Analytical Study of Attitude of the Teachers towards Reforms at School Level

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Abstract

Continuous reform process is inevitable to overcome challenges of the increasingly knowledge based economy of any country of the world (UNESCO, 2005 and Cheng, Chaw, & Mok. 2007). Successful implementation of this reform process is subjected to favorable attitude of the teachers- the real change agents (Hattie, 2015: OECD, 2005: Ambani & Birla, 2000). Keeping this in view, this paper was derived from the study in which teachers' attitude towards reform process at school level in Punjab was analyzed. For this purpose, from total population, seventy two schools having equal number of gender, demographic and category were selected through stratified cluster sampling technique. Being a descriptive study, survey method technique was applied. A questionnaire as an adaptation of ASTTP (Hussain, 2004) based on the five-point Likert scale comprising a demographic information sheet and 63 statements divided into five dimensions was developed. The tool was got validated by determining the Cronbatch Alpha, Factor Loading and through experts' opinions. To analyze the data, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation were calculated and t- test was applied. From results of this study, it was inferred that overall the respondents showed positive attitude towards all dimensions. Females showed more enthusiastic attitude towards all dimensions than males except computer education. Qualification wise analysis showed that irrespective of the gender, degree of qualification and positive attitude are directly proportional. Comparison between levels of the schools showed that secondary school teachers had better favorable attitude than elementary teachers.

Keywords: Attitude, Teachers, Reforms, School Level

Introduction

Since 1980s, phenomena of international competition, globalization and socio-political demands have drastically affected the world and induced rapid changes in

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almost every society in the world. UNESCO (2007) intimated that revolutionary policy responses are demanded as a result of the impact of these rapid changes in technology and general global environment. Cheng, Chow, & Mok (2007) had stressed that educational reforms have become inevitable in such an era of fast transformation because education is considered as the powerful instrument that can brought about the desired changes and revolutionized the cultural and social life of a nation. Likewise, progress and prosperity of the country and economic and human development of the society are largely based on the kind of education, provided to the people. In school education, with a hope to pursue a new future and to meet challenges in the new millennium, reform process has been initiated very earlier in many countries of the world. Shami & Hussain (2005) considered the education; a key to change and advancement and Pakistan has a firm stance to responds positively to opportunities, emerging needs and challenges of the globalization with the help of education. Teachers being the key actors, have been and will remain change agents in the whole education process (Hattie, 2015: OECD, 2005: Hussain, 2004: Ambani & Birla, 2000).

Kranstadt (2005) indicated that in Pakistan, plight of the education is very grim and its educational index is worst in the world outside the African countries. According to Government of Pakistan PSML survey (2014), Pakistan has only 58%, the lowest literacy rate in the region and in the World Bank Report (2008) Pakistan is listed in those twelve countries of the world that have total educational expenditure less than only 2% of their GNP.

Pakistan, since its emergence on the map of the world in 1947, at the federal and provincial levels has taken out number of initiatives, framed certain policies and brought about a variety of reforms to change the nature and structure of the whole education system (World Bank, 2007: Mirza, 2008: Shami& Hussain, 2005). The major aims of these reforms were to address the educational problems and increase the quality and access to education. These reforms were also meant to bring about harmonious development in the country and to keep pace with the rapid changes in the fields of science and technology. At the eve of first educational conference in 1947, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan categorically stressed in his message, that practical measures according to wishes and aspirations of the nation must be taken urgently for restructuring the whole education system of the country (Govt. of Pakistan, 1947: Habib, 2013). For this purpose, till the recent years, several commissions and polices have worked out beautifully various strategies and plans. Besides, several policies have been formulated for providing quality education, changing and enhancing the curriculum, redeeming and up-lining the management of the institutions and resolving the medium of instruction conflict yet the educational situation in Pakistan as perceived by Sayed (2009) is very vague and critical. With the help of national and international donor and funding agencies for achieving the national

as well as the millennium goals and responding to demands of the modern and the competitive world, government of Pakistan particularly, from the beginning of the 21st century has launched much interventions and reforms in primary, secondary and also in higher education sectors. Because of its sole importance, school education has been given the first priority throughout by all the federal and provincial governments.

In education sector, the most ambitious and innovate reforms have been launched by Punjab-the most populated province with 60 percent of the country's total population and these programs have also earned the fame and got reputation across the globe (World Bank, 2008; Barbar, M., 2010). For this purpose, under the umbrella of PESRP-Punjab Education Sector Reform Program and under the slogan of Barho-Punjab-Parho-Punjab, numerous innovations have been started such as;

- Recruitment of new teachers
- Distribution of free text books up to secondary students
- Monitoring and evaluation of the schools
- Stipends to girl students
- Establishment of Punjab Education Foundation
- Re-utilization of school councils
- Teachers training programs
- Provision of missing infrastructure to schools in Punjab
- Awareness campaign
- Literacy programs
- Provision of Non salary budget to school administrations

Beside the PESRP, many useful and innovative programs for school education by the Punjab government have also been launched such as:

- Conversion of medium of instruction of government schools from Urdu to English
- Introducing Chief Ministers' road map for education
- Update and change of Math and Science curricula
- Establishment of Punjab Examination Commission
- Distribution of Laptops to brilliant students
- Setting up of QAED (Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development)
- Danish Schools system
- Setting up of Computer and IT laboratories in schools
- Computerization of the Intermediate and SSC examination system
- Management rationalization of the teachers
- For needy and brilliant students establishment of Punjab Endowment Fund.
- At district level establishing the District Education Authorities

- Implication of English subject from the class 1st
- UPE and USE campaigns

True spirit of the implementers, is an obligation to success of any reform process. In educational field favorable attitude of the teachers as being implementer of the policy actions is essential for the success of this reform process and without their effective cooperation it may remain hung in the vacuum? National Education Policy (1998-2010), and Hattie, (2015) also confirm that at grass root level, teacher is considered the most crucial factor in implementing all educational reforms. Success of any reform process as narrated by Memon, (2009) is the reflection of the positive professional attitude of the teachers. Nowadays, in Pakistan attitude of the teachers against any reform action is questionable and being considered a big hurdle for progress of the education.

Purpose of the study

To analyze the attitude of the teachers towards reforms introduced particularly in the beginning of the 21st century especially by the provincial government of the Punjab for enhancement of quality, improvement of the access and development of education.

Method of the study

Being a descriptive nature, survey method technique was applied to conduct this study. All the teachers from primary, elementary and secondary schools of the Punjab comprised the whole population.

Population and Sampling

Through multistage cluster sampling technique, representative sample of 1500 teachers from 72 schools from all categories were selected. Selection of the number of respondents was made through Survey Sample Size software a computer program by Survey Monkey Audience, (2009) and selection of the number of schools was made by the given below Cooper and Emery, (2000) proportion question formula.

$$n = \frac{pq}{\sigma^2} + 1$$

Or

$$\sigma p = \sqrt{\frac{pq}{n-1}}$$

n = sample size

p = Proportion of the population that has given attribute

σp = 0.051 standard error of the proportion (0.01/1.96) at 95% confidence level

q = Proportion of the population that has not given attributes (1- p)

Procedure for selection of schools is given below. As the study was delimited to government schools of the Punjab province so, out of the nine administrative divisions of the Punjab, three divisions and then six districts, as two districts from each division were randomly selected.

Table 1

Procedure for selection of sample from each district

Schools in a District12	Primary schools 4	Elementary schools 4	Secondary schools 4
Rural/ Urban	2 + 2	2 + 2	2 + 2
Gender (M+F)	1+1 1+1	1+1 1+1	1+1 1+1

Development and Validation of the Tool

A questionnaire comprising 63 items divided into five clusters of questions or domains based on the five-point Likert scale was developed. Five domains of reforms were named as Administrative reforms (AR), Medium of Instruction (MI), chief ministers, roadmap (CMR), Examination reforms (ER) and Computer education (CE) reforms. Through expert opinion validity of the tool was determined while; through Cronbatch's Coefficient Alpha reliability of the domains was measured. Value ≥ 0.7 of Coefficient Alpha was considered adequate. Reliability of the each statement was assessed through applying the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) as experts think that factor loading of ≥ 0.5 is valid (Hair et al, 2004, Cooper & Emory, 2007). During analysis 14 statements having less than 0.5 Factor Loading were dropped.

Table 2

Coefficient of cronbach's alpha of all domains

Domains	Administrative Reforms (AR)	Mediumof instructions(MI)	CM Road map(CMR)	Computer education(CE)	Examination reforms(ER)
Number of statements	12	12	12	12	12
Cronbach's Alpha	0.883	0.827	0.828	0.889	0.769
Total			63		

Analysis of the data

To analyze the attitude of the teachers towards reforms process respondents were given a questionnaire and a sheet for their demographic information. By the help of the computer programs like MS-Excel and SPSS percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation were calculated and t- test was also applied to the data.

Results

After analysis following findings and results were drawn from the study;

Table 3

Descriptive statistics of the demographics

Demographics	N	Missing	Mean	St. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
District	1010	0	4.02	1.919	1	7
Rural/Urban	1010	0	1.60	0.491	1	2
Gender	1010	0	1.08	0.270	1	2
Designation	1008	2	8.15	4.75	1	82
Qualification	1010	0	4.61	2.813	1	11

It is depicted from the table.3 that there were six demographic variables. From distributed 1500 questionnaire, 1010 respondents showed their responses. Mean value 4.02 and standard deviation 1.919 in district variable declares that a little dispersion in attitude of the respondent's lies between districts. Between rural and urban variables, low dispersion in attitudes is indicated by the given table because it has 0.49 standard deviation and mean value 1.60. Scarcity of dispersion in attitude in gender variable is found with small values of mean and standard deviation i.e.1.08 and 0.270 respectively. From this table, it is also depicted that 1008 respondents showed their responses, having 8.15 mean value and 4.75 standard deviation, under designation demographic variable, it means there is much coherence in this variable. In qualification variable standard deviation is 2.83 and 4.61 is the mean value. These values also indicate that respondents have variety in responses.

Table 4

Descriptive statistics of the variance

Variance	AR	MI	CMR	ER	CE
N	1010	1010	1010	1010	1010
Mean	4.02	4.19	4.01	3.68	3.54
Std. Dev.	0.873	0.905	0.742	0.758	0.777
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1

Maximum	5	5	5	5	5

Table 4 revealed that among the five variance of the instrument most of the respondents show highly favorable attitude towards the first thee (AR, MI, CMR) variance or set of reforms while, against the other two (ER and CE) variance respondents are not much enthusiastic.

Comparisons among given five dimensions of the attitude scale with respect to different demographics were made and some results of these comparisons are given here.

Table 5

Comparison between urban and rural areas

AR MI CMR ER CE * CITY						
CITY		AR	MI	CMR	ER	CE
URBAN	Mean	3.84	4.07	3.97	3.53	3.39
	N	407	407	407	407	407
	S.D	0.922	0.884	0.795	0.805	0.774
RURAL	Mean	4.14	4.27	4.04	3.78	3.65
	N	603	603	603	603	603
	S.D	0.817	0.910	0.704	0.707	0.762
Total	Mean	4.02	4.19	4.01	3.68	3.54
	N	1010	1010	1010	1010	1010
	S.D	0.873	0.905	0.742	0.758	0.777
	t. value	5.35	3.53	1.437	5.36	5.194

Level of confidence 95% and df =1008 table value =1.96

Table 5 shows that against AR dimension, the mean value (3.84) of urban area is comparatively less than (4.02) mean value of the rural area, which indicates that there is more positive attitude among rural area respondents as compared to urban area respondents towards this dimension while, standard deviation results are vice versa of the mean results. The total mean and standard deviation i.e. 4.02 and 0.873 respectively against AR dimension show that overall attitudes of the urban and rural area respondents are favorable and among their responses, a little dispersion is found. Statistically significant difference in attitude of the respondents towards this dimension is indicated by calculated value of t. test (5.53).

In table 5 against MI dimension, statistical data given reflects that both mean and standard deviation values of rural area i.e. 4.27 and 0.91 are greater than urban area

mean and standard deviation values 4.02 and 0.884 respectively, indicating much dispersion and highly favorable attitude of the rural area respondents toward this dimension. Total mean value (4.19) and total standard deviation value (0.905) against this dimension represent a picture of positive attitude of the respondents with little dispersion. It is also evident by the greater t. test value (3.35) than (1.96) table value that statistically significant difference lays between two means.

This table also portrays that against CMR dimension (4.04) mean value of rural area is greater than (3.97) mean value of urban area and standard deviation values are of their vice versa. Overall, favorable attitude is represented by total mean 4.01 and standard deviation value 0.74 reflects a little dispersion in responses. Difference in means is insignificant due to smaller calculated value of t. test (1.437) than table value 1.96.

Against ER dimension greater positive attitude of respondents of the rural area with mean value 3.78 as compared to 3.53 mean value of urban area is indicated by the data given in table 5 while, 0.805 and 0.707 standard deviation values of urban and rural area respectively indicate greater dispersion among the views of respondents. Statistically significant difference between two means is observed by calculated t. value 5.36 greater than table value 1.96.

It is also obvious from this table that in CE construct, attitude of the rural area respondents is little positive with mean value 3.65 than that of the urban area value 3.39, and results of the standard deviation are of its vice versa. From total mean and standard deviation values (3.54) and (0.777 respectively, slightly positive attitude is depicted by the respondents against this construct. The calculated value of t- test (5.36) is greater than the table value showing significant difference between two means.

Table 6

Comparison between genders in different dimensions

AR MI CMR ER CE * GEN

GENDER		AR	MI	CMR	ER	CE
MALE	Mean	4.01	4.19	4.01	3.68	3.54
	N	930	930	930	930	930
	S.D	0.879	0.900	0.746	0.762	0.785
FEMALE	Mean	4.06	4.21	4.01	3.67	3.56
	N	80	80	80	80	80
	S.D	0.809	0.960	0.697	0.724	0.676

Total	Mean	4.02	4.19	4.01	3.68	3.54
	N	1010	1010	1010	1010	1010
	S.D	0.873	0.905	0.742	0.758	0.777
	t.test value	-5.35	-3.91	-4.428	-2.57	-2.68

Table 6 shows that at 95% level of confidence, difference between the means against AR dimension is statistically insignificant because (-5.35) calculated t. value is smaller than (1.96) table value while, positive response by the respondents is indicated by the total mean scores. With better mean score than males females show more positive attitude against AR dimension. In MI dimension at 0.05 level of significance, statistically insignificant difference between means is drawn as (-3.96) calculated value of t-test is smaller than (1.96) table value. The difference between mean scores shows that female respondents have a little favorable attitude than males.

In CMR, ER and CE dimensions difference between the mean scores and standard deviation scores of both males and females is negligible indicating that apparently there is no difference in their responses and both genders represent the relatively same attitude against these dimensions. The calculated t- values of these dimensions are also smaller than the table values hence, difference between the means are insignificant.

Comparison among designations and levels of schools

This study found that in secondary portion respondents from Senior Headmaster/Headmistress to SSE (Sc.) are much satisfied with first three set of reforms i.e. administrative, medium of instruction and Chief Minister roadmap reforms and show highly favorable attitude as compared to their mean values while, against other two domains (ER and CE) level of satisfaction of the secondary portion respondents is not so high and show less favorable attitude.

In elementary portion, it is seemed from mean values that most of the respondents from EST to DM teachers against AR, MI, CMR and ER dimensions have greater mean scores showing positive attitude and against CE dimension the lower mean score value indicates that perception of respondents is in between the positive and the negative attitude against this set of reform.

Among the respondents of the primary section of government schools, relatively same trend of attitude is depicted as the secondary section shows that they have much favorable attitude against first three dimensions (AR and CMR) and less favorable attitude against MI, ER and CE set of reforms.

Comparisons among the qualification levels of the respondents were also made and their results declare that as the level of qualification rises, positivity of the attitude of the respondents towards all dimensions is also rises.

Discussion and Conclusions

Results of the study clearly indicate that teachers of the public sector have favorable attitude towards reforms initiatives and neglected the general notion characterized to government teachers that they have non-committal, passive and detached attitude towards reform initiatives. Studies of Hussain, (2004) and Rizvi, (2000) also have supported this notion. In this study, female teachers are more inclined towards reforms and had shown more positive attitude than the male teachers. In this way, they had rejected the general belief that male teachers are only the change agent. It is also declared from this study that rural area teachers have more positive attitude towards these set of reforms contrary to teachers of the urban area, as Anghelache and Bentea, (2012) state in a similar study, "subjects in rural environment would be more open to change" (p.596). It is evident through this studies that in school education, in Punjab province, revolutionary changes have been taken out by the Chief Ministers' Road Map and PESRP programs. These programs also, have earned a highly positive response from teachers of government schools. This is also found in this study that absenteeism of both the teachers and the students in schools has been well controlled by monitoring and evaluation program under Chief Ministers' Road Map likewise sense of responsibility has also been inculcated in the teachers through PEC exams. It is inferred from this study that decision of conversion of medium of instruction of government schools from Urdu to English medium is accepted half-heartedly by the primary teachers because numeric of attitude of the teachers toward this domain are at near the margin. This attitude is also confirmed by a study conducted by Unger, (2016) that majority of teachers show negative response against reforms in education perceiving them burden, lack of usefulness and deception. Some contradictory attitude against devolution of power plan 2001 is also found among the teachers when they considered that it has facilitated the teachers to solve their problems at district level, on the other hand, they also considered that it has increased the difficulties of the teachers and increased the element of corruption in educational offices. Impact of the reforms initiatives like Education Sector Reform (ESR) Program 2001 at national level and Punjab Education Sector Reform Program (PESRP) beginning from 2003 and still continued at provincial level are highly reflected in most of the highly qualified newly inducted teachers who have showed much favorable attitude towards all set of reforms due to their better qualification. This attitude is supported in a study by Rizvi that it is quite clear from consequences of latest reform initiatives that in terms of their professionalism, teachers are advanced and relationship between the teacher professionalism and school reforms is well defined by the teachers' increased level of qualification. Merits and demerits of the PEC exams are also disclosed by this study as

centralized paper printing system and supply of papers through education officials in spite of banking system are major causes of secrecy leakage of the PEC papers. This study shows that on the whole, teachers are responsible enough to do their duties. If they have opportunities to play a leadership role, they will drive a positive attitude towards reforms process and this will result in a better and effective role to be played by them.

Recommendations

1. As it is found in this study that teachers are responsible and have progressive approach to reforms process so, it is recommended that in future any reform initiative be taken or policies framed, should be formulated through meaningful involvement of the teachers' opinion.
2. Preliminary training for the teachers is necessary for a particular change so that they would be mentally cognizant with it at the time of enforcement of reform process.
3. Chief Minister road map indicators should be fixed on the ground reality of disparity between urban and the rural environment.
4. PEC Exam papers should be printed at the district level and like secondary or higher exams be supplied through banking channel to prevent leaking and ensuring secrecy.
5. Poor performance of government schools is subjected to lack of resources so, in public schools generous funding should be made by the government.
6. Modern equipment and instructional technologies like multimedia, mini-tabs, e-books, digital libraries and internet access should be provided to government schools and syllabi are revised so that their students would be able to compete internationally and could avail the benefits of globalization.

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