

Attitude of University Students towards the Teaching Profession in Pakistan: A Case of Public Sector Universities

*Misbah Akhtar, Huma Nawaz and Farrukh Munir**

ABSTRACT

Teaching is considered a noble profession all over the world (Chakraborty and Mondal 2015). For a successful teaching-learning process, teachers must have an interest and favourable attitude towards teaching. The primary objective of the study was to explore the attitude of university students towards the teaching profession. The attitude of students was also compared based on gender, university affiliation, and disciplines. For this purpose, the 'Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession' questionnaire by Tezci and Terzi (2010) was adapted. Data was collected from 598 respondents of two public sector universities in Pakistan i.e., The Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Fatima Jinnah Women University – both public sector universities in the province of Punjab by using convenient sampling technique. Of the 598 respondents, 384 were females and 214 were males. Google forms were used for the collection of data. For data analysis Independent T-test and one-way ANOVA were applied. Results showed that there was no significant difference in attitude towards the teaching profession in terms of gender and university affiliation. However, a significant difference was observed based on discipline.

Keywords: Attitude, Perception, Teaching, Profession, University Students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is important for every society. A teacher is considered the backbone of the education system as a good teacher provides quality education (Madani 2019) and quality education improves every national sector (Alkhateeb 2013). Society develops with improvements in the education system (Egwu 2015). Quality education, through well-trained teachers, is considered the most important resource of schools so greater emphasis should be given building their capacity (Usman 2016; Andriani et al., 2018).

Unfortunately, comprehensive teacher training in Pakistan has been suffering (Batool and Qureshi 2007). Numerous studies have found that while teacher training has seen some improvement in terms of the number of institutions, from a qualitative perspective, it is not improving due to dearth of quality education and irrelevant training curriculum (Butt and Shams 2007; Mahmood 1999). One of the reasons behind this is that teaching profession is not the first priority of teachers. In Pakistan, people from different fields join teaching when they do not find a job in their respective fields of study, e.g., engineering, commerce, medicine, IT etc.

In Pakistan, students with different degrees join the teaching profession as school, college, and university teachers. For school and college level, B.Ed., M.Ed., or MA are considered compulsory to join the teaching profession, while MPhil or PhD is often required for university level posts. A large number of university students do not want to join the teaching profession, but they do not find jobs in their field of study, and so, they end up joining this profession. Ushadevi (2005) found that two factors, i.e., job satisfaction and attitude towards profession, affect success in the field of teaching. This was also confirmed by Suja (2007).

The present research measures the attitude of university students of different departments towards the teaching profession in Pakistan. It may contribute towards understanding the attitude of university students towards the teaching profession, especially those from the education department. The study was conducted to test the following hypotheses:

H01: There is no significant difference in the attitude of males and females towards the teaching profession in Pakistan.

H02: There is no significant difference in the attitude of university students belonging to separate universities towards the teaching profession in Pakistan.

H03: There is no significant difference in the attitude of university students of different departments towards the teaching profession in Pakistan.

H04: There is no significant difference in the attitude of university students from rural and urban areas towards the teaching profession in Pakistan.

Section Two covers the relevant literature review. Methodology is explained under Section Three. Section Four discusses the results, and the final section consists of conclusion of the study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Allport (1935), ‘Attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related’ (p. 810). Everybody has an attitude towards different things. These attitudes may be favourable and unfavourable learnt from the environment through experiences. These experiences decide whether someone has a positive or negative attitude towards any particular object, person, or group etc. If a teacher has a negative attitude towards his/her profession, their output will be affected. Intellectual calibre of teachers, emotional stability, habits, and personality all affect the personality and interests of the students they teach (Brooks and Sikes 1997).

Several studies have investigated attitudes towards the teaching profession (Maliki 2013; Khurshid et al., 2014; Chakraborty and Mondal 2015; Hussain et al., 2020). Maliki (2013) carried out a study on 150 Nigerian teachers to study their attitude towards their profession. It disclosed that most teachers had an unfavourable attitude towards the profession. Significant differences existed between the attitude of male and female teachers. Female teachers displayed a more positive attitude than male teachers. In another study, Viatonu (2004) discussed the different reasons behind the negative attitude of both students and teachers towards the teaching profession in the same country and found that these varied from the physical appearance of teachers, especially in primary schools; to poor reward system for teachers; lack of influential teachers’ association; nature of school teachers to their social background. Osunde and Izevbigie (2006) studied the attitude of 400 secondary school teachers and found that delay in payment of salaries and fiscal remuneration were the main causes of their negative attitude. They also pointed out that difficult conditions of service; bad personal and professional behaviour were also important factors causing negative attitude of teachers towards their own profession.

Soibamcha and Pandey (2016) studied the impact of qualifications in determining the attitude of teachers towards teaching using the Teacher Attitude Inventory (TAI) developed by Ahluwalia (1974). This study concluded that more qualified teachers had a more favourable attitude than those less qualified. Egwu (2015) conducted a study on 300 Nigerian students of the Department of Education at Ebonyi State University and demonstrated that they had a negative attitude towards the teaching profession. It was recommended that the government should increase the salary of teachers and parents should motivate their children to study ‘Education’ as a course.

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A study was conducted by Hussain et al. (2020) to measure the attitude of teachers toward the teaching profession at the secondary level based on teaching experience and their groups (Science versus Arts) and gender. The authors concluded that the attitude of secondary school teachers was positive. Male teachers had a more positive attitude than female ones. Alkhateeb (2013) also determined that university students of the Education Department had a positive attitude towards the teaching profession. Khurshid et al., (2014) conducted a study to find out the attitude of MA and MSc students towards teaching at the primary level. 93 students were selected by using random sampling techniques. Self-developed questionnaire having 25 items was used. The results of the study indicated that female students had a more favourable attitude than male students. Both male and female students displayed the same attitude toward university teaching. Sharma and Dhaiya (2012) did a similar study on B.Ed. students. Comparison of male and female students indicated that there was no significant difference between these groups towards the profession. Lawal (2012)'s study found that students, teachers, and parents perceived the teaching profession positively. It was recommended that the government should take serious steps for the training of teachers. Moreover Gonzalez et al., (2008) examined the problems due to which employees left the teaching profession after one year of service through a qualitative study. Dominant problems faced during the service included difficulties with student discipline, low salary, and lack of administrative support.

3. METHODOLOGY

The current study was based on primary data using the survey method. According to Viatonu and Jegede (2007), descriptive research is the most appropriate in that it is used to collect detailed and factual information that describes existing phenomenon and analyses, records, interprets and explains events as they exist. Respondents from two universities - The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) and Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU) participated in this study. In order to analyse data, descriptive analysis and ANOVA test was performed. Moreover, hypothesis was tested by stepwise regression analysis.

3.1. Participants

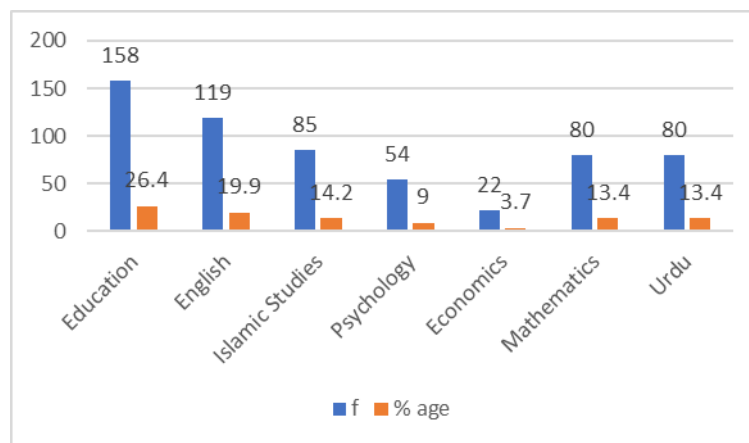
Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Characteristics	Categories	<i>f</i>	% age
Name of Participating Universities	IUB	503	84.1
	FJWU	95	15.9
Participating Departments	Education	158	26.4
	English	119	19.9
	Islamic Studies	85	14.2
	Psychology	54	9.0
	Economics	22	3.7
	Mathematics	80	13.4
	Urdu	80	13.4
	Female	384	64.2
Male	214	35.8	
Area of the Respondents	Rural	306	51.2
	Urban	292	48.8

Source: Study Data.

Data was collected from the students of seven departments of IUB and FJWU i.e., Education, Economics, Psychology, English, Urdu, Islamic Studies, and Mathematics.

Figure 1: Number of Respondents (*f*) & Departmental Affiliations (%)



Source: Study Data.

Data was collected from 598 respondents by using a convenience sampling technique. 84.1% of respondents from IUB and 15.9% from FJWU participated in the current study.

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64.2% female and 35.8% male respondents participated in the study. Some 48.8% of respondents were from urban and 51.2% were from rural areas.

3.2. Research Tool

'Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession' by Tezci and Terzi (2010) was adapted. The tool consisted of 34 question items. A five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree was used. Cronbach alpha reliability test was applied to calculate reliability. Reliability of the questionnaire items was adequate, i.e., .93.

3.3. Procedure

The questionnaire was developed for the study in Google forms. At first, the link was shared with the faculty members of both universities, and they shared it with their students through WhatsApp groups which were formed by universities due to online classes during COVID-19. The participants were requested to answer every item. Some 800 students were requested to respond to the questionnaire, 598 responded. SPSS version 21 was used to analyse the data.

4. RESULTS

Table 2: Students' Responses to Each Attitude Scale Item

No	Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Attraction for the idea of becoming a teacher	594	3.09	.880
2	Teaching is a boring profession for me*	597	1.06	1.017
3	Teaching is an appropriate profession	595	2.93	.879
4	Give preference to teaching profession again	597	3.02	.932
5	Teaching is a suitable profession	597	3.14	.920
6	Teaching does not suit lifestyle*	596	1.05	.966
7	Teaching does not suit personality*	598	1.05	.991
8	Feel regret about choosing teaching profession*	596	1.62	1.212
9	I will be successful in teaching profession	596	3.20	.910
10	Please to select teaching profession	596	3.05	.846
11	Believe confident to overcome difficulties regarding teaching profession	597	2.96	.850

12	Working as a teacher under difficult situations	593	2.95	.864
13	Requirements of the teaching profession	596	2.94	.810
14	Have special talent for teaching profession	594	3.00	.873
15	Teaching is not suitable for me*	596	1.096	1.0237
16	Opportunities to be productive and creative	594	3.10	.823
17	A professional teacher	594	3.11	.851
18	Teaching pleases me	588	2.27	1.080
19	I am attracted by the people working as teachers	596	2.97	.799
20	Happy to think that I will become a teacher	596	3.13	.826
21	Would not recommend choosing teaching as a profession*	593	1.599	1.1001
22	Will have much to do when I become a teacher	594	3.04	.793
23	Working conditions of this profession attract me	596	3.02	.842
24	Feel happy to converse with a teacher	593	2.99	.801
25	I consider success in the courses on professional teaching as knowledge as important	592	3.08	.755
26	Like to discuss issues about teaching profession	593	3.04	.827
27	Learned and qualified teacher	593	3.11	.779
28	Prestigious status in society	595	3.03	.845
29	Voluntarily selected teaching programme	591	2.80	.814
30	Will have troubles in the teaching profession*	594	1.80	1.091
31	Feel honour to guide a teacher	590	3.01	.859
32	Do not like to discuss the issues of education*	591	1.36	1.136
33	Esteemed by society after becoming a teacher	593	2.89	.828
34	This profession makes me feel secure	595	2.99	.802

Source: Study findings.

Note: *Statements marked by this sign are reverse rated.

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Descriptive analysis of Table 2 indicated mean and standard deviation of each item of the questionnaire one by one. For the statement, '*I believe I will be successful in teaching profession*' highest mean value of 3.20 was observed which showed positive attitude of students. Whereas, lowest mean value of 1.091 was observed against the statement that '*I think teaching is not a suitable profession for me.*'

Table 3: Attitude of University Students towards Teaching Profession

Attitude towards Teaching Profession	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	598	0.00	4.00	1555.17	2.6006	.39695

Source: Study findings.

The results presented in Table 3 indicate mean scores of university students' attitude towards the teaching profession (M=2.6006, S D=.39695). It is clear from the table that university students had a favourable attitude towards the teaching profession.

Table 4: Comparison of Students' Attitude towards Teaching Profession Gender-Wise

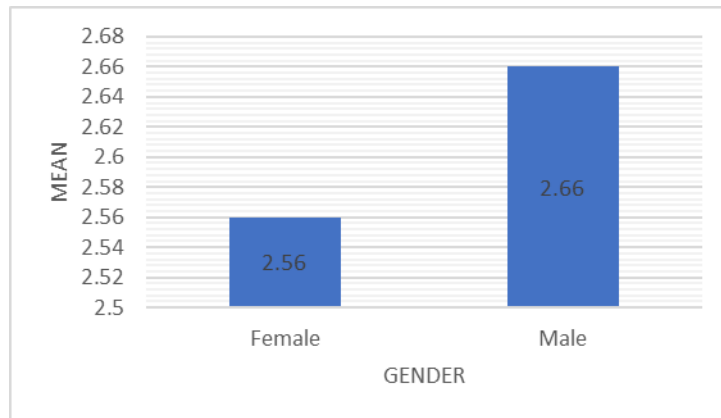
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
	Female	384	2.56	.385	-2.594	596	.959*
	Male	214	2.66	.412			

Source: Study findings.

Note: * = Not significant.

Table 4 represents the comparison of attitude towards the teaching profession based on gender. Some 384 females and 214 males contributed to this study. Mean scores (M=2.65, SD=.412) showed that males had a more favourable attitude than females (M=2.56, SD=.385). Resulted value .959 is greater than 0.05 which showed that it was statistically insignificant. So 'there is no significant relationship among the underlying variables of attitude of male and female students towards teaching profession' in Pakistan.

Figure 2: Comparison of Students’ Attitude towards Teaching Profession Gender-Wise



Source: Study findings.

Table 5: Comparative Analysis of Students’ Attitude towards Teaching Profession according to their Universities

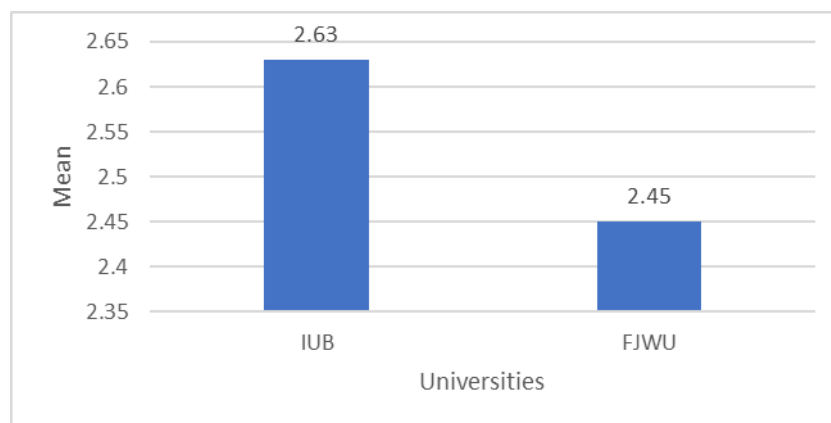
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	Universities	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	p
	IUB	503	2.63	.380	3.992	596	.117*
	FJWU	95	2.45	.466			

Source: Study findings.

Note: * = Not significant.

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Figure 3: Comparative Analysis of Students' Attitude towards Teaching Profession according to their University Affiliations



Source: Study findings.

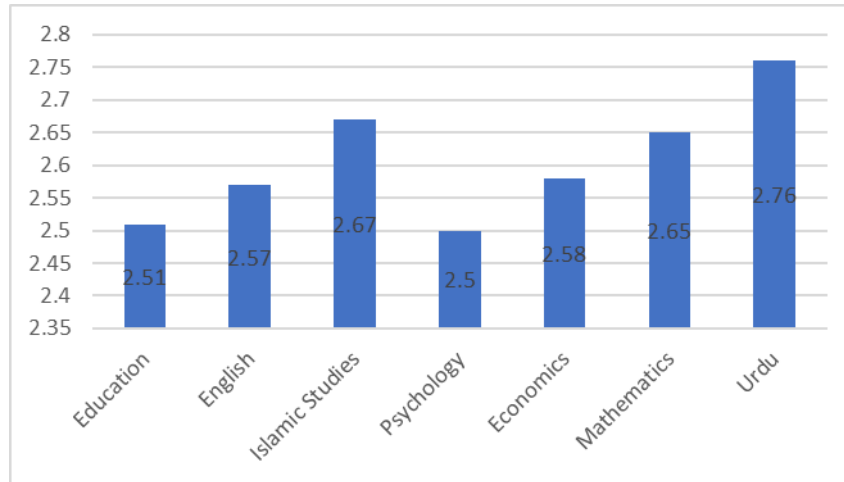
In Table 5, students' attitudes from both universities – IUB and FJWU were compared. Mean value 2.63 showed that students at the former university had a more favourable attitude towards the teaching profession than the students of the latter. The resultant value of 0.117 which was greater than 0.05 showed that there was no significant relationship among variables to study the attitude between the students at both universities.

Table 6: Students' Attitude towards Teaching Profession according to Different Departments

No.	Department	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	P
1	Education	158	2.51	.399	5.229	.000**
2	English	119	2.57	.355		
3	Islamic Studies	85	2.67	.384		
4	Psychology	54	2.50	.328		
5	Economics	22	2.58	.429		
6	Mathematics	80	2.65	.415		
7	Urdu	80	2.76	.418		
	Total	598	2.60	.396		

Source: Study findings.

Note: **Significant. ANOVA Summary.

Figure 4: Department-wise Comparison of Student Attitude towards Teaching Profession

Source: Study findings.

In Table 6, data presented shows the attitude of students' attitude towards the teaching profession according to different departments. One way ANOVA was applied to find the attitude of students of different departments. Seven departments i.e., Education, English, Islamic Studies, Psychology, Economics, Mathematics, and Urdu were selected. Mean scores ($M=2.76$, $S.D=.418$) showed that students from the department of Urdu had a more optimistic attitude towards the profession than the students of other departments. Department of Education ranked at six with mean scores of $M = 2.51$; $S.D = 0.39$ even though the major objective of its teacher education programme is to develop skills and positive attitudes towards teaching (Jain 2007) .000 value of p shows that statistically, a significant difference is present in attitude scores of students of seven departments. Therefore, the third null hypothesis, that 'There is no significant difference in the attitude of university students of different departments towards teaching profession in Pakistan' was rejected.

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing by Regression Analysis

No	Hypothesis	R1	R Square	Beta	t	Sig.
1	H1	.142	.020	.142	3.355	.001
2	H2	.189	.036	-.189	-4.480	.000
3	H3	.209	.044	.209	4.994	.000
4	H4	.134	.018	.134	3.151	.002

Source: Study findings.

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Table 7 shows that the estimated R square was 0 .020 indicating that 2% changes in gender were due to changes in the independent variable which is reliable. Moreover, the result showed that there was a significant relationship between gender and attitudes towards the teaching profession. Moreover, the gender variable had a positive impact (.142) on the independent variable. Study hypothesis H1 was accepted.

The estimated R square for the second hypothesis was .036 directs that 3.6% changes in the two universities are due to independent variables. Further, it was evident that significant relationships exist between universities and attitudes towards the teaching profession. Moreover, universities as a variable had a negative (-.189) impact on the independent variable and H2. There was no significant difference in the attitude of university students of the two target universities towards the teaching profession in Pakistan.

The study estimated R square at .044 i.e., 4.4% for the third hypothesis. This value showed that changes in students from different departments were due to the independent variable and were reliable. Moreover, significant relation was found among students from different departments and attitudes towards the teaching profession. Moreover, students from the different departments had a positive impact (0.209) on the independent variable i.e., attitude of university students towards the teaching profession. So H3, i.e., 'there is no significant difference in the attitude of university students of different departments towards the teaching profession in Pakistan', was accepted.

The table shows that the estimated R square for the fourth hypothesis was 0.018 which indicated that 1% change in the area was due to change in the independent variable. Moreover, significant relationships exist between area and attitude of students towards the teaching profession and area variable had positive (.134) impact on the independent variable. That is why the fourth hypothesis, i.e., 'there is no significant difference in the attitude of university students of area-wise towards the teaching profession in Pakistan', is acceptable.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the present study (M=2.6006, SD=.39695) showed that university students had a fairly positive attitude towards the teaching profession and support various studies (Alkhateeb 2013; Khurshid et al., 2014; Hussain et al., 2020). Moreover, results of the current study depicted that there was no significant difference of attitude towards the teaching profession between males and females. These results aligned with the results of different studies (Sharma and Dhaiya 2012; Parvez and Shakir 2013; Farrukh and Shakoor 2018; Sadruddin 2021). Respondents from The Islamia University of Bahawalpur had a more positive attitude as compared to the attitude of the students from Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi. Moreover, there was no significant

difference between the attitudes of students at both universities. Another study by Mahmood et al., (2013) conducted for measuring the attitude of students from the University of the Punjab and University of Education, Lahore had similar results. It showed that students from both universities had a favourable attitude towards teaching. Department-wise attitude towards teaching profession was also compared and it was concluded that there was a significant difference of attitude among students of seven departments. It was concluded that students from the Department of Urdu had the most favourable attitude and Islamic Studies Department ranked second. It was surprising that students from the Department of Education ranked sixth even though it is a professional degree which students specially join for the teaching profession. Result of the current study are supported by Muhammet and Sarigöz (2018) which found that the attitude of students from the Department of Education was below expectation. Attitude towards any profession significantly affects the success of the person in any profession. For institutional development, policies should be adopted keeping in view environmental factors. That is why it is important to focus on both practical and theoretical lessons for improving the teaching profession.

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