

A STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF M.A /M.SC TOWARDS TEACHING PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT. *This article is based on a part of study conducted in 2010. The major aim of study was to analyse the attitude of university students of M.A./M.Sc. towards teaching profession. For this purpose, all the students of Master level (1st and 2nd year) were included in the population. Out of the whole population of the students, ninety three (93) students were selected randomly by using simple random sampling technique. To gather data, questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire comprised twenty five (25) items including both, positive and negative statements. The questionnaire was analyzed on the basis of five point Likert scale. For statistical analysis of data, the arithmetic mean, percentage and z-score were calculated. On the whole, it was found that the responses of the M.A./M.Sc students were varied. Female students had more positive attitude towards teaching profession than male students. The attitude of male and female students was found to be same towards university teaching.*

Keywords: Attitude, Mater level Students, Teaching Profession

Introduction. The term Profession derives from the Latin language which means “to swear (an oath)”. The oath referred to stick to ethical standards, which may include client confidentiality, truthfulness, and the striving to be an expert in one’s calling, all three of these being practiced above all for the benefit of the client. The term profession, thus, refers to an occupation, vocation or high-status career, usually involving prolonged academic training, formal qualifications and membership of a professional or regulatory body. Professions involve the applications of specialized knowledge of a subject, field, or science to fee paying clientele. It is axiomatic that “professional activity involves systematic knowledge and proficiency. Professions include, for example farmers, dentists, doctors, lawyers, nurses, engineers, teachers, professors, pilots, librarians and some other specialized technical occupations (Wikipedia, 2008) .In this context, Spackman (1991) says:

“A well organized profession should provide good quality professional development opportunities and wise guidance; you should make it your business to research the possibilities for yourself”

Teaching is taken as a profession new and teachers are terrific professionals. They must be knowledgeable about such important things as child and adolescent development (Werdlow, 2008). Chen (2006) quoted (OSER, etal.1992) says:

“Teaching as a profession is and has always been at the center of all education and educational reform”

The best teachers are the ones who teach to the whole children. Their vision of education is not limited to the tangibles of academic achievements but encompasses daily doses of compassion, flexibility, communication, humor, imagination; and the willingness to be open minded. Most important by a good teacher is someone those who use both, their head and heart in equal measures through the school day (Patten, 2003). To become a good teacher, it is essential to join teaching as profession then for this purpose, teacher education is beneficial for their professional growth. Aggarwal rightly (1995s) says,

“If you educate a boy, you educate one individual. If your educate a girl, you educate the whole family and if you educate a teacher, you educate the whole community”

In the same context, he further quoted, the Education Commission, India (1964-66) have also stressed upon the profession education of the teachers as,

“A sound programme of professional education of teacher is essential for the qualitative improvement of education”

In the same context, Sodhi (2006) says:

“In UK, the Ministry of Education and Science is responsible to see the sufficient numbers of teachers to staff the public schools are produced throughout the country.”

Aggarwal (2005) have also the same view about the universities as:

“Universities would have vested in them the important four key functions: The important one is to prepare students for research and teaching”

According to Morison and McIntyre, (1984) if students are given opportunity for choosing a teaching career, their choices would depend according to their social and economic conditions. The range of opportunities for employment, the prestige of the teaching profession, conditions of employment for teachers and the influence of parents over their children’s occupation can all be important factors in some contexts but not in others.

People give several reasons for becoming teachers that can be classified according to their environments and conditions. One attempt to develop a basis for such classification (Morrison and McIntyre, 1984) quoted Ashlay et el., (1970) was a theoretical frame work delivered from parsons’ theory of social systems. Fifty eight clearly distinguishable reasons were identified from those given by over 500 students entering a Scottish college of Education. These were then tentatively classified into five theory-based categories concerning in order of the frequency with which reasons were given,

- 1) Teacher as Worker – the condition of work of teachers,
- 2) Teacher as teacher – interest in the task of teachers,
- 3) Teacher as person – the satisfaction of personal needs,
- 4) Teacher as educator – the value of education to society, and
- 5) Reasons unrelated to the teaching system, such as inability to think of anything better to do.

An individual’s choice of occupation depends not only on his own characteristics but also on those which he perceived the occupation have. Among occupations, teaching is unique in that by time one has to decide upon an occupation. The choice of an occupation is usually a conscious and deliberate decision taken over a period of years (for example what subject to study at school, how long to stay at school, etc); but not much is known about how these decisions are made,

nor about how they are influenced by different aspects of an individuals' environment or of his personality. It is mostly seen that the graduates from working-class background are more likely than other graduates to enter teaching (Morrison and McIntyre, 1984).

The Educational attitudes during their professional training, but having completed their training, they tend in their first years of teaching to change their attitude in the direction of those held by other teachers in their schools, which usually means adopting less progressive attitudes.

An attitude is an important concept to understand human behaviour. To define what exactly an attitude is many attempts have been made in the literature. Generally it is defined as a complex mental state involving beliefs and feelings. (Duatepe, Cikla, 2004 Page 61), further Duatepe and Cikla, (2004) quoted Anastasi (1957) definition about attitude as
“Attitude as a tendency to react in a certain way towards a designed class of stimuli”

In many researches, it has been found about to join or not joining teaching as profession many factors have been indicated which are related to teacher's attitude towards the teaching profession. According to Bradley (1995, p.14) inadequate funding of schools, lack of support from parents and community, insufficient salaries are some factors which affects the attitude to not joining this profession.

Attitudes of teachers have also been determined to be influenced by gender in the report of Dodeen and his colleagues (2003) quoted Dautepe and Cikla, (2004). They found that female teachers have more positive attitudes towards the teaching profession than male teachers. They further quoted Flores (2001), she asked 14 newly graduated primary school teachers what affects their attitudes towards teaching. They indicated that it is the social and political control existing over teachers and over their profession, in addition to the economical problems. She also reported that the workplace also plays a crucial role in shaping teachers attitudes towards teaching especially behaviours of principals and the nature of communication within the school.

Another study was done by (Mehmet, 2007, p.1), in this study, the researcher tried to determine the attitude of pre-school teacher candidates studying distance educational approach towards the teaching profession. A survey was used in order to measure the attitudes of teacher candidates towards teaching profession. The study revealed that the attitudes of teacher candidates towards teaching profession are quite positive due to program they enrolled. Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST, 2006 p.3) has undertaken a number of recent research projects which throw light on attitudes to taking up, or remaining in, a teaching career in Australia; including school students making education and career decisions. In summary, DEST and other Australian researches show that while people who have chosen teaching as a career are chiefly motivated by 'intrinsic' rewards such as wanting to 'make a difference', enjoyment of children, etc. extrinsic factors such as remuneration workload, employment conditions and statues are the most significant factors influencing people not to chose teaching, and to leave the profession.

According to DEST (2006) Teaching is a relatively more attractive to low-socioeconomic status, rural/regional students, and women. One more study which was done by Gonzalez, Brow, and Slate (2007, Page 1-11), in the State of Texas, USA, they have selected eight persons who had left the teaching profession after one year teaching were contacted and interviewed concerning their reasons for leaving. The three most influential factors found were lack of administrative support, difficulties with student discipline, and low salary levels. There are many factors influencing the decision of university students to become high school teachers, stokes (2007, p.1 of 15) from the university of New South Wales, Australia conducted research to look at the factors that influence the decisions of university students in deciding to pursue or not to pursue a career as a teacher. This study analysis the survey responses of over 400 university students throughout New South Wales (NSW) in regard to their attitudes to become high school teacher. In this study, a number of issues were considered. First are three different factors that influence the decisions of male and female university graduates to enter the teacher labour market? Second, what factors influence the decisions of students to pursue careers in teaching compared with other careers? Finally, what can be done to increase the overall level of university graduates entering teaching? There is very limited research into these issues in Australia to find solid reasons to not joining teaching profession. In another study, Richardson and Watt (2005, p.2) used surveys and interviews to target students at Monash University, Australia. They looked at reasons why people were going into teaching but did not consider why people were not going into teaching. The factors that they found most important were prior considerations, career fit, and time for family and financial rewards. While there was not a significant difference in the gender responses on these issues, the sample size was small (63 females and 11 m).

In Pakistan, those students who have been studying at university level have to choose their profession after completion of their study and naturally, different students have different attitudes to choose professions. Attitudes have been the most fascinating subject of study in social psychology, and it still continues to be as such Traverse (1997) defined attitude as:

“An attitude is a readiness to respond in such a way that behaviour is given a certain direction.

Eagly and Chaiken (1993) defined attitude as:

“An attitude is a psychological tendency i.e. expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour of disfavour”

Attitudes and beliefs are typically measured by the use of scales. A scale is a continuum marked off into numerical units that can be applied to some object or state in order to measure a particular property of it (Tackman, 1975).

The scale rests on the assumption that there are underlying dimensions which attitude can be ranged. Scaling is a method by which each respondent attitude can be assigned numerical values to indicate his or her position on the dimension of interest.

Several well known scales are frequently used according to the situation. In education, Likert type scale is widely used to measure the attitude, which consists of statements with five options like

Strongly Agree

SA =

A = Agree
U = Undecided
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree

As we know, the teaching profession plays a vital role in the overall development of nation; and we know that universities are the places where the students make decisions during their studies about their future professions. So, keeping in view the importance of teaching profession and it is essential to know the attitudes of university students who are the future teachers in our country, the present study was designed for the purpose.

Present Study

The aim of present study was to explore about the attitude of university students of M.A/ M.Sc towards teaching profession.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study has been designed to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To find out the attitude of MA / M.Sc. Students towards teaching profession.
- 2) To find out the attitude of Males and Females students towards teaching profession.
- 3) To analyze the opinion of university students towards teaching profession.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study will be significant in the following ways:

- 1) The findings of the study will be helpful to the future student who wants to join teaching profession.
- 2) University authorities will know the importance of teaching profession.
- 3) The study will provide data which shall be helpful for parents to decide about teaching as profession for their children.
- 4) University teachers will take advantage to prepare their students to join this profession.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was delimited to the M.A / M.Sc students of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan.

METHODOLOGY

The complete details of the procedure adopted for the study is given in method section. However, a brief description is as under:

POPULATION

All the students of M.A / M.Sc. studying at Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan were included in population.

SAMPLE

The sample was selected by using simple random sampling techniques. A reasonable sample of students (about 10%) of the population was selected according to requirement of research work. The total sample comprised of 93 students of M.A./M.Sc. of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan.

RESEARCH TOOL

As the study is descriptive in nature so questionnaire with five point Likert type scale containing 25 statements was developed for the data collection. For statistical analysis of the data, the mean and the percentage were utilized.

STATEMENT-WISE ANALYSIS

Items were analyzed through percentage and mean score methods which were presented in tabular form. The data were also presented in the form of column-cha

TABLE I. Teachers' Income

Statement	Levels	F	%age	Mean score
School Teachers have low Income	SA	44	47.31	1.61
	A	45	48.39	
	U	1	1.08	
	D	2	2.15	
	SD	1	1.08	

Table I shows that 95.7% of the students were in favour of the statement that School teachers have low income. On the other hand only 3.23% of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 1.61 (less than 3.00) which shows the lower level of agreement of teachers on the statement.

TABLE II. Teachers' Social Status

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
School Teachers have low social status.	SA	10	10.75	3.03
	A	34	36.56	
	U	10	10.75	
	D	21	22.58	
	SD	18	19.35	

Table II shows that 47.31% of the students were in favour of the statement that School teacher have low social status. On the other hand only 41.93 % of the teachers should disagree on the statement. Mean score was 3.03 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of teachers on the statement.

TABLE III. Profession Suitability

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
School teaching is suitable for me.	SA	19	20.43	3.11
	A	22	23.66	
	U	17	18.28	
	D	20	21.51	
	SD	15	16.13	

Table III show that 44.09 % of the students were in favour of the statement that School teaching is suitable for me. On the other hand 37.64 % of the students were disagreed on the statement. Mean score was 3.11 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE IV. Teachers' Family Backgrounds

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
School teachers come from poor families.	SA	9	9.68	3.46
	A	17	18.28	
	U	12	12.90	

	D	32	34.41
	SD	23	24.73

Table IV show that 27.96% of the students were in favour of the statement that School teachers come from poor families. On the other hand 59.14 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 3.46 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE V. Nature of Teaching Profession

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
For me, the school teaching is boring one.	SA	4	4.30	3.37
	A	26	27.96	
	U	11	11.83	
	D	36	38.71	
	SD	16	17.20	

Table V show that 32.26 % of the students were in favour of the statement that For me, the school teaching is boring one. On the other hand 55.91 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 3.37 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE VI. Female Students' Preference

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
University female students prefer to teach at school.	SA	14	15.05	3.03
	A	28	30.11	
	U	13	13.98	
	D	23	24.73	
	SD	15	16.13	

Table VI show that 45.16% of the students were in favour of the statement that University female students prefer to teach at school. On the other hand 40.86 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 3.03 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE VII. Public Attitude towards Teachers

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
Public attitude towards school teaching is not good.	SA	7	7.53	3.08
	A	33	35.48	
	U	11	11.83	
	D	30	32.26	
	SD	12	12.90	

Table VII show that 43.08 % of the students were in favour of the statement that Public attitude towards school teaching is not good. On the other hand 45.16 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 3.08 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE VIII. Teaching Is A Nation Building Profession

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
Teaching is a nation building profession.	SA	66	70.97	4.58
	A	21	22.58	
	U	2	2.15	
	D	2	2.15	
	SD	2	2.15	

Table VIII show that 93.55 % of the students were in favour of the statement that Teaching is a nation building profession. On the other hand 4.30 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 4.58 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE IX. Future of School Teachers

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
School teaching is just to waste the potential of future teachers.	SA	6	6.45	4.08
	A	4	4.30	
	U	7	7.53	
	D	36	38.71	
	SD	40	43.01	

Table IX show that 10.75 % of the students were in favour of the statement that School teaching is just to waste the potential of future teachers. On the other hand 81.72 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 4.08 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

TABLE X. Students' Preference for University Teaching

Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean Score
Students like to join teaching profession at university level.	SA	41	44.09	4.18
	A	39	41.94	
	U	4	4.30	
	D	7	7.53	
	SD	2	2.15	

Table X show that 86.03 % of the students were in favour of the statement that Students like to join teaching profession at university level. On the other hand 9.68 % of the students were disagreeing on the statement. Mean score was 4.18 (greater than 3.00) which shows the higher level of agreement of students on the statement.

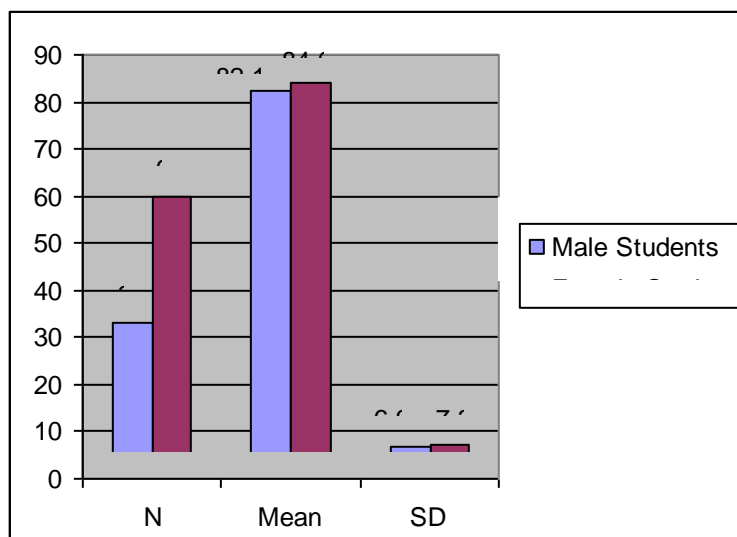
TABLE XI. Comparison between Males and Females Attitude towards Teaching Profession

Name of category	N	Mean	SD	Calculated Value (Z)
Male Students	33	82.18	6.97	1.22
Female Students	60	84.06	7.37	

T.V. = 1.96 (at significant level of 0.05)

C.V. = 1.22

The table indicates that calculated value (1.22) is less than the table value (1.96). It means that the difference of attitude between male and female university students of M.A./M.Sc. towards teaching profession is insignificant. However, the difference of means shows the better attitude of female students.



COLUMN CHART XI. Comparative Attitude

Conclusion. On the basis of the analysis of the data collected through questionnaire, the following conclusions were drawn on the basis of statements-agreed upon school teaching profession that the school teaching is low paid, low standard of living and unsuitable profession for especially males but it is more suitable for females in our society. Furthermore, public attitude towards school teaching is not optimistic, as they are unable to support their families, whereas both male and female were interested in university teaching due to better opportunities.

Discussion. AS we know that teaching is conceived as powerful agent, which is used as a powerful tool to bring changes in our social, moral and economic life of the entire nation. The whole process of education is done through a personality known as teacher. If the teachers are well trained and highly motivated, learning will be enhanced. The teaching profession demands a clear set goal, love for profession and obviously the more favourable attitude towards the profession. So, teaching is a noble and challenging profession and it is important to note that those teachers can better perform this responsibility that are sufficiently prepared and have strong professional attitude because this attitude is transferred to the new generation. Therefore, it helps to build attitude of students towards teaching profession. If the teacher is showing wholly satisfied by their profession, in turn their students will also show positive attitude towards the teaching profession and the situation would be different in future researches.

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