

Background characteristics of pre-service teachers and their motivation to teach

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this descriptive survey study is to identify the background characteristics of entrant teachers from pre-service teacher education institutions in Baluchistan, Pakistan. To achieve the objectives of this study, data were collected from all entrant teachers enrolled in the first year (second semester, spring 2012) of Associate Degree in Education (ADE) and Bachelor of Education (BEd (Hons)) programmes in Baluchistan. A survey questionnaire was developed and administered to get responses. The findings revealed that most of the entrant teachers are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated towards the teaching profession. However, motivation of entrant teachers varies as their background characteristics vary. The findings of this study have practical implications for policy-making for pre-service education programmes in Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

Attracting competent teachers and retaining them for the teaching profession has emerged as a global challenge, including in Pakistan (Status of Teachers in Pakistan 2008; Watt 2009). Motivation has been considered an important factor for attracting good candidates to join, and remain in, the teaching profession (Bruinsma & Jansen 2010). In turn, the background characteristics of trainees for the teaching profession are regarded as a helpful tool for predicting motivation to teach (Watt & Richardson 2008). Consequently, the background

characteristics of entrant teachers and their motivation to join the teaching profession have received considerable attention from recent researchers (Richardson & Watt 2006; Ahmet et al. 2012; Watt & Richardson 2012; Qin et al. 2015). Thus, in assuring the quality of teacher education, entrant teachers' background characteristics and motivation to join teacher education programmes hold a significant place. Entrant teachers with different demographic backgrounds (eg gender, academic background, residential location and mother tongue) may possibly demonstrate different

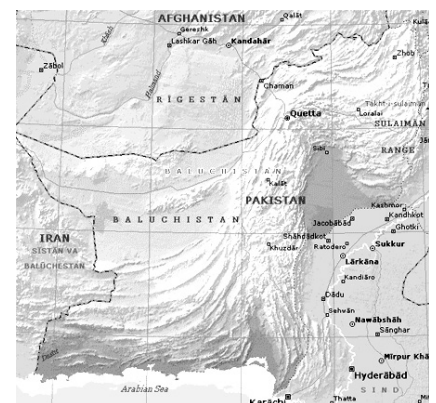
KEYWORDS

MOTIVATION

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

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PAKISTAN.



opinions and beliefs about teaching and different types of motivation to teach (Felder & Brent 2005).

Accordingly, this study intends to

find out the background characteristics of entrants to teacher education programmes in Baluchistan. Their motivation to join these programmes will also be explored. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the background characteristics of entrant teachers enrolled in the first year of Bachelor of Education (BEd (Hons)) and Associate Degree in Education (ADE) programmes in Baluchistan.
2. To analyse the impact of background characteristics of entrant teachers on the type of motivation towards joining the BEd (Hons) and ADE programmes.

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN

The effectiveness of pre-service teacher education in Pakistan had always been criticised for its low quality but surprisingly had never been seriously addressed until 2009. Then, for the first time in history, the Government of Pakistan, in the National Education Policy, 2009, not only acknowledged the role of pre-service teacher education in improving the quality of education, but also initiated multiple systematic efforts and programmes to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education in Pakistan (Ministry of Education Pakistan 2009). Consequently, a joint initiative was taken by the Teacher Education Project, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. They introduced new two-year (ADE) and four-year (BEd (Hons)) elementary school teacher programmes in teacher education colleges and universities to raise the quality of pre-service teacher education in Pakistan. The entrants were motivated to join these programmes through incentives like merit-based scholarships and a higher basic pay scale (Alam & Farid 2011).

In addition, a lot of time, effort and resources are being spent on improving the curriculum, infrastructure and

human resources pertaining to pre-service teacher education programmes. However, insufficient attention has been paid to the characteristics and quality of the incoming student population. Thus, this study was conducted in the context of the newly established BEd (Hons) and ADE programmes in Baluchistan. For the most part, studies of the background characteristics of entrant teachers and their motivation to join the teaching profession have been conducted in Western countries (Addison & Brundrett 2008; König & Rothland 2012; Watt & Richardson 2012). There is a decisive need to explore the background characteristics and motivation of pre-service teachers in Pakistan, specifically in Baluchistan, which has been neglected by previous researchers in the field.

MOTIVATION TO CHOOSE TEACHING AS A PROFESSION

The career choice motivation of entrant teachers is considered a significant factor in admission to, progression in and graduation from teacher education programmes; as well as an essential premise for motivation and enthusiasm in the teaching profession (König & Rothland 2012). Motivation is a force, internal state and external cause that encourages, energises and directs someone to accomplish a task, satisfy his or her needs, and improve productivity (Stembridge 1989). There are different types of motivations; however, the literature shows that extrinsic and intrinsic motivations are the two main types that entrant teachers may have towards teaching (Brookhart & Freeman 1992; Moran et al. 2001; Watt & Richardson 2007).

In extrinsic motivation, an external controlling factor is involved. Grading, appreciation, reward, support, encouragement, attractive salary, job security and long holidays are some examples of extrinsic motivation (Gulzar et al. 2010; Smith & Pantana 2010). Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, involves an internal force. The main factors in

intrinsic motivation are enjoyment, preference and keen interest in teaching and working with children. Research has found intrinsically motivated teachers to be productive, happy and competent (Cameron & Pierce 2002; Smith & Pantana 2010).

Entrant teachers can be both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated towards the teaching profession (Stembridge 1989). Therefore, both types of motivation should be considered interrelated and important in teacher education programmes. They are not mutually opposed but are two dimensions between which teachers fluctuate depending on the situation (Bruinsma & Jansen 2010).

This implies that motivation can be created and maintained during teacher education programmes (Smith & Pantana 2010). Despite the importance of both types of motivation, the literature signifies that most research studies are related to intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation or both (Devetak et al. 2009; Bostwick 2010; König & Rothland 2012).

ENTRANT TEACHERS' BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS AND MOTIVATION

According to Watt & Richardson (2008), the background profiles of entrant teachers contribute towards type of motivation, influencing both selection of teaching as a career and teacher education programmes. The current researchers claim that motivation to teach and background characteristics of entrant teachers are knotted together (Watt & Richardson 2007; Bruinsma & Jansen 2010; Ahmet et al. 2012).

A person's profile or background information constitutes his/her background characteristics. Personal life (eg age, gender, language and ethnicity), academic background, socio-economic status, income and family status are some of the background characteristics (OECD 2009).

Researchers have found that the type of motivation differs among students of different ages (Gömleksiz 2001; Gilletet al. 2012). Dench & Regan (2000) claimed that young students are more highly motivated than their older counterparts.

In addition to age, gender also influences motivation. Men and women differ biologically and physically (Parker 2007). Their educational and occupational pursuits also differ (Meece et al. 2006). However, Yau et al. (2011) found no difference in the motivation of different gender types towards learning. James et al. (1999) argued that residential location significantly influences students' motivation towards higher studies. Similarly, it affects teacher's education as it is assumed that residential location (rural/urban) influences teachers' motivation to teach. Additionally, Lim & Kim (2003) found that gender significantly affects motivation, whereas marital status, age, work experience and study programme do not.

Thus, age, gender, income and education level of parents, and the background characteristics of pre-service teachers, cannot be ignored as prior research has highlighted their importance (Galley & Clifton 2004; Richardson & Watt 2006; Qin et al. 2015). The background characteristics can be used to identify those teachers most likely to leave the teaching profession at an early stage of the programme (Watt & Richardson 2008). Conversely, plans can be developed to attract upcoming teachers to the teaching profession and retain them. Based on the above discussion, we conceptualised that the background factors influence motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic), which in turn influences selection and retention in the teaching profession.

METHOD

This study follows a quantitative survey methodology to explore the impact of entrant teachers' background characteristics on motivation to teach.

SAMPLE

The sample for this study consisted of all entrant teachers (N=184) enrolled in the first year (second semester) of the BEd (Hons) at the University of Baluchistan and approximately all entrant teachers enrolled in the first year (second semester) of ADE in all of the government colleges, except Panjgur. SBK Women's University was the site for pilot testing, so was not involved in the actual study, and the Government College of Elementary Education Panjgur could not be visited for security reasons.

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

A survey questionnaire based on a literature review was developed and administrated. The two-part questionnaire was designed to obtain responses. Part 1 had items related to the background characteristics of entrant teachers (age, gender, location, marital status, mother tongue, qualification). The second part was a four-point Likert scale 'motivation scale' with the anchors ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. It consisted of particulars related to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

The instrument developed was pilot-tested to determine the reliability and validity of the scale, for which Cronbach's alpha was computed. The value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.719, which is acceptable according to Gardner (2001).

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis due to the nature of the research question (see Qin et al. 2015). Descriptive analysis was performed to determine the frequencies and means of the background characteristics. In addition, independent sample t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to analyse the factors that contribute to entrant teachers' motivation.

RESULTS

COMPARISON OF MOTIVATION BY AGE

Table 1 shows that the greatest number of entrant teachers are aged 20–23. There is deluge literature which shows that age is a relevant factor in causing change in the prospective teacher's motivation to join a teacher education programme (Dench & Regan 2000). Tables 1 and 2 indicate that there is no statistical difference between three age groups. However, the entrants aged more than 23 had slightly higher mean scores for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The mean score of intrinsic motivation (with standard deviation SD) for entrant teachers older than 23 is (M=47.50, SD=4.38), for those younger than 19 is (M=45.06, SD=4.65) and for those aged 20–23 is (M=45.44, SD=3.93). The mean score of extrinsic motivation for entrant teachers older than 23 is (M=39.00, SD=3.53), for those younger than 19 is (M=37.46, SD=4.58) and for those aged 20–23 is (M=37.22, SD=4.40).

Type of motivation	Age group	N	Mean	SD
Intrinsic	<19 years	36	45.06	4.65
	20–23 years	97	45.44	3.93
	>23 years	18	47.50	4.38
	Total			
	151	45.60	4.20	
Extrinsic	<19 years	35	37.46	4.58
	20–23 years	96	37.22	4.40
	>23 years	18	39.00	3.53
	Total	149	37.49	4.36

Table 1: Description of motivation of entrant teachers by age group

Type of motivation	Groups	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Intrinsic	Between groups	78.03	2	39.02	2.248	0.109
	Within groups	2568.33	148	17.35		
	Total	2646.36	150			
Extrinsic	Between groups	48.14	2	24.07	1.271	0.284
	Within groups	2765.09	146	18.94		
	Total	2813.24	148			

Table 2: Comparison of entrant teachers' motivation to enrol in teacher education programme by age

COMPARISON OF MOTIVATION BY GENDER

Type of motivation	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Intrinsic	Male	77	44.21	3.76	-3.207	172	0.002
	Female	97	46.21	4.32			
Extrinsic	Male	77	36.74	4.43	-2.773	169	0.006
	Female	94	38.55	4.10			

Table 3: Comparison of entrant teachers' motivation to join teaching profession by gender

Table 3 shows that there are more female than male entrant teachers. It also shows that there was a significant difference between male mean scores for intrinsic motivation (M=44.21, SD=3.76) and female scores (M=46.21, SD=4.32); (t (172))=-3.207<.05). Similarly, for the extrinsic motivation there was a statistical difference between male (M=36.74, SD=4.43) and female (M=38.55, SD=4.10); (t(169))=-2.773<.05). Overall, the results showed that females were more motivated than males, as is evident from the higher mean scores of females in both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

COMPARISON OF MOTIVATION BY MOTHER TONGUE

Table 4 clearly demonstrates that mother language is not a factor in causing difference in motivation of the entrant teachers. The two main languages spoken

in the province are Pashto and Balochi. Means of intrinsic motivation for Pashto and Balochi (M=45.52, SD=3.67) and other languages (M=45.19, SD= 4.70) are almost the same and not significant (t(173)=0.520>.05). On the other hand, mean scores of extrinsic motivation for Pashto and Balochi (M=37.36, SD=4.10) and other languages (M=38.15, SD=4.55) are almost equivalent (t(170))=-1.200<.05).

Type of motivation	Mother tongue	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Sig.
Intrinsic	Pashto and Balochi	89	45.52	3.67	0.520	173	0.604
	Others than above two	86	45.19	4.70			
Extrinsic	Pashto and Balochi	88	37.36	4.10	-1.200	170	0.232
	Others than above two	84	38.15	4.55			

COMPARISON OF MOTIVATION BY LOCATION

Table 5 represents the result of entrant teachers' residential location and type of motivation. It indicates that the majority of entrant teachers are from urban areas, It also indicates that urban entrant teachers are less motivated intrinsically but highly motivated extrinsically in comparison to entrant teachers from rural areas. This is clearly indicated in mean scores as there is no major difference in the intrinsic motivation in urban and rural locations. For the extrinsic motivation, difference exists between the urban and rural prospective teachers.

COMPARISON OF MOTIVATION BY MARITAL STATUS

It is usually said that entrant teachers who are single are more highly motivated than those who are married. In Table 6 we observe that the majority of the entrant teachers are single and they are not highly motivated to join the teacher education programme, but married prospective teachers are more motivated. The mean scores of intrinsic motivation for married entrant teachers are (M=46.38, SD=4.15), while for single they are (M=45.22, SD=4.22); (t(171))=-1.179<.05); (t (17))=0.913<.05).

Table 4: Difference in motivation by mother tongue

Background characteristics of pre-service teachers and their motivation to teach

Type of motivation	Locale	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig.
Intrinsic	Urban	128	45.27	4.37	-0.585	172	.560
	Rural	46	45.70	3.69			
Extrinsic	Urban	125	38.16	4.32	2.063	169	0.041
	Rural	46	36.63	4.23			
Total	Urban	121	83.49	6.94	0.813	163	0.418
	Rural	44	82.52	6.16			

Table 5: Comparison of motivation of entrant teachers by location

	Marital status	N	Mean	SD	t	Df	Sig.
Intrinsic Motivation	Single	152	45.22	4.22	-1.179	171	0.240
	Married	21	46.38	4.15			
Extrinsic Motivation	Single	149	37.44	4.33	-2.189	168	0.030
	Married	21	39.62	3.85			

Table 6: Difference in motivation of entrant teachers by marital status

CONCLUSION

Motivation affects teachers' behaviour, well-being, psychological health and future plans (Watt & Richardson 2008). The main objective of the study conducted in Baluchistan was to explore how entrant teachers with different background characteristics display different types of motivation to teach. The following conclusions can be drawn from this study:

1. Most of the entrant teachers from all over Baluchistan were female.
2. Most of the entrant teachers from Baluchistan were from Balochi- and Pashto-speaking backgrounds, single, and aged 20–23 years.
3. Most of the entrant teachers belonged to urban areas.
4. Collectively, entrant teachers demonstrated a high level of motivation to teach.
5. Entrant teachers scored high in intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation. However, the scores varied based on background characteristics.

The study concluded that background characteristics and types of motivation to teach need to be considered as key factors in teacher education programmes, specifically at the time of entrance. The Government of Pakistan needs to take action in response to the findings of this study.

The findings of this study will provide important insights for policy-makers and educational planners. It is necessary to consider background characteristics of entrant teacher educators in order to obtain output from the teachers. Teachers' output is highly dependent on their motivational level towards their profession. It is assumed that the results would be more convincing if the data for entrant teachers from Panjgur were available. Future researchers should collect data from all teacher educator institutes in Baluchistan. Comparing results of motivation at the time of entrance, during study periods and at the end of the programme would be another important contribution. Moreover, there is a need to conduct more in-depth

qualitative study on the topic in order to improve understanding by spending time with entrant teachers. Thus, qualitative studies should be welcomed by future researchers in the field.

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