seen as a noble profession. A teacher was considered in high esteem by all classes. It was a fact that he was an ALIM (scholar) and knew the Holy QURAN. During the middle ages, the caliphs and Sultans honored the Ulema (scholars) and Fuqaha (religious scholars) greatly. The Umayyad Caliphs consulted Fuqaha in the affairs of the state. People gathered and kiss the feet of Abu Ishaq Shirazi when he visited Sultan Malik Shah. Those who did not approach him kissed the tail of his horse. It was the honor and social status of the teacher in the past.

Allama Ibn Muawiya was blind. One day when he wanted to wash his hands, caliph Haroon Ur Rashid himself poured water on his hand. The sons of Haroon, Amin and Mmamoon used to quarrel over putting their teacher's shoes before him after the lesson. In the last it was agreed upon that each one should put one shoe before him (The National policy on Education 4th Edition 2003).

Teaching profession is considered inferior to medicine and law profession in connection with high prestige and economic standing (Ornstein & Levin, 2003. p.30)

No doubt teaching profession is being compared with other profession and, therefore teachers feel dissatisfied. Thus some of the teachers leave their jobs and lead to teacher militancy in the union movement" (Natale, 1993). "Teaching ranked high because it is more complex than other

75% other profession (Rowan 1994) but here the situation is different, teachers may be given high prestige and economic standing”, Ornstein and Levine (2003)

It is always blamed that our teachers are not discharging their duties and responsibilities adequately and satisfactorily. The quality of education is deteriorating; it can hardly be challenged by anyone. Taiwo (1980) has observed that the teaching profession had gone down on the scale of respectability. Omoregie (1994) reported that the majority of secondary school teachers does not possess positive attitude towards their profession. Studies conducted in Brazil (Garrido et. el., 1991) indicate that teachers show little interest and lack of compromise toward innovation in school. Barros and Elia (2008) describe that professional and social status; school infrastructure, poor libraries and laboratories, safety conditions etc., create new variables that (re)define the attitudes of even most devoted and well prepared teachers.

METHOD & PROCEDURE

Descriptive research design was employed, (check list) & completion type of questionnaire was used for collecting data. The questionnaire was distributed among teachers, students, parents & people belonging to different professions in Peshawar. Random sampling was made in district Peshawar in KPK, Pakistan. Ten public high schools were selected randomly from 40 in the district, 100 parents, and 40 teachers

Objectives

The study is to investigate the social status, social ranking of different profession, job satisfaction of high school teachers and comparison of teaching with other profession in Peshawar in Pakistan.

Table # 1 Shows Monthly Income of the Respondents

Respondents	frequency	%	US\$.161	%	US\$.230	%	US\$.345	%
Teachers	40	100	12	30	20	50	4	10
Total	40	100	12	30	20	50	4	10

According to the table 30% of the respondents’ monthly income is 161 USD, 50% of the respondents’ monthly income is 230 USD, 10% of the respondents’ monthly income was above 345 USD.

Table # 2 Shows Reasons for Selection of Teaching as a Profession

	Reasons									
	Freq	%	Pre planning	%	Parents' desire	%	You like it	%	By chance	%
Respondent	40	100	4	10	8	20	4	10	24	60
Total	40	100	4	10	8	20	4	10	24	60

According to the table 10% of the respondents have selected teaching as a profession through planning, 20% are teachers due their parent's desire, and 10% of teachers have adopted teaching as a profession because they like it while 60% of the teachers are in this profession by chance.

Table # 3 Shows Professional Satisfaction of Teachers in their Environment

Satisfaction in the environment	Frequency	%	If no why					
			Low salary	%	Less respect in society	%	%No job security	%
Yes	14	35	-	-	-	-	-	-
No	26	65	18	70	4	15	4	15
Total	40	100	18	70	4	15	4	15

The table shows that 35% of the teachers are satisfied in their environment while 65% are not satisfied; among these 70% of the teachers are not satisfied due to low salary, 15% of the teachers were not satisfied due to less respect in society while 15% of the respondents were not satisfied due to no job security.

Table # 4 Shows Attitude of Teachers towards Teaching as an Attractive Life Long Career

Teaching offers an attractive life long career	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	12	30%
No	28	70%
Total	40	100%

According to the table only 30% of the respondents were of the view that teaching profession offers an attractive life long career while 70% of the respondents were of the opinion that teaching offers no attractive life long career.

Table # 5 Shows Competition for Joining teaching as a profession

Is there strong competition to join teaching	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	40%
No	24	60%
Total	40	100%

According to the table 40 % of the respondents were of the view that there is competition to join teaching profession while 60 % of the respondents were against the said opinion.

Table # 6 Shows The Best Working Conditions

Teachers enjoy high quality working conditions	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	8	20%
No	32	80%
Total	40	100%

According to the table only 20 % of the respondents were of the view that teachers enjoy high quality working conditions while 80 % of the respondents told that teachers do not enjoy high quality working conditions.

Table # 7 Shows Status of the teachers in society.

Teachers have high status?	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	14	35%
No	26	65%
Total	40	100%

According to the table only 35 % of the respondents were of the view that teachers have high status in the society while 65 % of the respondents told that teachers do not enjoy high status in the society.

Table # 8 Shows Status Ranking of Professions According to People Belonging to Different Strata of Society

Occupation / Profession	Scale Score	Rank
Airline Pilot	85	1
Doctors	79	2
Engineers	74	3
University teachers	70	4
Judges	69	5
Business	68	6
Army Officers	62	7
Lawyers	61	8
Police Officers	58	9
College teachers	56	10

Custom Officers	52	11
Income Tax Officers	51	12
Journalist	47	13
Secondary school teacher	44	14
Primary school teacher	39	15

According to the table the highest status goes to Airline pilot followed by doctors, engineers' university teaching staff and so on. It is evident that the secondary school teachers and primary school teachers occupy the lowest rank.

Table # 9 Shows Attitude of Parents towards Teaching Profession for their Children

You want your child to be a teacher	Freq	%	If no why					
			Low salary	%	Less respect in society	%	No job security	%
Yes	9	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
No	31	77	26	84	3	10	2	6
Total	40	100	26	84	3	10	2	6

The table shows that only 23% of the parents are in favor of teaching while 77% are against of teaching as a profession for their children; 84% opined that teachers have low salaries, 10% claimed that there is less respect of teachers in society while 6% say that there is no job security in teaching.

Table # 10 Shows Attitude of Students towards Teaching as a Profession

You want to become a teacher	frequency	%	If not, why?					
			Low salary	%	Low status in society	%	No job security	%
Yes	7	35	-	-	-	-	-	-
No	13	65	9	69	2	15	1	8
Total	40	100	9		2		1	

The table shows that only 35% of the students have the intention to become teachers in future while 65% were not in favor of becoming teachers; 69% opined that teachers' salaries are low, 15% of the sample are also not favorably disposed to teaching profession because of the poor social status of teachers while 8% say that there is no job security in teaching profession.

DISCUSSION

The whole study shows that teachers are not satisfied with their profession. Their social status is not up to the mark. They are not enjoying high occupational prestige with their jobs than their counter parts in other countries. The current state of education in Pakistan shows that there are several issues that still persist in imparting quality education and many of them are linked with the status of the teachers and teaching profession. Renowned teachers should be invited to high profile meeting to attract other talented people to this profession. Teachers should be given foreign tours of highly developed countries so that they may acquire new methodologies and then apply them in their own country. This profession may be made highly attractive to motivate people to join this profession by planning in advance. Job security and satisfactory environment should be provided to the teachers. The life long career of the teachers should be made attractive. This idea was also recommended by ILO/ UNESCO (1996), and Educational Section Reform and National Plan of Action for EFA 2001---2005. As the builders of nation, salaries of the teachers should be increased, Flores (2001) explored from the newly graduated teachers that what affects their attitude towards teaching profession. They indicated that social and political control existing over teachers and the profession, in addition to the economic problem. Many teachers suggested that they may not be disturbed with the complication of their promotion; their office problems may be resolved automatically as a

matter of routine. For the improvement & imparting quality education research should be conducted in the main areas. Ideal teachers' biographies & history should be written as precedence for the new teachers. Practice of teaching should be given preference & weightage should be given to practice than theory. The degree in education should not be considered less than other professional degrees. Affiliation, to professional colleges, should not be awarded blindly. Majority of the teachers want to be encouraged & be appreciated on special occasions. All parents want good schools with excellent teachers for their children. Most of the parents are of the view that competent teachers should be appointed. These views are clearly stated on pages 161- 163 of National Best Seller – “The Audacity of Hope”. We have to take the education system seriously for the challenges of the twenty-first-century. Most of the parents do not want their children to join this profession because it is not well paid job. Teaching profession (From the very beginning to higher level) should be made very charming and attractive so that highly qualified people may join this profession and may remain in the profession for life time.

In short it was concluded that only 10% of the teachers have selected this profession by proper planning 20% have adopted it by the choice of their parents, 10% have adopted it by chance. On the basis of data analysis, it is interesting to note that 18% parents want their children to become doctor, 15% want their children to become businessmen, 13% want their children to become pilot, 10% want their children to become army officers, 10% want their children to become engineer, 8% want their children to become University teacher, 8% want their children to become judges, 4% want their children to become college teacher, 4% want their children to become lawyer, 4% want their children to become police officer, 3% want their children to become custom officers, 3% want their children to become income tax officer. No one wants to make their children journalist, Secondary and Primary School teachers. Large number of the respondent are of the view that such activities should be discouraged which spoil the image of the teachers. Teachers may not lose their image by seeking their personal motives. (Provision of National Policy on Education for Professionalization of Teaching, The National Policy on Education 4th Edition 2003).

Recommendation

The under mention are some of the recommendation for the improvement of the teachers' status and teaching profession

- Teachers should be encouraged and appreciated on special occasion like annual day and other function of the school.
- Careful criteria should be devised for the selection of the teachers.

- During training moral aspect of the teachers should also be polished so that he/she may not prove a blemish for teachers.
- Such activities should be discouraged that spoil the image of the teachers.
- Teachers should be facilitated like other professions
- Teachers may be participated in the important matters of the locality so that their image may rise in the public.
- Teachers' salary may be raised to the level so that they may fully devote themselves for the teaching process.
- There should be a class on mannerism, for the teachers, in the training institutes as they inculcate that good manner to their students to make them good citizen.
- There should be a sense of patriotism in the teachers to transmit it into their students
- The office related problem like promotion of the teachers may be resolved automatically.
- Regular check on the attendance of the teachers may be made practical especially in rural areas.
- Seminars and lecture should be conducted for raising the image of the teachers in the eyes of the public.
- Teachers may be made aware to devote themselves fully to the teaching process and do not indulged themselves in absurdities.

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