

Original Article

Woman At Work: Challenges Of Private School Teachers In Pakistan

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Abstract

Women in Pakistan have always faced undeniable challenges compared to men reflecting pervasive gender disparities. The private sector in Pakistan has an undeniably large workforce and a grapples with numerous issues stemming from unclear and unstable policymaking, inadequate implementation, and a lack of effective research. This study analyses the socio-economic hardships of private school teachers in Pakistan. It consists of a public survey and discussion with school teacher for the determination of socio-economic problems. The analysis reveals that concerns such as inadequate salaries, burdensome workloads, and precarious job security significantly impact teachers' satisfaction and well-being. Notably, teachers who perceive greater job security, receive higher remuneration, and experience lighter workloads express higher levels of job satisfaction. Therefore, in order to strategize its policy options, the private sector needs to be better organized and certain policies to improve job security, workload management and equitable remuneration emerges as crucial strategies for enhancing teacher satisfaction and fostering a conducive work environment.

Keywords: Women Employment, Private Sector, Salary, Job Security, Workload

1. INTRODUCTION

In collectivistic societies, the socio-economic status of working women faces diverse challenges. Women in Pakistan experience multiple issues ranging from social, economic, religious, and psychological factors (Abbasi, 2013). The socio-economic status of working women varies with respect to different variables, such as class, rural, and urban. The rapidly increasing number of Pakistani women in urban areas, especially in the private sector of education, is a significant trend. Teaching in private schools and colleges is a popular and imperative profession for women in Pakistan (I-SAPS, 2010). As Pakistan is the most urbanised country in South Asia (UNESCO, 2020), it is important to address the challenges that teachers face in Pakistan.

Despite the increasing number of women in the workforce, not enough literature exists to delineate the socio-economic problems of female school teachers at private education institutions. The private sector in Pakistan is flourishing and has become an even more important part of the Pakistani economic and social culture, which provides education to thousands of children. The most important objective of quality education is to enhance the productivity of human beings and improve their quality of life. (Lewis, 2021). It is vital to dig deeper into this part of the economic sphere as well and compare it with the government education sector. Female teachers working in the private sector face problems with inadequate salaries, a lack of employee benefits, and job security due to nonexistent policies regarding the private sector of education in Pakistan (Zahid Khan, 2022).

This study aims to launch a comprehensive inquiry that will uncover socioeconomic challenges that teachers in both urban and rural regions meet either directly or indirectly. Furthermore, prior research



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has shown that teachers' problems influence not only these individuals but also their students and families. Along with themselves, Pakistan can hope to better serve the condition of the majority of its female workforce through the comparison of these findings.

Objectives of the Study

- To determine the socio-economic status of female school teachers working in the private sector in Pakistan
- To find out the socio-economic problems faced by female school teachers working at private schools in Pakistan.
- To find out factors that determine the socio-economic problems of school teachers.
- To recommend policies for improving the socio-economic conditions of female teachers.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The social and economic spheres of life are not mutually exclusive. There is no clear demarcating line between the two, which could force them apart and enable one to define one without referring to and/or considering the other. Engaged in a perpetual interplay and entwined so closely together that they become inseparable, the social and economic become the socio-economic. Changes in the economic sphere of life trigger changes in the social sphere, and vice versa. Both of these spheres determine the kind of life that individuals in a society lead (Sumra, 2006).

Although studies that focus on women and their socio-economic problems abound, there are not many that deal exclusively with those that school teachers in Pakistan face every day. The teaching profession has been called "feminized" (UNESCO, 2011) all over the world, as the percentage of female teachers teaching at the high school level surpasses that of male teachers (UNESCO, 2013). Among the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries, female teachers constitute a major part of the workforce.

At the workplace, problems like harassment, work load management, low wages, and independence regarding the expenditure of salary and facilities are normally experienced by female school teachers (UNESCO, 2013). Women's physical and mental health have been found to be correlated with their socio-economic status (Susan Macran, 1994; Mulatu & Schooler, 2002). These schools are located in different areas, are run by different managements, and range from poor to rich in resources, which is why the socio-economic status of teachers can be said to vary according to their economic class (Masood, 2011).

Research dealing with the private sector and problems faced by female school teachers who work in the private sector is almost nonexistent. Seeing how significant the private sector really is when it comes to the education sector after the denationalisation in the 1980s, it is unfortunate that meagre volumes of research deal with the private sector and its problems. If forty-four percent of a country's teachers work in the private sector, it is certainly important to know in which direction they are headed and also to know the nature and scope of their problems (Institute of Social and Policy Sciences, 2010).

The private sector institutions in Pakistan are not such that they can be easily clustered together in terms of the variables discussed above. Some cater to the lower middle classes, while others consist exclusively of students who belong to the elite and upper middle classes. The quality of education varies too, which is why the kind of job specifications that these different schools put forward range from requiring highly qualified (M.Sc. and M.S./M.Phil.) teachers to those who are "middle (eighth grade) pass" (Rukhshanda Maqsood, 2005).

In terms of policymaking to ensure a stable and strong standard of quality education, the challenge is to keep track of which institutions are actually performing. Some private schools mostly had unqualified and inadequate teachers who could not impart the necessary education to the enrolled students. Despite this, there are still many schools in which unqualified female teachers work. The reasons these schools run lie within the overall economic condition and socio-economic problems of women in the country. These teachers face quite different problems than those who work in schools that cater to the more economically prosperous classes.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is quantitative and based on primary data collected through a comprehensive survey comprising 40 items. For primary data collection, a survey was conducted and a questionnaire was

formulated from female school teachers working at private schools in major cities in Pakistan. The research meticulously constructed a questionnaire, ensuring its alignment with the identified variables indicative of socio-economic issues. The formatted questionnaire was used, and it was analysed using SPSS. Additionally, factor analysis, employing principal component analysis, was utilized to distill underlying patterns and dimensions within the dataset, thereby elucidating the multifaceted nature of socio-economic challenges faced by private school teachers. The research employed an independent sample t-test to discern significant differences across various socio-economic parameters, thereby enriching the understanding of disparities and variations within the teaching sector. Furthermore, the exploratory factor analysis technique is also utilised here to explore the relationship between the groups of experimental variables and the socio-economic problems of working women in the teaching sector. For data reduction and examining structure among the variables, factor analysis is used here separately on workplace, family, and society-related problems.

Research Questions

- How do factors like harassment, workload, and wages affect the professional experiences of female teachers in Pakistani private schools?
- What is the connection between socioeconomic differences among teachers and the backgrounds of students in private schools in Pakistan?
- How do government policies and recruitment practices impact the socioeconomic challenges faced by female teachers in private schools, and what changes are needed to support teacher well-being?

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Results

A sample of 200 female teachers was selected from the private schools in Pakistan. Among these schools, only School C teachers have the highest levels of satisfaction in all three areas. According to Table 1, job security is ensuring 22 percent in School A and 15 percent and 18 percent in Schools B and C, respectively. 45 percent of teachers in School A are satisfied with their salaries, while in School B, 50 percent, and in School C, 33 percent of teaching staff are satisfied with their salaries. Similarly, School B assigns a heavy workload to teaching staff (84 percent). School B assigns teachers’ 76 percent, and school C assigns 68 percent.

Table 1

Teachers Characteristic in Different Schools

Characteristics	School A	School B	School C
Job Security	22 %	15%	18%
Salary	45%	50%	33%
Workload	76%	84%	68%

The table shows that female teaching staff in School C have the lowest levels of job security, salary satisfaction, and workload satisfaction. Teachers in School B have slightly higher levels of satisfaction with their salaries, while teachers in School B have the highest levels of workload burden.

Table 2 shows that the results of the logistic regression model suggest that three independent variables—salary, job security, and workload—are significantly related to dependent variables as predictors of teacher satisfaction. Job security and salary are positively related to job satisfaction levels. While workload for teaching staff is inversely related to dependent variables, Thus, teachers who feel secure in their jobs, are paid more, and have lighter workloads are more likely to be satisfied. Assigning more duties to teachers would result in low job satisfaction levels among teachers in private schools in Pakistan. The coefficient of determination R2 is 0.40, which represents 40 percent variation in the dependent variable, which is explained by the three independent variables.

Table 2

Fitted Parameter Estimates (Logistic Regression Model)

	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
Job Security	0.604	0.248	0.002
Salary	0.578	0.369	0.044
Workload	-0.406	0.116	0.026

R² = 0.40

Most of the respondents agree that they are being indirectly forced to work more than their share. And they are not being paid for doing so. This validates the research, which tells us that in Pakistan, teachers in the private sector are overworked and are rarely paid for it (UNESCO, 2013).

A large number of respondents said that they feel threatened when they do not work until late because of the culture that has come to prevail in private sector jobs. Those who work late get benefits even though the job says nothing about late hours.

Discussion

The salary is the motivation that teachers get as a result of providing tireless services to any school. The study investigated whether salary and job satisfaction are positively correlated. Teachers who have been paid greater salaries are happier compared to those who received lower salaries.

The majority of instructors at private schools are not guaranteed jobs. As a result, the private school administration has the authority to abruptly fire any instructor. Teachers' performance may be impacted by constant stress brought on by the worry of losing their jobs. Job satisfaction in our study is highly influenced by job security.

Workload is a common reason for the dissatisfaction of teachers. When teachers get involved in extracurricular activities, it is challenging for them to focus on their jobs. The workload also includes academic obligations fulfilled outside of the classroom. In the current study, workload is positively correlated with instructors' job satisfaction. Workload management has also been linked to issues of inadequate wages. Employees have been known to feel overworked when they do not get what they think they deserve. So, much can be gathered from what female teachers have to say about whether or not their work load management allows them to live a healthy and satisfied life. It could provide insight into several other socioeconomic issues; therefore, it can be a vital indicator. Being employed in a field that is not one that they specialise in is also a factor in making employees feel burdened (Bibi, 2011).

5. CONCLUSION

Research dealing with the private sector and problems faced by female school teachers who work in the private sector is almost nonexistent. Seeing how significant the private sector really is when it comes to the education sector after the denationalisation in the 1980s, it is unfortunate that meagre volumes of research deal with the private sector and its problems. If forty-four percent of a country's teachers work in the private sector, it is certainly important to know in which direction they are headed and also to know the nature and scope of their problems.

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In terms of policymaking to ensure a stable and strong standard of quality education, the challenge is to keep track of which institutions are actually performing. Some private schools mostly had unqualified and inadequate teachers who could not impart the necessary education to the enrolled students. Despite this, there are still many schools in which unqualified female teachers work. The reasons these schools run lie within the overall economic condition and socio-economic problems of women in the country. These teachers face quite different problems than those who work in schools that cater to the more economically prosperous classes.

Competing Interests

The author did not declare any competing interest.

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