

Challenges Faced by Prospective Teachers towards the Efficacy of Teacher Education in Balochistan

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Abstract

Teachers are our greatest assets; they serve their lives in helping and educating the new generation for a prosperous nation. Teachers always leave some lasting impacts for any society. The major objective of the study is to explore administrative, infrastructure and instructor related challenges of the PTs in their respective institutions in Balochistan, Pakistan. The literature and the result of the study reveal that PT and the Teacher Education institutions are important factors for a nation development. The research study was carried through phenomenological approach and the data were collected concluded semi-structure interview and focused group interview. The interview themes were drawn through the research questions and were analyses through the thematic analysis. The findings of the study suggest that the institutions which are providing Teacher Education in Balochistan are facing some chronic issues and they need some precautionary steps and alteration to fix the challenges of the Students-teachers. The qualitative aspect of the research and data collection demonstrate that major reasons of the PTs' challenges are the; incompetent teachers, gaps between the administrators and the students, delay of the final result, lack of resources and the budgeting constraints etc. The research was executed in 4 public universities in Balochistan. In each university, nearly 5-8 participants were selected randomly as interview participants from the B.Ed. final enrolled students. The sampling institutions were the UoB Quetta, AIOU Islamabad (Turbat Campus), LUAWMS University, and UoT.

Keywords: Challenges, Prospective Teachers, Teacher Education, Infrastructure

Introduction

Education is one of the most significant tools for everyone to succeed in life. In this process, HEIs play a key role to prepare PTs to cope with the challenges which they are facing in TEPs. Quality teaching in the HEC and preparedness of PT are surrounded by some issues such as

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administration related, academic-related, teacher's efficacy, and infrastructure. The present defective education system is in dire need of some refitting. The major fact behind the downfall of education is not giving proper attention to its TEPs. Besides that, unequal line of providing education, unfair means of using authority, gender discrimination, lack of resources, meager budgeting, unavailability of technical education, lack of professionalism have prevailed and handicapped the system of education in Pakistan. Pakistan, education has always been given the last priority for policymakers. The total budget for education which is being spent annually is nearly 1.8 percent of the total budget which is the lowest of the other departments' annual budget (Holmes, 2005). According to the Institute of Social and Policy Sciences report, Pakistan is spending the lowest of its GDP in the region of South Asia. One can judge it by the meager annual budget of it that is 2 percent of the total GDP. The insufficient annual budget for the education approved that the government's concern over the education is lacking. There is no doubt in accepting the fact that the developmental process and prosperity of education mainly rely on the annual budget that is spent and the policymakers' concern for its development (Shakoor, 2011). The research, more importantly, explore the challenges and difficulties encountered by PTs throughout TEP.

Teaching is regarded as a noble and highly respected profession which demands true strength, energy, and courage from the one who adopts this profession. However, a teacher carries an ample responsibility on his/her shoulders in this competitive and modern era of development. Above all, it is a teacher who shapes the ideas of the students and diverts their attention towards Students' desired goals through their wisdom and sagacity (Shakoor, 2011). In this modern era of education, education demands change. It requires restructured, innovative and advance knowledge from the people to survive in society. Similarly, teachers may not remain effective if they sustain with the stagnant knowledge, rather it demands new and innovative skills to make this process of learning according to the need of the time. The 21st century is regarded as the age of knowledge, innovations, creativity, and information (Saleem, 2014). Quaid-e-Azam remarked in on the importance of Education in educational conferences in 1947. The worth of education cannot be underrated. Our new generation is supposed to be abreast of the changing world. It is required to catch up and compete with the world which is developing rapidly. Keeping in view the above statement, the upbringing of the young people is proportional to the preparation of their teachers. For which teachers should be directed towards the quality of knowledge.

Hence, it is decidedly required to make the PTs resourceful that will make them an ideal paradigm for the learners. To undo the appalling standard of teachers and the TEPs, HEC has recommended structural changes to the program. In this meeting of HEC, the old-fashioned training programs which are being offered to PTs like PTC, CT, Diploma in education, and one-year B.Ed. were strongly condemned and phased out and exchanged with 4 years B.Ed. (Honors) with a 140 to 142 credit hours program and two years Associative Degree program of 68 credit hours. One of the scholars expressed on the occasion, HEC accords due importance to TEPs as the quality of education relies on the teachers' quality. They conclude the meeting by saying that the major aim of changing the structure of the education roadmap is to "raising teachers' prestige in society and ensuring their professional knowledge skills and competencies (HEC, 2016). Thus PTs are surrounded by several challenges that heed urgent attention of the policymakers.

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Numerous researches and the researcher come up with proof that effective TEPs help the PTs on the field to perform with confidence. According to one of the scholars, to make the PTs perform effectively and efficiently, firstly it is required to know their issues that they are facing academically and lace them with modern teaching techniques and provide them field-related knowledge, experience and guidance (Vega, 2015). PTs face various challenges in their related institutions. Such as administrative, academic, teacher efficacy and infrastructure-related. According to the finding of the research, they are the major issues PTs are facing in HEIs (Kıral, 2015). A great administrator is the one who focuses on developing student's capacities rather than their limitations. On the other hand, teacher efficacy is also critical for the prospective teacher's efficacy (Leithwood, 2004). It shows that the administrative body in the higher education institutions and the way they deal with the challenges of the students not only solve the issues of the Prospective Teachers but the overall performance of the institutions.

Research Questions

1. What are the teacher efficacy concerned issues of PTs towards TEPs?
2. What administrative challenges do the PTs face in Teacher Education?
3. What are the instructor related confrontations of PTs towards teachers' education?

Research Methodology

The qualitative method was used to gather the responses of the participants (PTs) to obtain the purposes of the study. The research mainly limits to challenges faced by the PTs in administration, academic, teacher efficacy and infrastructure in TEPs. The research was executed in 4 public universities in Balochistan. The sampling institutions were: The University of Balochistan Quetta, Allama Iqbal Open University, Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water & Marine Sciences (LUAWMS), and University of Turbat (UoT). The study sample included Prospective B.Ed. Final semester students and who are carrying CGPA at least 3 out of 4 are selected from each university. It is one of the most appropriate sampling techniques for this study because 4th-semester students were quit abreast of the challenges they have faced in their academic sessions. The researcher made the list of the PTs (male and female) following some particular criteria to collect data from the samples through the interview. Keeping in view the sampling methodology and the stratifies which were mentioned earlier. The B.Ed. (Regular program) final year students were selected for the research interview for governmental universities. UoB, LUAWMS, AIOU, Turbat Campus, UoT. The reason for selecting the final year students of B.Ed. that they are much familiar with the challenges which they faced throughout the program. In each university, nearly 5-8 participants were selected randomly as interview participants from the B.Ed. final enrolled students. The instrument which was used to get data through will be the interview. The interview is particularly useful for getting the story being a participant's experience. The interviewer could pursue in-depth information around the topic. (McNamara). The instrument consists of two parts. Part I deals with biographical information. Part II relates to problems and difficulties met by PTs such as administrative problems, instructor related problems, and infrastructure problems. In the data analyzing process, the researcher analyzed the data which he obtained from the field. The study followed the phenomenological

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method to analyze the collected data.

Data Analysis

Core Themes of the Study

1. The administrative issues of the PTs linked to the efficacy of TEPs.
2. Instructor related issues PTs faced during their course in the TEPs.
3. Infrastructure related issues PTs faced in the TEPs.
4. Do PTs perceive the challenges that interfere in conducting Quality Teacher Education?

The following themes and the sub-themes are developed from the research question and each core theme was asked by different participants from different institutions regarding the challenges of the PTs. Some of the participants were interviewed through semi-structured and the majority of the participants were interviewed through a focused group interview. The themes are discussed below one by one.

Core Theme 1: Administrative Issues of the PTs

The majority of the participants of the view administrative issues in the TEPs created some issues for them. Not only this, but the administrative issues also left some distinctive impacts on the overall quality of the PTs and the TE in Balochistan. One of the participants of the view: "We are facing some critical administrative issues in our university. One of the major issues in the administration is political interference in the recruitment process of the teachers. The teachers who are being taken are not worthy of their positions and they are not competent enough to teach".

One another participant of the view about the administrative issues of the PTs she expressed that:

"Besides the political interference, there is a huge gap between the administration and the students. The issues of the PTs and the administration persist on because students are never asked for their consents about anything and there is no timely access between the administration and the students. We are sometimes supposed to wait for months for a response from the administration".

One of the participants about the administrative issues thought that

"Most of the difficult subjects of the course are kept in the final year which not only prevents them to participate in other co-curricular activities but also increase their pressure of passing those courses. The administrative policymakers are to heed this issue and control the pressure of the students."

While some other students believed that late results and getting the final result sheet are the foremost issues of the administration which the students are facing throughout Balochistan particularly in their final result. "There is no productive way of making the final result and getting the certificate. The criterion of getting the certificate is made very lengthy and technical which makes us wait for months to get the degrees".

The above-mentioned issues highlighted by the participants truly exist in our education institutions. According to a teacher in one of the speeches "constant political interference and policy changes are barriers to raising standards in school. Our plan for education will ensure all pupils leave education with the knowledge and skills they need to access a wide range of

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jobs and succeed in a competitive global market”.

One another report of Dawn Newspaper, Political interferences, non-transparent recruitment and bureaucratic failure to keep pace with the emerging challenges have led to the underprivileged quality of education in community schools and the mushroom growth of business-oriented private institutions. According to a report presented by the HEC that Prime Minister Imran Khan also telephoned Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) that political interference in the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) should not be tolerated and merit should be followed and the favoritism should be curbed out”.

From the upper mentions, literature and the participants' view, it is cleared that our Higher Education Institutions are extensively under the pressure of the politicians in the recruitment process. Besides that, the administrative staff of the universities is not capable enough to negotiate the issues of the students.

Core Theme 2: Instructor related Issues of the PTs

Instructor related issues of the Higher Education Institution, particularly for the PTs, were challenging. The participants of the view where the research was conducted had some pertinent issues to their instructor challenges. Some of the corresponding challenges for the PTs were like: lack of passion in teaching, unqualified teachers, insufficient supervision, scarcity of staff, giving minimum respect to students' view, a traditional method of teaching were the major issues which were recorded by the investigator.

When a student was asked a question about the instructor related issues of the PTs, she said that;

One another participant from another university about the passion of the students nice said that;

"Passion is such a thing which motivates you to perform better in your field. Because of a lack of passion and lack of charm in education our teachers prefer to give more time to their part-time jobs than the full-time job. What I guess is the issue of the passion and the lack of will of doing something. It is one of the most challenging issues of the prospective teacher. It is mandatory to recruit the ones who are diligent, hardworking and have the passion to work". The literature also supports that the passion of the teachers in overall performance of the students and for the TEPs matters a lot Palmer a researcher remarkably said in his dissertation "Teacher Passion as a Teaching Tool" Majority of the teachers entered in this field just for excitement as it is one of the most flexible jobs and they don't have the featured of educators. He further said that some of the skills teachers own before they enter but some of them are to acquire after that to perform effectively. In his one of the quote, he believed that "Passion is a characteristic that teachers and students frequently ranked among the top 10 required skills"

According to Garrison (a researcher) "Those who feel the call to teach, who sense teaching is a profoundly meaningful part of their life, have a passion for teaching". Fried said about the passion and its importance in students' life that a passionate teacher is the one who has deep affection, knowledge, skills which drive the direction of the students. From the above literature, one can judge that the passion of the teachers in students' life and learning is indispensable.

The most frequently recorded issues related to instructors were insufficient supervision of

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the teachers during the course and disregarding of the students' views by the teachers. When the participants were asked questions in the focused group interview. They arbitrarily expressed that when they face any issue related to the course or their final research process, they find their teachers uncooperative. They avoid giving time and timely supervising, as a result, they perform poor and delay to submit their assignments and the researches. And some other participants of the view teachers usually disregard their views. Their decision about the class or course outline or any issue related to their academics is regarded. we are just followers what to designed and structured for us.

A large number of participants of the study elaborated in the focused group interview about the instructor issues to their teaching method. A participant asserted that, "Alas! Yet our teachers are using the traditional method of teaching in the class. They have failed to integrate the new teaching methods with the learning styles of the learners. They usually follow one of the teaching methods in the class which is very common in the intuitions that are "lecture method of teaching". There are so many modern methods and instructional strategies of teaching but they are unaware of them.

According to researcher teachers are to learn different teaching styles to deliver in different ways and be eligible enough to incorporate those styles with different learning styles of the learners. According to Fleming, there are three major learning styles of the learners based on Auditory, visual and Kinesthetic (AVK). Teachers are required to shape his/her teaching styles as per these models so that it benefits the students and create a sense of interest for the learners.

Core Theme 3: Infrastructure related Issues of the PTs

Participants of the study felt that they are facing several issues related to the infrastructure of the institutions. According to them, the infrastructure of an institution important role in the overall process. It is mandatory to design and structure the infrastructure. The modern classroom and building are erected so that not only common students benefit but also the physically challenged students benefit from it. Most of the participants of the study were reluctant about the structures of the institutions. one of the participants said that

"Though the government is spending an ample budget over the structures of the public universities. But still, there are some issues students are facing challenges related to infrastructure. it is known to all that universities' strengths are getting more and more every year but the classrooms are built are very small to accommodate all the students. Well.....one thing classrooms are small and are not designed as per the modern ways where the students get ease in doing activities and the second thing is classrooms are very crowded whereas creating so many disturbances for the teachers and also for us." One another students said that modern classrooms are built keeping in views different types of classrooms seating arrangements like U-Shape, cluster, stadium and combination seating arrangements but unlikely we are yet negligent of the types of classroom seating arrangement and we are only following one type of seating arrangement that is tradition rows and columns, which commonly being practice in overall institutions' classrooms".

Conclusion

The education and the TE in Pakistan more importantly in Balochistan has been under serious

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issues and challenges. These challenges in this research are investigated under three major themes like administrative issues of PTs, infrastructure-related issues of the PTs and the instructor related issues of the students- teachers during their academic years. The students-teachers mostly commented that the most persistent issues they face during the academic years are mostly are administrative issues. The management of the HEIs is under the serious influence of the politicians. The teachers and the other recruitment are mostly done by their consents. The PTs' commented that they not only face the administrative issues but the infrastructure issues they also face during their study. As per the students, there are fewer classrooms and also mostly the classrooms are not well equipped with the modern technologies. The shortage of classrooms was the issue of the institution where the study was done. The other common responses related to infrastructure issues were recorded were: unhygienic cafeterias, unclean toilets, crowded and small classrooms, lack of resourceful library, etc.

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