

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS INFLUENCING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' INTEREST IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION: A CASE STUDY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAKAND

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ABSTRACT

Teaching is one of the most significant professions among all the profession. It is important to investigate the future perspectives of teaching profession through investigating determinants of university student's interest towards teaching profession. The objectives of study were; to investigate factors leading towards adopting teaching profession, to determine the university student's attitude towards teaching profession, to find out the gender wise differences of males and females' students in attitude towards teaching profession. Respondents who were a part of this study consisted of BS university students of 6th semester from 10 different departments of University of Malakand. The researcher were used a simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling technique as well. The questionnaire which includes 23 items was created on Likert scale pattern where respondents were given five choices in front of each item. The researcher used SPSS for data analysis. The tests applied for data analysis were independent sample t-test. The results show that the mean scores of male and female respondents (15.63 and 16.29) shows that Male students had an average score while Female students had a slightly higher average score. The results show that the value of coefficient of correlation was found (0.326) at 0.05 level of significance, which indicate a moderate positive relationship between the variables however it claims there is no significant difference between male and female students in terms of their scores on the measured variable. The findings of the study which reflects that majority of the respondents were agreed to the statements and they have good positive attitude towards teaching profession. Therefore, it is recommended that they must know national professional standards for teachers in Pakistan and then rate themselves that they are competent or not.

Keywords: Teaching, Teaching as a profession, Factor, Attitude, Gender differences.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is taken as a profession of terrific professionalism. They need to be educated on important things such as child and youth development (Werdlow, 2008). In (2006) Chen quoted (OSER, 1992) says: "Teaching as a

profession is and has always been at the center of all education and educational reform". Determinants of inclinations of university students include many factors as religious, economical, inspirational, psychological, social, passion for

teaching, charisma of sharing ones knowledge with others, explore new things, passion for a particular subject and bad experiences in one's own student life are some factors that could draw the attention of a student to adopt teaching as a profession.

When comparing teaching with other established professions (like medicine, law, engineering, etc.) teaching is a controversial profession (Ingersoll & Perda, 2008). Attitude is a significant idea in understanding individual performance. As behavior is composed of several features, then one of these vital features is attitude. Individual performance rely on attitude towards the objects, thought, individual, and object in his environment (Mangal, 2009). Allport (1999) defined an attitude as: *"A mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a dynamic or directive influence upon the individual's response to all subjects and situations with which it is related."* He similarly defined the attitude as *"A specific and consistent way of reacting to certain people, things or concepts."*

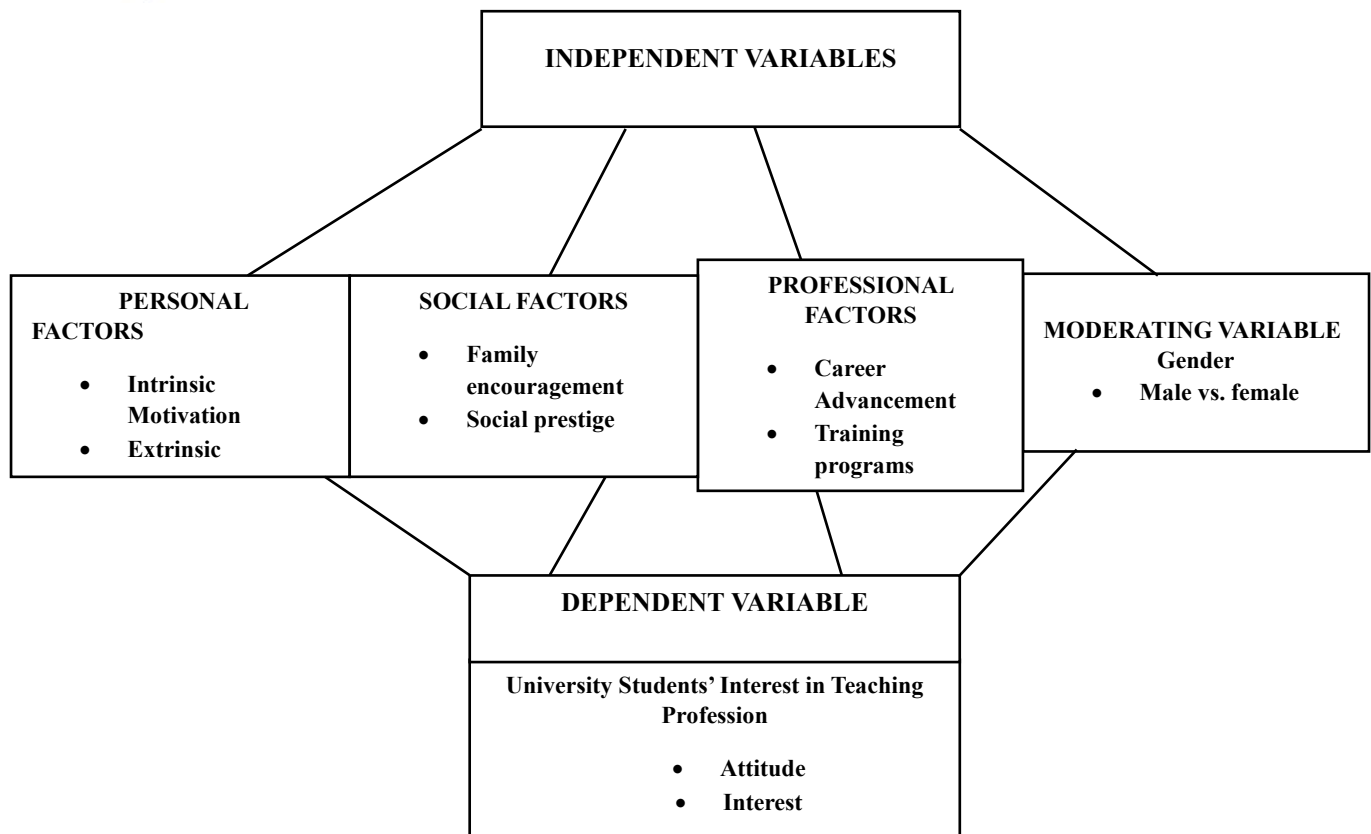
Attitudes of instructors have been originate to be effected by gender. For example, many studies have examined the influence of gender variables on attitudes (Erden, 1986; Tanrıöğen, 1997; Alghazo, 2003; Üstün, 2004, Askar & Cakır, 2005; Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008; Oral, 2004) establish that female instructors have extra constructive approaches to the instruction occupation than male instructors. Equally, other studies (Çakır, 2006; Davran, 2006; Sürücü, 1997) established that male educators have more progressive attitudes toward teaching profession. According to available research, pre-service teachers frequently approach their education with preconceived notions about teaching, often viewing it as a vocation heavily reliant on

interpersonal connections rather than a profession necessitating a highly qualified and knowledgeable expert (Fajet et al., 2005). Individuals who approach teaching as a career are expected to exhibit commitment beyond conventional expectations, actively contributing to the attainment of both school and student objectives (Akinwale & Okotoni, 2019).

The experiences encountered during practical teaching exercises can significantly reshape a student's perspective, potentially diminishing their focus on subject matter mastery, classroom management, and long-term educational objectives, while also impacting their self-efficacy (Lamote & Engels, 2010). The tripartite theory of attitudes emphasizes the interconnectedness of cognition, affection, and behavior in shaping an individual's overall attitude (Naseer et al., 2020). Stereotypes, which are shaped by accumulated knowledge about social groups, have the potential to both facilitate and distort educators' perceptions and evaluations of student performance (Krischler & Cate, 2019). Beliefs held by beginning teachers at the commencement of their careers have been shown to correlate with notable variations in the implementation of instructional strategies that foster a mastery-oriented approach in the classroom, as well as the provision of emotional support to students during the learning process (Aus et al., 2016).

Conceptual framework

This diagram demonstrates and proves the relationships between independent variables (social, personal, and professional factors), the dependent variable (university students' interest in the teaching profession), and the moderating variable (gender).



Literature review

It is fundamental to understand the nature of teaching that the teacher is demanded to provide the nourishment for the learner (O'Brien & Guiney, 2001). 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". To become a great teacher, teaching as a profession is of the utmost importance. For this reason, the training of teachers is conducive to their professional development. In (1995) Aggarwal rightly says, "if you educate a boy, you educate one individual. If you educate a girl, you educate the whole family and if you educate a teacher, you educate the whole community".

Teaching is often seen as a profession. According to Enyi (2014), professions are related to professions which have an exclusive knowledge system linked to society and whose members have special skills and abilities acquired through training. Lawal (2012) pointed out that there are important differences in the way parents, teachers and students view the teaching profession. Parents have a negative attitude towards the teaching profession, while teachers and students have a positive attitude towards the teaching profession.

Entering any field as professional one seeks a sound social status to lead his life in sheer dignity and happiness and give his family the comfort which everyone desire to give so a profession should be as such to meet all the point of interests that a person is looking for social determinants which include handsome salary, dignified social status and basic facilities of life. One seems for a religious point of interest too when selecting a source of income for himself and as Muslims we foresee what our religion allow us to do and not to do.

Teachers are the spiritual fathers of Islam. With the education of Islam, education became a religious obligation, as the Prophet (PBUH) said: "The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim." - Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 74. The Prophet also said: "Acquire knowledge and impart it to the people." - Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 107

It is also stressed that the best practicing Muslim amongst us is the one who seek knowledge and then feed them to others moreover teaching is the profession of prophets and our Prophet (SAW) has truly said: "I have been sent a teacher"

Attitude is the response of the individual, his tendency to respond in a definite way to

characteristic conditions and actions of actuality. Attitudes are shaped according to the knowledge about a thing and the approaches towards it (Haber, 2005). The attitude idea is a compound psychological state counting views, spirits, standards, norms and values to perform in different way. According to some writers, attitude is a theoretical concept that presents a person's like or dislike for a thing and effect his contact with the nearby world (Fishbein, Ajzen, 1975). According to Ajzen (2001) Attitude-reflecting assessment measures can take many forms, such as good or bad, harmful-beneficial, pleasant-disagreeable, and likeable-disagreeable. Chakraborty and Mondal (2015), instructors' professional attitude which they referred to as the feelings, expressions and commitment to the profession is enhanced if the teachers are committed to their profession.

Khamari and Tiwari (2015) investigated differences in professional attitudes of teachers towards teaching based on tribe and gender in a descriptive study. They found that gender and tribe are not factors that influence the direction of teaching attitudes. Male instructors are defined as inclining to provide extra attention to classroom organization and favor characteristics such as equality and effective interaction while females are defined as inclining towards student centeredness, selecting characteristics such as being helpful and being well planned (Ogden, 1994). Attitudes of instructors have been originate to be effected by gender. For example, many studies that examined the influence of the sex variable on attitudes (Askar and Erden, 1986; Tanrıöğen, 1997; Alghazo, 2003; Üstün, 2004; Oral, 2004; Cakır, 2005; Çapri & Çelikkaleli, 2008) establish that the female instructors have extra constructive approaches to the instruction occupation than male instructors. Equally, other studies (Sürücü, 1997, Çakır, 2006; Davran, 2006;) established that the male educators have more progressive attitudes.

Instructors' attitudes to the instruction profession have a direct connection to gender (Askar & Erden, 1986; Ogden, 1994; Alghazoet, 2003;). Female educators looked to be more confident in teaching instead of male instructors

(1986; Luke & Cope, 1994; Alghazo, 2003; Askar and Erden, Yeşil, 2010). It is very necessary to pay attention towards Gender when recruiting prospective teachers into the occupation. Additionally, there is a lack of instructor recruitment standards founded on trained information, abilities, and personalities like promise, approaches towards occupation, and sense of duty.

Research design

The study was conducted with a purpose to investigate the factors influencing university students' interest towards teaching profession. The studies were quantitative and descriptive in nature and data were collected through questionnaire survey. The researcher adopted quantitative research design for conducting research study. The population of the study was composed/consisted of all six semester students from 10 different center/institute/departments of University of Malakand. The researcher used random sampling and convenient sampling technique for selecting a sample.

Research Instrument

The researcher used questionnaire as a tool for the collection of data which was regarding the student's attitude towards teaching profession. The questionnaire which includes 23 items was Created on Likert scale pattern where respondents were given five choices in front of each item. These choices include strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagreed, strongly disagree.

Strongly agree (SA) = 5

Agree (A) = 4

Neutral (NU) = 3

Disagree (AD) = 2

Strongly disagree (SDA) = 1

Data Analysis

Criteria of means score analysis

5.00	to	4.51	=	strongly agreed
4.50	to	3.51	=	Agreed
3.50	to	2.51	=	Neutral
2.50	to	1.51	=	Disagreed
1.50	to	1.00	=	Strongly Disagreed

Table No. 1
Positive attitude towards teaching profession

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
item10	100	1.00	5.00	3.8600	1.05428
item11	100	1.00	5.00	3.7600	.95473
item12	100	1.00	5.00	3.8100	1.19507
item14	100	1.00	5.00	4.1700	.97499
item17	100	1.00	45.00	4.3500	4.23639
item23	100	1.00	5.00	4.3000	.89330
Valid N (listwise)	100				

The above table describe the responses of the respondents on the positive attitude towards teaching profession. The mean score of all items is between the range of 4.50 to 3.51 which reflects that majority of the respondents were

agreed to the statements and they have good positive attitude towards teaching profession. To conclude on the base of analyzed data, majority of university students have good positive attitude towards teaching profession.

Table No. 2
Determinants for teaching profession

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
item7	100	1.00	5.00	4.0600	1.04272
item19	100	1.00	5.00	3.8900	1.10000
item20	100	1.00	5.00	4.0700	.92392
item21	100	1.00	5.00	4.0300	.95827
item22	100	1.00	5.00	3.8700	1.04112
Valid N (listwise)	100				

The above table describe the response of the respondents on the determinants for teaching profession. The mean score of all items is between the range of 4.50 to 3.51 which reflects that majority of the respondents were agreed to the statements and they were motivated for

teaching profession because of social prestige, guiding nature and job permanence. To conclude on the base of analyzed data, majority of respondents were agreed that they like teaching profession because of the above-mentioned inclining factors.

Table No. 3
Gender wise comparison regarding determinants for teaching profession

Respondents	M. S	Std	MD	t value	Sig value
Male	15.6364	3.35415	-.65775	-.987	.326
Female	16.2941	2.72507			

The above table reflects the gender wise comparison of respondents regarding determinants for teaching profession. The mean scores of male and female respondents (15.63 and 16.29) shows that there no significant differences. The mean differences -.65775 and t value -.987 shows that there is no significant

difference between them regarding motivating factors for teaching profession.

Discussion

Teaching, acknowledged as a profession of immense significance, necessitates educators to possess a comprehensive understanding of crucial aspects such as child and youth

development, pedagogical strategies, and effective communication techniques to foster optimal learning environments.

The perspectives and motivations of students towards embracing teaching as a profession warrant careful examination, considering its pivotal role in shaping future generations and societal progress (Kurti, 2015). Investigating the determinants influencing university students' inclination towards the teaching profession is of paramount importance for understanding the future landscape of education (Kutálková, 2017). Multiple factors, including religious beliefs, economic considerations, and personal inspiration, contribute to shaping students' attitudes toward teaching (Din et al., 2020). These factors collectively influence an individual's decision to pursue a career in education (Kambeyo & Julius, 2020).

Lecturers, learning facilities, family encouragement, primary school teachers, classmates, ambitions, dreams, teaching methods, teachers' roles, teaching experience, love for the mother tongue, self-confidence, life goals, surroundings, systematic concern, friendly administrations, co-curricular activities, and outdoor education all contribute to motivation (Nachiappan et al., 2012).

The dynamic interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors significantly impacts an individual's decision to pursue a career in education (Hynds & McDonald, 2009). Intrinsic motivation, arising from a genuine passion for teaching, a love for specific subject areas, and a desire to positively impact students' lives, serves as a powerful driving force for individuals entering the teaching profession (O'Reilly, 2014). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, encompasses external rewards such as salary, job security, social recognition, and opportunities for career advancement, which can also play a significant role in attracting individuals to the field of education (Bakar et al., 2014).

However, the erosion of satisfaction due to external factors, such as mandated testing and teacher performance evaluation systems, highlights the importance of fostering a supportive and autonomous school climate that values teacher input and creativity (O'Reilly, 2014).

Motivation plays a crucial role in shaping a teacher's actions, acting as an internal or external determinant of their behaviors and regulating mechanisms (Pânișoară et al., 2020). A teacher's motivation influences not only their engagement in classroom activities but also their overall job satisfaction and commitment to the profession.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The above findings provided following conclusions and recommendations of the study: Majority of the respondents were agreed that they have positive attitude for teaching profession and their inclination was towards joining teaching profession. There were different reasons that shows their inclination to teaching profession. Therefore, it was concluded that most of the university students want to be teachers in future. Majority of the respondents were agreed that they have personal competence for teaching profession. They considered themselves suitable for teaching profession. Therefore it was concluded that majority of university students' have self-confident for teaching profession and are aware of their competencies as teacher. The most important determinants that majority of the respondents were considering for teaching were include; social prestige, guiding nature and job permanence. Therefore it was concluded that most of the respondents want to be teachers as they want these incentives.

Some respondents were unaware about their inner feelings, that whether teaching to people pleased them or not. Furthermore, there were some respondents were not able to decide whether to accept or regret the teaching profession. Based on these results it was concluded that besides their wish for teaching profession they still involve in the learning of certain other professions which have confused them.

There was significant difference between the responses of male and female respondents from the perspective attitude towards teaching profession. Therefore it was concluded that male and female both have positive attitude towards teaching profession. It is recommended that they must know national professional standards for teachers in Pakistan and then rate themselves that the competent or not and to

know about the challenges in the field from in-service teachers, so that they could prepare themselves properly moreover after the graduation the interested respondents may also enroll themselves in teaching education programs, to become competent for teaching profession.

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