

Exploring the Relationship between Teachers’ Socio-economic Status and Their Teaching Profession Attitude at Secondary School Level

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Abstract

The main focus of this study was to find out the relationship between teachers’ socio-economic status (SES) and their teaching profession attitude at secondary school level in the province of Punjab. After extensive literature review and focus group discussion, four sub-components of teachers’ SES have been selected named as qualification, income, occupational respect, wealth and while teaching values, attributes, salaries & incentives, and satisfaction with teaching profession were selected as sub-components of teaching profession attitude. A questionnaire was surveyed on nine-hundred (900) teachers who taught science subjects to secondary classes and selected from all over the Punjab through proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The major findings showed positive relationship between the both variables of the study while teachers’ occupational respect- only one of the sub-components of teachers’ SES found positive relationship with teaching profession attitude. This study recommended that public and media should play its role to promote the occupational respect of teachers in the eyes of general public and all stakeholders.

Keywords: Socio-economic status, teaching profession attitude, teaching occupational respect.

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Introduction

The teachers being such important persons in the society seem to complain about their low socio-economic status in the society. For this reason, different conferences and projects were launched to uplift their status and prestige at international level (Delors et al., 1996; Mirza & Rasheed, 2009). But still matter is unsolved as different studies pointed out that due identification and status is not being provided to the teachers, as a result they are facing inequalities (Raza, 2010). The consequences of these inequalities have been reflected in the National Policy on Education (2009) as it declares that if government does not succeed in controlling these inequalities then the country can face social chaos.

On the economic situation in Pakistan, the daily newspaper reported that an average Pakistani has to spend at least two times more on energy utilization than the persons living in the other counter part of the world. Almost half of households' monthly income was spent on foodstuff while people had to spend beyond their means to make both ends meet (News Reporter, 2011). For this reason people have to work for extra time to earn more. On the other hand despite the better salary package in different countries, the situation is same. For instance, Hargreaves (2009) in her study pointed out that "teachers in some countries enjoy high salaries and comfortable working conditions; elsewhere they may have to do two jobs in order to live on" (p.199). These additional struggles of teachers for more earnings affect teachers' teaching profession attitude as Halawah (2008) asserted that salary or earning is one of the factors which influence the teachers' attitude towards teaching profession. So there was a great need to explore the relationship between teachers' socio- economic status and their teaching profession attitude.

Literature Review

The major sub-components of socio-economic status are educational qualification, income or salary, occupational respect, and wealth of the individual (Gottfried, 1985).

The issue of teachers' status has been addressed on different occasion especially in the Pakistan National Education Policies of 1992, and 1998-2010. The National Education Policy (1992) pointed out that despite the government's initiatives to uplift status, matter remained unsolved. Similarly NEP (1998—2010) reflected that, "It is a matter of fact that social status of teachers in Pakistan is very low. The teaching profession

is usually the last choice for the young men.” (p.47). At the international level, the importance of teachers' status has also recognized. Such as in the year 2000, DAKAR framework of action for Education for All and organization for economic co-operation and development (OECD) stressed on enhancement of the teachers' status (Santiago, 2005).

As far as sub-components of SES is concerned, one of the associations, APA (2007) indicated that better educational qualification is inter-related with the better economical and mental conditions of the persons. One major source of income of government's employees is salary. In this regard, Graham (1985) mentioned that teachers seem dishearten due to low as well as delay in salaries which ultimately affects the status of the teachers and the teaching profession in the society which cause the leftover of teaching profession. It is also pertinent to note that, low salary or non-payment of salary always does not link with the leftover of the teachers from the profession but it may be the one reason.

Occupational respect of a profession is directly related to both income and qualification because it determines the required level of qualification to enter into the profession and income level of that job. The high level of both indicators shows the high status of the profession (APA, 2007). To explain it further, Hargreaves (2009) narrated that pay and qualification seem critical factors of SES but pay does not provide the surety of high occupational respect of teaching profession and also concluded that out of total seven profession, secondary school teachers fell at the last. Similarly Sheikh and Iqbal (2003) reported that in Pakistan most of the teachers perceive that authority-wise, they are on the bottom as compared to other occupation.

In another study conducted in Pakistan, Shah, Ali, and Khan (2012) found that out of fifteen professions, secondary schools' teachers got fourteen ranking that's why the majority of the parents were not in the favor of teaching as a profession for their children. It is noticeable that some studies pointed out that teachers left out the profession due to low occupational respect but Fwu and Wang (2002) disagreed that in Taiwan, teachers are satisfied in regard of teachers' occupational respect as compared to other countries.

The fourth sub- component of SES- wealth is the collection of all types of assets, which produces sense of security in an individual to meet the household's expenses and emergencies and provide the opportunity to live comfortably. The income, occupation, and education might enhance the wealth level (APA, 2007).

Teachers' Attitudes towards Teaching Profession

There are so many factors related to attitude of teachers towards their profession. But in this study it is delimited to four sub- component in the light of socio-economic status. These are teaching values, salaries and incentives, teaching attributes, and satisfaction with teaching profession.

About first sub- component, Adel (2010) explained that the relationship between the students and teachers in the classroom depends upon the teaching values held by the teachers as well as students. Emphasizing on providing salaries and incentives, National Education Policy (1998-2010) asserted that the teaching profession can be made attractive to the young talented graduates by institutionalizing a package of incentives along with salaries.

As far as teaching attribute is concerned it is pointed out that teaching attributes is one of the most important indicators for employing the secondary school teachers in the field (Johnson, Scott, Roellke, & Christopher, 1999). Regarding its importance, the Task Force on Teacher Leadership (2008) pointed out that it is imperative to mobilize the huge unused characteristic of teachers to build up students' achievement. Similarly some teaching attributes such as solid subject knowledge, awareness about teaching-learning goals, selection of best teaching pedagogy, and commitment play a vital role in the achievement of students.

About satisfaction with teaching profession, Doyle and Forsyth (1973) agreed that being a part of community, the teachers' satisfaction is necessary to justify with their profession. In this regard Cobb, Steven, Foeller, and William (1992) explored that job satisfaction is influenced by individual attributes and job characteristics.

Most of the researches found the positive relationship between socio-economic status and attitude towards teaching profession. For instance, hurdles in getting payments, low intensity of financial adjustment, and teachers' own negative attitude and behavior are the most profound variables associated with the low prestige, status and teaching profession attitude of the teachers in the community (Osunde & Izevbigie, 2006).

To strengthen the concept, Halawah (2008) asserted that salaries or income (one of the sub-component of SES) along with the other factors such as promotion; teacher-society relationship and parents affect the teachers' attitude towards teaching profession.

Major Objective of the Study

The major objective of the study was to explore the relationship between teachers' socio-economic status and their attitude towards teaching profession.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed in the light of objective of the study.

1. Is there any relationship between teachers' socio-economic status and their attitude towards teaching profession?
2. Is there any relationship among the sub-components of teachers' socio-economic status and their attitude towards teaching profession?

Research Methodology

This study was descriptive and co-relational in nature. A questionnaire was developed to find out teachers' SES and their teaching profession attitude.

Population of the Study

All teachers of public secondary schools who taught science subjects to secondary classes in all over the Punjab considered as population. Punjab Province consists of total thirty-six (36) districts and it is distributed into four zones; Southern, Western, Northern, and Central Punjab which have 07, 07, 04 and 18 districts respectively (AEPAM, 2010).

Sample Design

Sample of the study was selected through multistage sampling technique. At the first stage through stratified proportionate sampling technique eighteen districts were finalized for collecting the data at the ratio of 50 %. Ahmad (2010) reported that people are enjoying more facilities and benefits of health and education in north and central Punjab as compared to western and southern Punjab. That's why status wise these four zones are further distributed into two regions i.e. deprived status and wealthy status region. Wealthy region comprises Northern and Central Punjab named strata A while deprived status region

comprises Southern, and Western Punjab named strata B. Thus total eleven districts from strata “A” (Wealthy region) and total seven districts from strata “B” (Deprived region) were randomly selected.

Table 1

Breakup of Secondary Schools in Sampled Districts

Total Sampled Districts	<u>Urban</u>			<u>Rural</u>			Total Schools
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
18	595	507	1102	1079	508	1587	2689

Source: School Education Department Census, 2010-11

Table 1 reveals that in urban area male and female schools are in the ratio of 54 and 46 whereas in rural area male and female schools are in the ratio of 68 and 32. Moreover out of 2689 schools, 1102 schools are in urban area and 1587 are in rural area which shows that urban and rural schools are in the ratio of 41 and 59 approximately.

Table 2

Locality-Wise Breakup of Selected Schools from Sampled Districts

Sampled Districts	Number of School from each District	Total Sampled schools	Locality-Wise Breakup of Schools at the ratio of 41: 59		
			Urban	Rural	Total
18	10	180	74	106	180

Table 2 shows the locality-wise breakup of schools from 18 sampled districts. At the second stage ten schools from each district were selected randomly. In this way, total 180 schools were selected randomly. Since in sampled districts, urban and rural schools are in the ratio of 41:59 as reflected in table 1, therefore at the third stage 74 urban and 106 rural schools was selected randomly in the same ratio. In this way, total 180 schools were selected.

Table 3

Gender-Wise Breakup of Selected Schools from Sampled Districts

Gender-Wise Breakup of Schools						Total Schools
Urban (74)			Rural (106)			
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
40	34	74	72	34	106	180

Table 3 reveals the gender-wise breakup of selected schools from sampled districts. Since in urban area, male and female schools are in the ratio of 54 and 46 as reflected in table 1, therefore at the fourth stage 40 male and 34 female schools were selected randomly in the same ratio. Similarly in rural area, male and female schools are in the ratio of 68 and 32 as reflected in table 1, therefore at the fifth stage, 72 male and 34 female schools were selected randomly in the same ratio. In this way, total 180 schools were selected randomly through proportionate random sampling. In other words, total 112 male and 68 female schools are selected from both localities.

At the sixth and last stage, stratified proportionate random sampling procedure was adopted for the selection of the study sample of nine hundred (900) teachers who taught science subjects to secondary classes.

Table 4

Locality-Wise Breakup of Selected Teachers from Sampled Districts

Total Urban Schools	Total Rural Schools	Teacher from each school	Total Urban Teachers	Total Rural Teachers	Total Teachers
74	106	5	370	530	900

Table 4 shows locality wise breakup of selected teachers from sampled districts. Total seventy four urban schools and 106 rural schools were selected as reflected in table 2. Since five teachers were randomly selected from each school, in this way 370 teachers from urban and 530 teachers from rural areas were selected. Therefore total 900 secondary school teachers were selected randomly.

Table 5

Gender-Wise Breakup of Selected Teachers from Sampled Districts

Total Male Schools	Total Female Schools	Teacher from each School	Total Male Teachers	Total Female Teachers	Total Teachers
112	68	5	560	340	900

Table 5 shows gender-wise breakup of teachers from sampled districts. One hundred and twelve male schools and 68 female schools were selected as reflected in table 3. Since five teachers were randomly selected from each school, in this way 560 male and 340 female teachers were selected. Therefore total 900 secondary school science teachers were selected randomly.

Instrumentation

Based on literature review, a research instrument was developed with the help of supervisor. Experts of the field in enquiry and a focus group comprising eight members were also constituted. Out of these members, two were Executive District officers (EDOs), two were teachers from Teachers' Education Institutions (TEIs), two were head teachers of secondary schools and two were secondary school teachers.

Teachers' socio-economic status was measured through Teacher Socio-economic Status Scale. It was consisted of total seven (07) questions. Questions no.1 was consisted on teachers' qualification while question 2 was related to teachers' wealth. Question3 to 6 were related to teachers' income while question no.7 was included on teachers' occupational respect. To develop question no.7, the researcher with the permission of author adapted only one part of the questionnaire of Hargreaves and others (2006) developed on 3- point likert scale. The researcher, too, modified this part on 5- point likert scale (always, very often, sometimes, rarely, and never) because the other scale of this study related to teaching profession attitude was also developed on 5-point rating scale.

Validity and Reliability

Teaching profession attitude was measured through teaching profession attitude scale. To develop this scale, the researcher studied the different scales such as Arshad (1982) teaching attitude scale, Halawah (2008) scale, Ahmed and Sahak (2009) scale and most recent developed

scale by the Husain et al. (2011). Out of 35 items, total twenty- eight (28) statements with moderately positive and negative effect were finalized after piloting and item analysis. Out of these, twenty one items were stated with positive effect and seven items were stated with negative effect. All the items were arranged on a five-point Likert scale. The five points rating responses were strongly disagree (SDA), Disagree (DA), Not sure (NS), agree (A), and strongly agree (SA). The overall reliability of the attitude towards teaching professional scale was calculated through Cronbach alpha which was 0.84.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to find out the relationships.

Table 6

Relationships between Teachers' Socio-economic Statuses and Attitude towards Teaching Profession

Variables	Mean	SD	Relationship with	R	p	Correlation
SES	67.76	10.82	Attitude	0.261	<0.001	Positive
Qualification	4.07	1.15	Attitude	0.01	=0.795	No
Income	11.99	5.99	Attitude	0.061	=0.094	No
Wealth	9.14	2.97	Attitude	0.024	=0.531	No
Respect	42.55	7.81	Attitude	0.304	< 0.01	Positive
Values	29.53	3.41	SES	0.233	< 0.001	Positive
Incentives	25.34	3.78	SES	0.168	< 0.001	Positive
Attributes	27.99	2.86	SES	0.132	=0.032	Positive
Satisfaction	24.76	3.17	SES	0.171	< 0.01	Positive
Attitude	107.64	9.02	SES	0.261	<0.001	Positive
Qualification	4.07	1.15	Incentives	-0.005	=0.896	No
Qualification	4.07	1.15	Values	-0.40	=0.289	No
Qualification	4.07	1.15	Satisfaction	0.066	=0.082	No
Qualification	4.07	1.15	Attributes	0.012	=0.745	No
Income	11.99	5.99	Incentives	0.6	=0.117	No
Income	11.99	5.99	Values	0.43	=0.261	No
Income	11.99	5.99	Satisfaction	0.047	=0.213	No
Income	11.99	5.99	Attributes	0.1	=0.783	No
respect	42.55	7.81	Incentives	0.179	=0.000	Positive
respect	42.55	7.81	Values	0.288	=0.000	Positive
respect	42.55	7.81	Satisfaction	0.184	=0.000	Positive
respect	42.55	7.81	Attributes	0.174	=0.000	Positive
Wealth	9.14	2.97	Incentives	0.023	=0.547	No
Wealth	9.14	2.97	Values	0.024	=0.524	No
Wealth	9.14	2.97	Satisfaction	0.016	=0.674	No
Wealth	9.14	2.97	Attributes	-0.002	=0.963	No

N=692, SES= Socio-economic Status, SD= Standard Deviation, r= Correlation co-efficient, p= Significant value

Table 6 reveals the mean score, standard deviation (SD) and relationships between variables along with relationships among sub-components of the variables. It reflects that the mean score of SES and teaching profession attitude is 67.76 and 107.64 respectively while standard deviation of SES and teaching profession attitude is 10.82 and 9.02 respectively. It can be concluded that SES has more standard deviation as compared to teaching profession attitude. It is to be noted that teachers' qualification, income, wealth, and occupational respect were taken as sub-components of teachers' socio-economic status (SES) whereas teaching values, teaching incentives, teaching attributes, and teaching satisfaction were taken as sub-components of teachers' attitude towards teaching profession. The table shows a positive correlation between teachers' socio-economic status and teaching profession attitude, at $r = 0.261$, and $p < 0.001$. As far as relationship of SES with sub-components of attitude towards teaching profession is concerned, all the sub-components have positive correlation with socio-economic status such as teaching values has positive relationship at $r=0.233$, $p<0.001$, teaching incentives has positive relationship at $r=0.168$, $p<0.001$, teaching attributes has positive relationship at $r=0.132$, $p=0.032$, and teaching satisfaction has positive relationship at $r=0.171$, $p<0.01$. As far as relationship of attitude towards teaching profession with sub-components of SES is concerned, only teachers' occupational respect has positive relationship with their attitude towards teaching profession at $r = 0.304$, and $p < 0.01$. As far as relationships among the sub-components of variables are concerned, teachers' occupational respect has positive relationship with teaching incentives at $r= 0.179$, $p= 0.000$, teachers' occupational respect has positive relationship with teaching values at $r= 0.288$, $p= 0.000$, teachers' occupational respect has positive relationship with teaching satisfaction at $r= 0.184$, $p= 0.000$, and teachers' occupational respect has positive relationship with teaching attributes at $r= 0.174$, $p= 0.000$.

Table 7

Coefficient for Socio Economic Status (SES)

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	92.936	2.100		44.254	.000
SES	0.187	0.031	.261	7.091	.000

Dependent Variable: Attitude towards teaching profession

To assess the strength of the predictive linear relationship of teachers' socio economic status on attitude of teachers towards their teaching profession, linear regression analysis was conducted. Table 7 displays the un-standardized coefficients for the socio economic status with $B^{\wedge} = 92.936$, $t = 44.254$, $p = .000$, which found to be significant to attitude of teachers towards teaching profession. For this study, the prediction equation, using un-standardized coefficients, for attitude of teachers towards teaching profession is:

Attitude of teachers towards teaching profession = 92.936 + 0.187 (socio economic status)

The above equation shows that socio-economic status (SES) has positive effect on attitude towards teaching profession.

Table 8

Coefficient for Attitude towards Teaching Profession

Model	Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	34.07	4.768		7.146	.000
Attitude	0.313	.044	.261	7.091	.000

Dependent Variable: Socio- economic Status

To assess the strength of the predictive linear relationship of teachers' attitude towards their teaching profession, linear regression analysis was conducted. Table 8 displays the un-standardized

coefficients for the attitude towards teaching profession with $B^{\wedge} = 34.07$, $t = 7.146$, $p = .000$, was found to be significant to socio-economic status. For this study, the prediction equation, using un-standardized coefficients, for socio-economic status is

$$\text{Socio-economic status} = 34.07 + 0.313 (\text{Attitude towards teaching profession})$$

The above equation shows that attitude towards teaching profession has positive effect on socio-economic status (SES).

Table 9

Coefficients for Four Factors of Socio-economic Status

		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	89.598	2.531		35.400	.000
	Qualification	.250	.205	.045	1.219	.223
	respect	.253	.030	.306	0.784	.433
	Wealth	.005	.025	.007	8.199	.000
	Income	.038	.037	.038	0.903	.367

Dependent Variable: Attitude towards teaching profession

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the strength of the predictive linear relationship of the four factors of Socio economic status on attitude towards teaching profession. Table 9 displays the un-standardized coefficients for each of the four factors of socio economic status. For this study, the prediction equation, using un-standardized coefficients, for attitude towards teaching profession is:

$$\text{Attitude towards teaching profession} = 89.598 + 0.250(\text{Qualification}) + 0.253(\text{Occupational respect}) + 0.005(\text{Wealth}) + 0.038(\text{income})$$

The above equation shows that all the sub-components of SES have positive effect on attitude towards teaching profession.

Table 10

Coefficients for Four Factors of Attitude towards teaching profession

		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	34.492	4.912		7.022	.000
	Value	0.598	.128	.188	4.857	.000
	Attribute	0.084	.154	.022	0.543	.587
	Satisfaction	0.243	.144	.071	1.679	.094
	Incentive	0.287	.177	.100	2.457	.014

Dependent Variable: Socio Economic Status

Similarly a multiple regression analysis was conducted to assess the strength of the predictive linear relationship of the four factors of attitude towards teaching profession on Socio- economic Status. Table 10 displays the un-standardized coefficients for each of the four factors of attitude towards teaching profession. For this study, the prediction equation, using un-standardized coefficients, for socio-economic status is:

$$\text{Socio-economic status} = 34.492 + 0.598(\text{Value}) + 0.084(\text{Attribute}) + 0.243(\text{Satisfaction}) + 0.287(\text{Incentive})$$

The above equation shows that all the sub-components of attitude towards teaching profession have positive effect on SES.

Findings and Discussion

As far as relationship between teachers' socio-economic status and their attitude towards teaching profession is concerned, study revealed a positive correlation. In other words, it can be reported that increase/decrease in teachers' SES tend to be increased/decreased in their attitude towards teaching profession and vice versa. This finding supports the findings of the studies of Litt and Turk (1985) and Osunde and Izevbigie (2006), in which they reported that teacher's negative own and professional behavior along with the low level of financially compensation, hindrance in payment of salaries and allowances are vital indicators causing low regard and status of the teachers and attitude towards teaching profession in the society. Similarly, this finding was in line with the studies of Flores (2001) cited in Hussain, et al. (2011), in which association between economic problem and the attitude of newly graduate teachers towards teaching profession was found out. Besides this, in a study conducted in Pakistan, Mirza and Rasheed (2009) claimed that lack of social and economic status of teachers is one reason of disinterest in teaching profession. On the other hand, the study's finding did not support the finding of study of Patkin et al. (2009), in which no

effect of teachers' background of SES on their attitude and professional growth was reported.

As far as sub-components of SES and their attitude towards teaching profession is concerned, study found that out of these sub-components, teachers' qualification, income, and wealth had no correlation with their attitude towards teaching profession which contradicts the findings of the study of Halawah (2008) in which it was reported that salaries or income (one of the component of SES) along with the other factors such as promotion, teacher- society relationship and parents influence the teachers' attitude towards teaching profession. Besides this, the study also concluded a positive correlation between teachers' occupational respect and their attitude towards teaching profession. In other word, increase / decrease in teachers' occupational respect tend to be increased /decreased in their teaching profession attitude. Therefore, this finding may be the result of expectations of the teachers about their occupational respect in the eyes of public, community, students and other stakeholders.

Findings also revealed that all sub-components of teaching profession attitude have positive correlation with teachers' socio-economic status. In other words, this result showed that increase /decrease in teachers' teaching values, teaching incentives, teaching attributes, and satisfaction with teaching profession tend to be increased / decreased in their SES.

As far as relationship among the sub-components of the variables is concerned, only one sub-component of SES i.e. occupational respect has positive relationship with all sub-components of teaching profession attitude. In other words, it can be concluded that increase /decrease in teachers' occupational respect tend to be increased / decreased in their teaching values, teaching incentives, teaching attributes, and satisfaction with teaching profession. As far as limitations of the study is concerned, as the study is survey type, so more time consumed in data collection and analyzing it which might be affected the validity of study as well as the socio- economic situation of the respondents might be changed during that time period. Moreover it is difficult to generalize the results of this study as the sample is delimited to science teachers only.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that teachers' salaries should be increased to uplift the socio-economic status of teachers as well as Public and Media should play its role to promote the occupational respect of teachers in the eyes of general public and all stakeholders so that positive attitude towards teaching profession can be produced in the teachers. A detailed qualitative study should be conducted to find out the current images of teachers in the eyes of public and all stakeholders. Moreover a causal-comparative study to investigate the effect of teachers' socio-economic status on their teaching profession attitude should be conducted.

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