Factors Affecting Professionalism of Head Teachers at Secondary Level in the Punjab

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This quantitative study was designed to find out the different factors that affect professionalism of teachers who are working as heads of a secondary school in the province of Punjab. Cluster sampling technique was used to select a sample of 100 headteachers working in different districts of the Punjab. For data collection an indigenously developed questionnaire was used. The questionnaire comprised statements related to different factors of professionalism. Different factors were given against each statement to get responses on the statements. The questionnaire was validated by conducting a pilot study, which showed a statistically significant reliability index (Cronbach Alpha) .81. Data were analysed by SPSS 21 trial version, by applying descriptive and inferential (t-test and ANOVA)statistics. Results of these tests showed the mean difference in head teachers' responses for factors that affect their professionalism on the basis of "gender, age, district, years of experience and qualification." Results also showed that factors that highly affect professionalism of head teachers included: family matters, extra duties and working environment, whereas, personal interest and health conditions were the least affecting factors. Recommendations were given on the basis of these results.

Introduction

The status of an occupation is based on the community demand of the occupation, its contribution towards community and the role it plays in individual and collective welfare of a society. Though teaching is a developing profession, teachers cannot enjoy full professional status. Similarly, as a developing profession the status of teachers is more evident in Pakistan like other developing countries. There are many factors which may affect the professionalism of teachers. The objective of this research study was to identify the factors affecting the professional characteristics of teachers at secondary level in the Punjab.

A key distinguishing feature of any profession is the usefulness of its services and application of its intellectual capabilities to the practical life, which has been developed after a specialised and prolonged training. There are many definitions of the profession which describe it in different ways but a valid one must contain some certain clear characteristics that a profession must have. Every profession has some services and responsibilities that are purely individual and personal. It requires one to get knowledge for its application and exercise using their own intellectual understanding rather than manual practices. In short, a professional must be able to lean new developments related to their profession and must organise their practices accordingly.

Wells (1990) defined teaching as group of activities that are practised by a teacher like communicating, clarifying, construing, asking, inspiring, attracting attention, record keeping of students' works, students improvement and background information of students. According to Farrell and Oliveira (1993) teaching can be defined for example birational and planned actions representing the teacher to student/s interaction as they work on some kind of subject-related content. Acheson and Waite (1998) argued that the process of education involves teaching and learning of "facts", "administration", and "procedural capability". It may also be considered as the transmission of life skills and cultural heritage to the next generation.

Teaching is a demanding profession; on the one hand, teachers have to deal with youngsters that they are responsible for from their mind and character; on the other hand it provides an opportunity for intellectual development for teachers.

Here are some of the key features of teaching to consider it as a profession:

Education and Training: one of the key traits of the teaching profession is educational attainment (degree) and professional training. They are also getting pre-service and in-service trainings though it may not be equivalent to education and training of other established professions like "engineers", "doctors", and "barristers", which need high academic certificates and testing for entry.

Absolute and Relative Size: a number of persons have adopted this occupation; fifty to seventy percent of them are employed in public departments. A transparent and established system has been established for the recruitment of teachers.

Self-Regulation: as people in established professions are at higher level of self-regulation they are successful in conserving extraordinary entrance registration and requirements. As compared to this teachers, tend to have weak professional organisations.
Service Ethics and Professional code of Conduct: Teaching also has to show public ethos and strong, long-term commitment.

The Work Environment and Remuneration: it is evident that teachers cannot enjoy the working environment like other professions. But still they have many professional facilities and are being paid reasonably.

Academic Background and social Class of Employers in a Profession: the social class of employers affect the status of a profession, the higher the social class, the higher the status of the profession (Hoyle, 1980). Although in Pakistan teaching is the least preferred profession, and is not the preference of the elite or higher middle class. Most of the students are reluctant to pursue their further studies to go into the education profession. Still many students from middle and high middle class select this profession.

Gender Balance: Belongingness of a specific gender to form a profession also affects the status of a profession. In the last twenty years, the majority of females in the teaching profession increases its status as compared to men (Hoyle, 1980).

Commitment to the Profession: Although due to the working environment and remuneration, teachers are less likely to be committed with their profession; still, the majority of teachers like to stay in the profession till their retirement; especially in the public sector they are more committed to continue their job due to in-service and retirement incentives.

Salary: The salary package is partly a measure of the respect and honor of a profession. Inspite of having a moderate salary package there are number of graduated who are applying to join this profession.

According to Meric (2004) a successful system not only needs "teachers" but it needs "good teachers" who must be professional and can fulfill professional responsibilities. Professionalism may be defined as fulfillment of professional responsibilities by controlling the factors that can affect an individual's job performance. Hall (1968) argued that there are two levels of examining professionalism: individual and organisational level. For example, Uzun, Palic, Akdeniz (2013) found that science teachers did not perceive themselves as professional and believed that professionalism comes with time; moreover lack of in-service training is the major factor that affects the professionalism of teachers.

There are many other factors which are affecting the teaching profession i.e. the award system of an organisation, the professional culture of the institution, teacher-student ratios, and the career of teachers. It is clear by the above discussion that there are many factors which are affecting the profession of teaching and becoming a hurdle to take it to the full status of a profession. Keeping all in view this study was designed to identify the factors that are affecting professionalism of teachers in the province of Punjab.

Objective of the study

The study aimed at following objectives:

1. To identify factors effecting head teachers' professionalism at secondary level
2. Identify the difference in male and female teachers' professionalism at secondary level
3. Identify the difference in teachers' professionalism at secondary level in rural and urban areas of the Punjab
4. Identify the difference in teachers' professionalism at secondary level on the basis of level of the education of teachers
5. Identify difference in teachers' professionalism at secondary level on the basis of teachers' experience

Methodology

The study was qualitative in nature. The following procedure was followed to execute the study.

Population

The secondary schools' head teachers working in the districts of Faisalabad, Muzaffargarh, Multan, Sahiwal and Bahawalpur were the population of the study.

Sample of the Study

The sample was selected through cluster sampling technique. Twenty five percent schools were selected from each district to get data from head teachers. 100 head teachers were the sample of the study.

Table 1 *Descriptive of the Variables*

Variable	Category	Numbers	Total
Gender	Female	48	100
	Male	52	
Schools	High	57	100
	Higher Secondary	43	
Designation	18	68	100
	19	32	
Area	Rural	65	100
	Urban	35	
	Less than 10	35	100
Experience	10-20	22	
	More than 20	43	
	Multan	20	100
Districts	Faisalabad	20	
	Sahiwal	20	
	Mazaffargrah	20	
	Bahawalpur	20	

Table 1 shows the details of all the variables of study in this research.

Instrumentation

An instrument was used to get the head teachers' responses for factors affecting their professionalism, which was developed on the basis of the review of the related literature and validated by a pilot study. The questionnaire comprised two sections: one to identify respondents' demographic information, that is age, gender, school, district, experience, and designation, and academic and professional qualification. The other containing statements related to factors affecting professionalism of head teachers. The statements were related to following aspects of professionalism: Reflecting on teaching, communicating with families; performing responsibilities professionally; maintaining records accurately; contributing while working in the school and district etc. Five factors (1. FM: Family Matters; 2) PI: Personal Interest; 3) WE: Working Environment; 4) HC: Health Conditions; and 5) EDW; Extra Duties on Work) that can highly affect their professionalism were mentioned against each statement. Participants were instructed to choose as many of these as they thought were related to each statement. One number was assigned to each selected factor.

Data Analysis

SPSS Version 21 trial version was used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation) were used to identify the intensity of factors that affect head teachers' professionalism. To grasp the mean difference in the head teachers' responses for the factors that were affecting their professionalism on the basis of gender, area, school and designation,

t-tests were used. ANOVA identified mean differences in head teachers' responses for the different factors that affected their professionalism based on the district, years of their experience, professional and academic qualification..

Results

This section presents results of different tests used to identify the difference in head teachers' responses for various demographic variables.

Table 2 *Descriptive statistics of the statements related to factors that affect professionalism of head teachers*

S#	Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Due to the following factor, I cannot articulate an "understanding of lessons' goals and objectives"	3.5	0.24
2	Due to the following factor, I cannot "states the strengths and weaknesses of lessons based on data"	3.56	0.44
3	Due to the following factor, I cannot analyse "students' participation in terms of content comprehension"	3.74	0.26
4	Due to the following factor, I cannot encourage participation from diverse student populations	3.88	0.12
5	Due to the following factor, I cannot "write reflections about lessons and refines subsequent instruction"	2.84	0.16
6	Due to the following factor, I cannot "accept feedback and implements recommendations"	3.54	0.46
7	Due to the following factor, I cannot "develops written plans for improvement"	3.7	0.3
8	Due to the following factor, I cannot "record and update the results of students' assignments"	2.76	0.24
9	Due to the following factor, I cannot collect "information about students' progress in a systematic manner"	3.74	0.26
10	Due to the following factor, I cannot "analyzes performance of students with diverse learning styles"	2.52	0.48
11	Due to the following factor, I cannot "maintain records of non-instructional activities"	4.54	0.46
12	Due to the following factor, I cannot "maintain confidentiality in all situations/settings"	2.32	0.68
13	Due to the following factor, I cannot communicate "positive information and concerns to parents/caregivers"	2.9	0.1
14	Due to the following factor, I cannot engage "family members/caregivers in the instructional program"	3.88	0.12
15	Due to the following factor, I cannot establish "rapport with members of diverse populations"	2.78	0.22
16	Due to the following factor, I cannot seek "assistance from other professionals concerning teaching and learning"	2.8	0.2
17	Due to the following factor, I cannot "participate in school-related	2.8	0.2

	activities"		
18	Due to the following factor, I cannot "Grow and Develop Professionally	3.9	0.1
19	Due to the following factor, I cannot "participate in student teaching" seminars and other required university events"	2.66	0.34
20	Due to the following factor, I cannot "attend all required school and district professional development programs"	3.6	0.4
21	Due to the following factor, I cannot "show evidence of participation in at least one professional organization"	4.66	0.34
22	Due to the following factor, I cannot "integrate information from professional publications into daily instruction"	4.92	0.08
23	Due to the following factor, I cannot "articulate a philosophy of education that includes critical self-reflection"	1.84	0.16
24	Due to the following factor, I cannot "attend meetings promptly and regularly"	4.96	0.04
25	Due to the following factor, I cannot "dress professionally in the school setting"	3.8	0.2
26	Due to the following factor, I cannot "practice personal hygiene and neat grooming"	1.88	0.12
27	Due to the following factor, I cannot "complete schedules, assignments, and other paperwork on time"	1.84	0.16
28	Due to the following factor, I cannot "complete work in the manner prescribed by the university and/or the school district"	4.00	0.22
29	Due to the following factor, I cannot "comply with school and class rules"	3.88	0.12
30	Due to the following factor, I cannot "use relevant codes of ethics for the teaching profession"	2.82	0.18
31	Due to the following factor, I cannot "follow proper procedures for reporting students' welfare and safety"	2.74	0.26
32	Due to the following factor, I cannot "act responsibly regarding school and personal property"	3.78	0.22
33	Due to the following factor, I cannot "challenge stereotypical attitudes"	1.8	0.2
34	Due to the following factor, I cannot "ensure that all students receive an equitable opportunity to succeed"	0.80	0.32

The table above presents the mean and standard deviation of head teachers' responses for the statements related to factors that affect their professionalism.

Table 3: *Frequency of Factors Selected by 100 Participants that were affecting their Professional Responsibilities*

No.	Statements	FM	PI	WE	HC	EDW
1	Reflecting on Teaching	100	73	100	100	100
2	Maintaining Accurate Records	100	79	82	53	100
3	Communicating with Families	100	84	73	50	62
4	Contributing while working in School and District	100	60	61	63	82
5	Performing responsibilities Professionally	100	76	94	40	93

FM: Family Maters; PI: Personal Interest; WE: Working Environment; HC: Health Conditions; and EDW; Extra Duties on Work
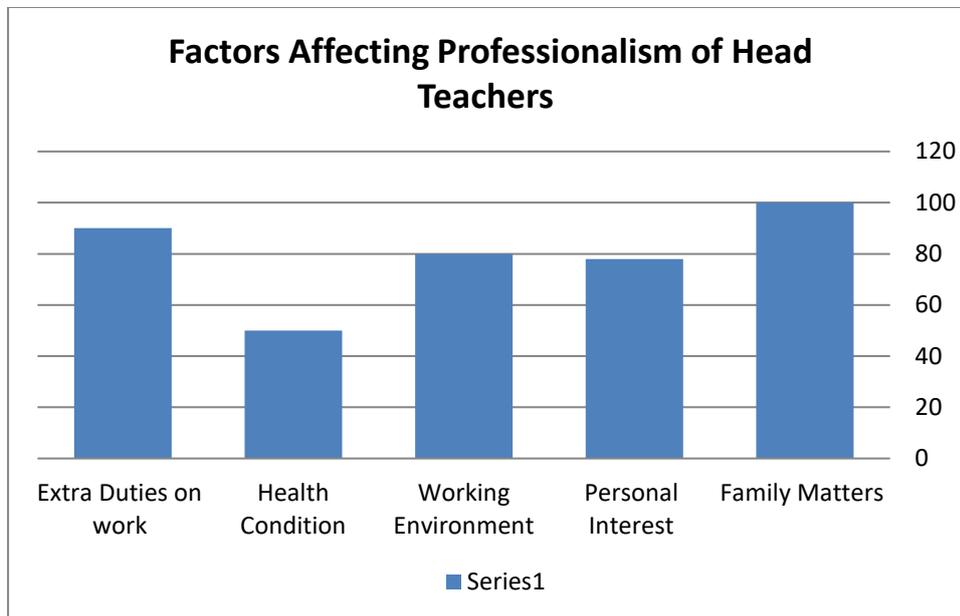

Figure 1: Graph of factors affecting professionalism of Head Teachers in Punjab.

Table 3: *t-test to Identify the Mean Difference in responses of Factors Affecting Professionalism of Male and Female Head Teachers*

Variables	N	df.	M	t- value	Sig
Male	52	99	443.19	.361	.007
Female	48		448.04		

Table 3 presents the results of the t-test to identify the mean difference in male and female head teachers' responses for the factors that affect their professionalism. It is evident that the difference in mean scores of Male (M = 443.19) and Female (M = 448.04) was statistically significant t (99) = .361, p = .007. therefore, the hypothesis that" there is significant difference in scores of factors affecting professionalism of male and female Head teachers" is accepted and it is concluded that more factors are affecting professionalism of female head teachers.

Table 4: *t-test to Identify the mean Difference in Head Teachers' responses for Factors Affecting Professionalism on the basis of Areas*

Variables	N	df.	M	t- value	Sig
Rural	65	99	449.19	.301	.000
Urban	32		441.04		

Table 4 presents the mean difference in the responses of head teachers for factors affecting their professionalism on the basis of the areas. It is apparent that the mean difference in the responses of head teachers working in Urban (M = 441.04) and Rural areas (M = 449.19)

was statistically significant t (99) = .301, p < .05. Therefore, it is concluded that more factors are affecting professionalism of head teachers working in rural areas as compare to Urban Areas.

Table 5: *ANOVA to Recognise the Difference in head teachers' responses for the Factors affecting their Professionalism having different Years of Experience*

Experience	Sum of Squares	df.	MS	F	Sig.
WG	2120.725	2	2706.908	4.293	.011
BG	5928.250	99	464.674		
Total	8048.975	101			

Table 5 shows the mean difference in factors affecting professionalism of Heads having different years of experience. It is apparent that the mean difference is significant F(2) = 4.293, p < .05 in head teachers' opinions about factors affecting professionalism on the basis of years of experience. So, the research hypothesis that "there is significant difference in factors affecting professionalism of head teachers on the basis of their experience" is accepted which leaded to the decision that head teachers with varying service experiences have unlike factors that affect their professionalism.

Table 6: *ANOVA to Find out the Difference in Head Teachers' responses which have a different Qualification for the Factors that Affect their Professionalism*

Qualification	SS	df.	MS	F	Sig.
WG	993.516	2	1331.172	6.964	.001
BG	1711.984	99	447.555		
Total	2705.500	101			

Table 6 is shows the mean difference in head teachers' responses for factors affecting their professionalism, with a different qualification. Statistically significant F(2) = 6.964, p < .05 mean different is evident in head teachers' responses for factors that affect their professionalism. Keeping in view these results the hypothesis that "there is significant difference in factors affecting professionalism of head teachers on the basis of their Qualification" is accepted which showed that different factors affect head teachers' professionalism with a different academic qualification; furthermore fewer factors affect the professionalism of head teachers who have a higher qualification.

Table 7: *ANOVA to Find out Difference in the responses of head teachers for the Factors Affecting their Professionalism who have been Appointed in different Districts*

	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Appointment Districts					
Within Group	1165.824	4	1388.608	3.858	.017
Between Group	3626.151	99	400.726		
Total	4791.975	103			

Table 7 presents the mean difference in factors affecting professionalism of head teachers appointed in various districts. It is obvious that the difference is significant $F(4) = 3.858$, $p < =.017$, in opinions of head teachers appointed in different districts for factors affecting their professionalism. Keeping in view these results the hypothesis that "there is significant difference in factors affecting professionalism of head teachers on the basis of their districts" is accepted and it is inferred that heads working in various districts have different opinions about factors that affect their professionalism.

Findings and Discussions

The findings of this study have shown that all the factors affect professionalism of head teachers including "Reflecting on Teaching", "Maintaining Accurate Records"; "Communicating with Families", "Contributing while Working in School and District" and "Performing Responsibilities Professionally" etc. Head teachers also stressed that their family matters, personal interest, working environment, health conditions, and extra duties highly affect their teaching and they cannot fully put emphasis on the articulation of lessons' goals and objectives. Due to having a load of all these factors they cannot fully analyse students' content comprehension. A strong grip on content is desired for encouraging student participation from diverse backgrounds which is affected by these factors. Writing reflections about lessons is essential to refine instruction which is almost impossible due to the strong effect of these factors. They cannot get feedback and implement recommendations of students. They do not have enough time to develop written plans for improvement; record keeping and updating the results of students' assignments. One of the prime responsibilities of teachers is to collect information about students' individual progress as compared to previous performance, which is not possible in the presence of these factors. These factors are a hurdle in analysing performance of students with diverse learning styles. Due to the following factors, they cannot maintain records of non-instructional activities and face difficulty in maintaining confidentiality in all situations/settings.

Due to these factors, they cannot effectively communicate related information to caregivers and parents; similarly concerns cannot be shown due to the large number of students in a class. Due to these factors, they cannot engage family members/caregivers of students in the instructional programs. These factors are big obstacles in establishing rapport based on

confidence and trust with students from diverse backgrounds. These factors also create a problem in seeking assistance from other professionals concerning teaching and learning. They cannot participate in school-related activities and cannot grow and develop professionally. These factors are also a hurdle in participating in student teaching discussions and other events. Head teachers also face problems in attending school and district professional development programs. These factors also hinder them to add evidence from research into daily instruction.

Due to these factors head teachers cannot articulate a philosophy of education that develops critical self-reflection. Due to these factors, they cannot, due to the following factor, attend upcoming events promptly and regularly and they cannot dress professionally in the school setting. These factors also affect practicing personal hygiene and neat grooming. They also face problems in completing schedules, assignments, and other paperwork on time. Due to these factors, they face problems in compliance with school and class rules, face problems to follow codes of conduct for the teaching profession and to ensure an equitable opportunity for all students to succeed.

Recommendations

Following are the recommendations of the study:

1. There should be a high standard to enter this profession.
2. There may be some regress certification system for teachers.
3. In order to uplift the professional standing of the teaching profession, strict self-regulation training must be part of its requirements.
4. There may be some official solutions for the problems created by these factors.
5. There is a dire need to improve the working environment and remuneration of persons related to this profession.
6. Motivational workshops and seminars may be arranged to motivate head teachers for commitment to this profession.
7. There is a need to include courses and training about factors affecting professionalism.
8. Workshops and seminars should be conducted at a national level to discuss researchers and knowledge at a local and international level.

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