

ATTITUDE OF PAKISTANI SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS THEIR PROFESSION AND THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING[#]

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The study was undertaken to assess the professional attitude of Pakistani school teachers and their psychological well-being. Study focussed on finding out the relationship among professional attitude, and psychological well-being of the teachers. For this purpose, an indigenous Professional Attitude Scale of Teachers: PAST was developed, and a Well-Being Scale Affectometer 2 (Kammann & Flett, 1983) was translated in Urdu. Reliability studies of both the scales showed these scales to be highly reliable (Naheed, 1997). Sample of the study consisted of 172 Government school teachers (60 males & 60 females) who were randomly drawn from primary, middle, and high schools of urban areas of Multan Division. Results indicated that teachers have a favourable attitude towards their profession. Teachers reported high well-being on Urdu version of Affectometer 2. Findings supported the hypothesis that there exists a positive correlation between teacher's Professional Attitude and their Psychological Well-being. Findings of the study are supported with theoretical and cultural frame work.

A great deal of research on teaching specifically and teachers in general, and the related issues is available in the psychological literature (Gage, 1963; Gould, 1934; Lindzey & Aronson, 1969; Shahab, 1996; Travers, 1973; Wittrock, 1986). State and importance of teaching career also remained an interesting topic for a number of educational psychologists (e.g., Cook, Leeds, & Callis, 1951; Lindzey & Aronson, 1969). It has been noticed that in every society teachers always face the criticisms like: Are they true professionals?... Who can teach effectively and how?... Is teaching a science or art? Despite the fact that people seem to know lot about teaching profession, as it

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appears. In fact, it requires knowledge, skills, inspiration, creativity, and intuition (Ball & Goodson, 1985; Hunt, 1990; Scotter, Haas, Kraft, & Schott, 1991). Due to such pre-requisites some believe that teaching is a science (e.g., Woolfolk, 1987) whereas, many others agree that teaching has both scientific and artistic elements in it (Ball & Goodson, 1985; Hunt, 1990). As a matter of fact, a truly professional and dedicated teacher does not view himself as a seed machine. He would rather take it upon himself to prepare the soil for the seed. Which implies that teaching should not be considered a simple process of imparting knowledge, but it is to understand the individual student through his intelligence, behavior, needs, goals, and inspirations. Teachers with their peculiar characteristics, attitudes, and beliefs make a direct impact on their students.

Research on teachers professional attitudes is relatively a new phenomenon (Breckler, 1984; Feldman, 1985; Hunt, 1990; Luthans, 1993). However, it is evident that a good teacher always show positive attitude towards his profession (Fontana, 1988). Portrayal of the teaching profession depicts importance of the teacher and his/her role in the society (Ornstein & Levine, 1984). The way teachers perceive teaching and learning is a crucial issue to be researched. Teaching attitude includes attitude towards teaching and learning, commitment to teaching, attitude towards students, and perception about prestige of the teaching profession. One who believes teaching as an important profession and career would definitely behave in a different way as compared to those who do not consider it important. Their classroom behaviors and attitudes are directly influenced by these assumptions. It is desired that teachers should attract the keenest minds and shape finest personalities, which could be only possible if we study the professional attitude of teachers in relation to their own psychological well-being (Scotter et al., 1991).

Well-being is used as synonym to healthfulness. Health is a positive state of physical, mental, and social well-being, it does not merely refer to the absence of disease (WHO Report, 1958). Well-being also refer to one's good quality of life (Zautra & Reich, 1983) ...it is a balance between positive affect and negative affect and appraisal of one's functioning (Bradburn, 1969; Schollosser, 1990; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Literature review reveals that at least over the last decade, the issue of wellness or well-being is well researched in several disciplines (e.g., Andrews & Withey, 1976; Bradburn, 1969; Diener, 1984; Diener & Larsen, 1993; Diener, Larsen, Levine, & Emmons, 1985; Mookherjee, 1992; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Psychological well-being refers to one's positive sense of subjective well-being. It could be further explained that a person who

evaluates his past and present positively, has a positive cognition of his future. In other words, one who perceives himself individually energetic and socially approved is psychologically well. Andrews and Robinson (1991) maintain that well-being is an attitude towards one's own life and self.

Life and job are so strongly interrelated that both can effect each other either positively or negatively (Judge, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1994; Salanick & Pfeffer, 1978). Obviously teachers' way of perceiving themselves (both as a person and as a teacher) is a major determinant of classroom environment and students performance. Teacher's evaluation of his own potentials and subjective well-being has great impact on the effective teaching.

A large body of research in teaching profession was initiated to see the teacher's commitment and favourability towards their career (Chivore, 1988; Huberman, 1989; Kiesler, 1981; Lyons, 1981; Ornstein & Levine, 1984; Wood, 1988). Several investigators have studied the differences in teacher's attitudes as a function of a number of variables like age, sex, gender, experience etc. (Carlson, 1993; Elbaz, 1981; Huberman, 1989; Munby, 1983; Newman, 1979; Peterson, 1976; Peterson & Barger, 1984; Rempel & Bentley, 1970; Sofer, 1970; Wandt, 1954). Present study was planned to explore the professional attitude of teachers and their psychological well-being. Here, professional attitude means teacher's feelings, behaviors, and commitment to their jobs, whereas, psychological well-being is considered as their subjective evaluation of their self and life.

In Pakistan, teaching is considered as one of the stressful professions due to a number of reasons including their pay structure, general status, working condition, work load, school environment etc. Contrary to such negative aspects, there are many things which are considered good and attractive about the profession. Some of these could be social relations, relationship with students, and opportunities for self-expression, etc. As a result, many positive attitudes are built. It gives job satisfaction, enhances self-image, and it might result in the enhancement of well-being. Thus, a positive sense of psychological well-being may develop a positive attitude towards one's own self, life, and work, etc. Self-analysis of teachers is needed for their better handling of students. And a final outcome could be positive attitude towards one's own profession and professional role (Hassan, 1978). Some empirical data was needed to prove aforesaid statements, especially in Pakistan. Present study was an attempt in this concern.

Main objectives of the study were: (i) to study the essential nature of professional attitude of teachers. (ii) to study the perceived

psychological well-being of the teachers. (iii) to explore the relationship between professional attitude of teachers and psychological well-being, and (iv) to investigate the differences in professional attitude of teachers as a function of demographic variables (sex, age, income, education, marital status, and experience)

Following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. School teachers will show favorable attitude towards their profession.
2. School teachers will show positive psychological well-being.
3. There will be a positive correlation between professional attitude of teachers and their psychological well-being.
4. Women teachers will possess more positive professional attitude as compared to men teachers.
5. Women teachers will have a high degree of well-being than the men teachers.
6. Undergraduate teachers will show less favourable attitude towards their profession than graduate and post-graduate teachers.
7. Undergraduate teachers will show negative psychological well-being than graduate and post-graduate teachers.
8. The young and elderly teachers will show more favorable professional attitude than the middle-age group.
9. The elderly teachers will exhibit a high degree of psychological well-being than the younger ones.
10. There will be a positive correlation between income and professional attitude of teachers.
11. There will be a positive correlation between income and psychological well-being of teachers.

METHOD

Sample

The sample of present study comprised of 120 school teachers. Among these, 60 were men and 60 were women. The age range of the subjects was between 23-56 years ($M = 37.0$; $SD = 8.57$). A representative sample was drawn from 13 Government schools of urban areas of Multan division. Among those 38 teachers were teaching primary classes, 43 were teaching middle classes, and 49

were teaching high classes. The range of subject's experience was between 2 to 33 years ($M = 13.1$; $SD = 8.1$).

Instrument

Major instruments used in the study were (1) Professional Attitude Scale for Teachers: PAST (Naheed, 1997), (2) Well-being Scale Urdu translation of Affectometer 2 (Kammann & Flett, 1983), and (3) a separately developed bio-data sheet. Following is the brief description of these instruments. Reliability of these scales were determined in the first phase of the study.

Professional Attitude Scale (PAST)

PAST, a 24-item scale is an indigenous attitude scale which was developed for the measurement of attitude of teachers towards their profession. PAST has been found significantly reliable instrument (Alpha coefficient, .83) for attitude measurement (Naheed, 1997). It is a 5-point scale, giving score of 1 to strong disagreement, 2 to disagreement, 3 to undecided, 4 to agreement, 5 to strong disagreement. Sum of the scores give an overall attitude score of the subject. Range of score of PAST fall in between 24 to 120. Half of its items are positively worded, whereas, half are negatively worded.

Affectometer 2: Well-being Scale

The scale is used for the measurement of well-being. Urdu adaptation of well-being scale was made from the original scale by Kammann & Flett (1983). It consists of 39 items divided in two parts. Part A was comprised of 19 statements and Part B had 20 adjectives in it. Well-being scale has been found significantly reliable instrument (Alpha coefficient, .88) for the measurement of well-being (Naheed, 1997). Part A and Part B of Well-being Scale was also scored on 5-point Likert type scale. Giving the score of 1-5, i.e., 1 = not at all, 2 = occasionally, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = all of the times. This scoring was reversed for negative items for both parts of well-being scale. Sum of these scores was considered as Well-being Score of the subjects. Range of the scores of well-being scale is in between 39 to 195.

Procedure

Professional Attitude Scale (PAST) and Well-being scales were administered to the sample individually. Teachers were contacted in their schools. First of all they were asked to read out the general

instructions for these tests. Before filling the scales the participants were asked to fill the bio-data sheet. Researchers made sure that the respondents were following instructions clearly. It was observed that it took an average of 15 to 25 minutes to complete scales.

RESULTS

Professional Attitude Scale scores and Well-being Scale scores of the subjects were computed on the basis of the data obtained from 120 teachers. The possible range of scores on Professional Attitude Scale for Teachers was from 24 to 120, whereas, obtained scores of respondent teachers ranged between 51 to 119. Similarly, range of scores on Well-being scale is possible between 39 to 195, while the obtained range of teacher's well-being score of our sample was 117 to 191.

Table 1

Mean scores and standard deviations of subjects on professional attitude scale for teachers and well-being scale

Scale	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Professional Attitude Scale	120	92.35	14.83
Well-being Scale	120	152.67	19.90

Table 1 indicates that mean Professional Attitude Scale score of the sample is ($M = 92.35$; $SD = 14.83$), whereas, mean of scores on Well-being Scale is ($M = 152.67$; $SD = 19.90$). These findings indicate a favourable attitude of teachers towards their profession with highly positive psychological well-being.

The two scales are positively correlated with each other ($r = .54$; $p < .001$), which indicates that higher the professional attitude of teachers, higher will be their psychological well-being.

Mean scores and standard deviation of the male and female subjects on Professional Attitude Scale are shown in the Table 2. Differences in the mean scores and significance level is indicated through *t*-test.

Table 2

Mean, standard deviation and t-value of Professional Attitude Scale of the men and women teachers

Teachers	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
Men	60	87.05	14.05	4.18
Women	60	97.66	13.74	

df = 118; *** *p* < .001

The results of Table 2 show a significant difference in the mean professional attitude scores of men and women subjects ($t = 4.18$; $df = 118$; $p < .001$). The mean of the two groups indicate that women teachers possess more favorable attitude towards their profession as compared to men teachers.

Mean and standard deviation of scores of teachers on Well-being Scale are presented in Table 3. Difference in perceived psychological well-being of subjects is also indicated, which is obtained through t-test.

Table 3

Mean, standard deviation and t-value of Well-being Scale of men and women teachers

Teachers	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
Men	60	148.41	21.30	2.39***
Women	60	156.93	17.54	

df = 118; *** *p* < .005

Table 3 shows a significant difference ($t = 2.39$; $df = 118$; $p < .005$) in the mean well-being scores of men and women teachers. The mean scores indicate that women teachers have scored higher on well-being as compared to men teachers.

Table 4 shows mean, standard deviation and t-value of Professional Attitude scores of subjects with different education.

Table 4

Mean, standard deviation and t-value on Professional Attitude Scale of teachers with different educational level

Education	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
Under Graduate	54	95.07	16.46	1.83
Graduate/Post Graduate	66	90.13	13.06	

df = 118; ****p* < .001

The results indicate that there is no significant difference ($t = 1.83$; $p = ns$) in professional attitude scores of under-graduate and post-graduate teachers.

Table 5 shows mean, standard deviation and t-difference in psychological well-being scores of the sample of subjects with different educational level.

Table 5

Mean, standard deviation and t-value on Well-being Scale of teachers with different educational level

Education	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>
Under Graduate	54	151.57	22.09	.55
Graduate/Post Graduate	66	153.57	18.03	

df = 118; ****p* < .001

Table 5 indicates that there is no significant difference ($t = .55$; $p = ns$) in the psychological well-being scores of teachers with graduate and undergraduate qualifications.

Mean scores and standard deviations of three age groups (young, middle and elderly) on Professional Attitude Scale are shown in the Table 6. Differences among these groups on Professional Attitude

Scale as a function of age were determined by ANOVA which are shown in Table 7.

Table 6

Mean, standard deviations on Professional Attitude Scale of teachers of different age groups

Age Group	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Young (23-30 years)	36	91.47	16.77
Middle (31-40 years)	48	92.47	13.94
Elderly (41-56 years)	36	93.08	14.28

Table 6 indicates mean attitudinal scores and standard deviations of subjects labeled as young (age = 23-30; $M = 91.47$), middle (age = 31-40; $M = 92.47$), and elderly (age = 41-56; $M = 93.08$). The mean attitude scores of all the three groups are very close to each other.

Professional attitude scores of different age groups were also put to one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) as shown in Table 7.

Table 7

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on Professional Attitude Scale of young, middle aged, and elderly teachers

Source of variance	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
Age group	47.89	2	23.94	.1072
Residual	26129.70	117	223.33	
Total	26177.39	119		

* $p < .05$

The results of ANOVA in Table 7 indicate a non-significant effect of age on Professional Attitude Scale of the subjects,

$F(2, 117) = .1072; p = .05$. and, standard deviations of subjects labeled as young (age = 23-30; $M = 91.47$), middle (age = 31-40, $M = 92.47$) and elderly (age = 41-56; $M = 93.08$). The mean attitude scores of all the three groups are very close to each other.

Mean scores and standard deviations of different age groups on Well-being Scale are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Mean, standard deviations on Well-being Scale of teachers with different age groups

Age Group	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Young (23-30 years)	36	145.97	19.82
Middle (31-40 years)	48	154.97	20.09
Elderly (41-56 years)	36	155.11	18.57

The results (Table 8) show that elderly teachers indicate a high perceived psychological well-being as compared to other groups. It also indicates that the elder group differ from the younger group but not much from the middle group in the well-being scores.

Results of *ANOVA* on Well-being Scale as a function of different age groups are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on Well-being Scale of young, middle aged, and elderly teachers

Source of variance	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>
Age group	2322.54	2	1161.27	3.03*
Residual	44811.77	117	383	
Total	47134.32	119		

* $p < .05$

Table 9 shows a significant difference in the Well-being Scale of teachers among different age groups, $F(2,117) = 3.03, p < .05$.

Table 10 shows correlation of Professional Attitude Scale and Well-being Scale with the variable of monthly income.

Table 10

Correlation coefficients of professional attitude scores and well-being score with the variables of monthly income

Variable	Correlations	
	Professional Attitude Scale ($N = 120$)	Well-being Scale ($N = 120$)
Monthly Income	-.15	.05

* $p < .05$

Table 10 shows that there is negative but insignificant relationship ($r = .15, p < .05$) between monthly income and professional attitude of teachers and there is non-significant relationship ($r = .05, p < .05$) between monthly income and psychological well-being.

DISCUSSION

The conceptual models of well-being (Bradburn, 1969; Baron & Byrne, 1993) emphasize upon the distinct dimensions of wellness, which include personal growth and purposeful life as well. Many researchers propose that a positive sense of well-being has positive impact on overall functioning, in general, and one's professional career and attitude, in specific. It is believed that the positive professional attitude and out-put has lot of bearing in more enduring quality of self i.e., the sense of well-being.

It was hypothesized that the school teachers generally possess a favourable attitude towards their profession and have a positive sense of psychological well-being. Findings of the study are congruent with the assumption. Regarding the positive attitude of teachers towards their profession many inferences can be drawn. One explanation may be that the sample of study were all in-service teachers who were enjoying all the benefits of their career. Social information processing perspective of Salanick and Pfeffer (1978) about work attitudes also provides some support to our findings. It explains that individuals

perceive their job rewards before hand. which ultimately results in positive work attitude.

Findings of the study reveals that teachers possess moderately favourable attitude towards their profession ($M= 92.35$; $SD= 14.83$). A high psychological well-being was also reported on well-being scale ($M= 152.67$; $SD= 19.90$). Degree of favourability of teachers towards their profession also seems attached with their perceived social status in the society. Besides, teacher's positive professional attitude can also be attributed to their intrinsic/extrinsic motivation of choosing teaching as a career.

A teacher's evaluation of himself/herself as a teacher, as well as a human being has a great impact on his/her teaching effectiveness, as well as on the society. High scores on the Well-being Scale suggest that teachers have a positive perception of their life, environment and their own self. Being employed may be one of the important factors contributing in their feelings of wellness, as significantly high prevalence of low-esteem have been reported in unemployed people (Winefield & Tiggemann, 1990). Teachers of our sample seems satisfied for their economic gains. These findings are in line with the findings of economic instrumentality of work (Diener, 1984; George & Brief, 1990). In addition, employment is not only providing economic benefits to these teachers but it has a number of latent and manifest consequences (Jahoda, 1981, 1982, 1992).

The element of culture specificity in attitudes and perception is obviously found across cultures, which is contingent upon a number of socio-psychological factors and cultural milieu. With this understanding we see that in our culture where teaching profession is relatively viewed a professional career of second-choice and is considered low paid as compared to other professions. Unlike the West, it becomes imperative to see these intrinsic rewards relating to personal satisfaction which are operating in the professional attitude. Pakistani school teachers, despite meager resources and societal pressure, are able to maintain a positive self-esteem and well-being. It may also be attributed to the psychological rewards of their profession than monetary gains.

Assessment of relationship between professional attitude of teachers and their psychological well-being was one of the main objective of the study. Results indicate a moderate correlation between the two. These findings are congruent with the results of Sandvik, Diener, and Seidlitz (1993). One can safely infer that these relationships exist because work/profession and life are closely linked to each other. Job is a part of whole life.

Having job means a lot to oneself, it certainly contributes a lot in forming positive sense of well-being. We all agree to that contented and self-assured persons do have an impact on their personal and family life. This has been proved by various researches (e.g., Salanick & Pfeffer, 1978). Findings reveal that a teacher who possesses a favourable attitude towards his profession prefers his professional role in a better way getting in turn, positive feedback from his employees and students. As a result, he feels himself/herself psychologically well.

Study has revealed more favourable professional attitude and high psychological well-being in female teachers as compared to male teachers. However, there seems no significant impact of education on professional attitude and psychological well-being of teachers. It implies that psychological gains and rewards are equal for all. Similarly, study revealed no significant differences in professional attitude scores as a result of age. These findings give an interesting indication that younger group looks satisfied with getting a job, and middle one seems settled with their life routine, whereas, the elderly take their job easily and perhaps are better rewarded at this stage. As regards the age group and well-being a significant difference indicates that psychological well-being of the older and middle age group is higher than the younger ones. It may be because of the fact that in our culture, attitude of young people is relatively unsettled towards their life and goals. Study revealed no relationship between income and psychological well-being and income and professional attitude. The study focused on to that target population which was most neglected, perhaps the forgotten ones, but who are the most significant professionals of the society: the teachers. Investigated relationship between professional attitude and psychological well-being has been a unique issue for further research.

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