A Study of Pakistani Teachers Beliefs and Perceptions about Teaching and Learning

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ABSTRACT
This paper is based on a study done on Pakistani tertiary teachers of English Language and Content Subjects such as sciences, mathematics, medical sciences, and engineering and technology in a metropolis of the country. The study explored the beliefs, perceptions and values related to their teaching-learning situations, and the prospects of Pakistan’s higher education system in order to recommend alterations in teacher development programs to bridge such gaps.

KEYWORDS: Tertiary Teachers, Beliefs, Perceptions, Values, Teaching and Learning

1. INTRODUCTION
Most human endeavours are shaped by an individual’s personal beliefs, value systems and perceptions, all of which together affect and shape the attitude of the individual towards the task at hand. In the case of the teaching-learning continuum, the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of the interactants, especially the two major interactants therein – i.e. teachers and learners (students) – can be argued to affect the situations in and out of the classrooms. As thinking beings, teachers and students play their respective roles within the classrooms and the communities they belong to. Literature provides evidence of studies on teachers’ beliefs conducted in many contexts in the West, and also in some parts of Australasia and Africa. These studies have been conducted about English language teachers and issues of teaching and learning, mathematics curriculum and its teaching and learning, teaching and learning of science subjects, music, nursing and medical education. However, not many studies could be located about such issues related to higher education in the Pakistani context. Thus, a case study was conducted to explore the beliefs, perceptions and values of some tertiary teachers and students in different disciplines (such as English language and content subjects like medical sciences, engineering sciences and mathematics and pure sciences) in a metropolis of Pakistan.

1.1 Background
As per policy, the medium of instruction for science-related, and professional education such as business, engineering and medicine is English. The revamping of the University Grants Commission (UGC) as the Higher Education Commission (HEC) in 2001 led to the setting up of the English Language Teaching Reforms Project (ELTRP Phase I) in July 2004 with a budgetted cost of PKR 38.39 m (and PKR 53.67 m in Phase II – April 2010 – March 2013), and a National Committee on English. Similar national committees were set up for sciences and mathematics, medicine and engineering-related subjects also. However, this study focussed on
the main objective of the educational reforms formulated in 2001 related to capacity building among tertiary teachers, with a particular reference to the ELTRP and its main objective of amelioration of English language teaching and the setting up of Applied Linguistics research standards in Pakistan in order to make teaching and learning at the tertiary level as effective as possible, and to build capacity. While the beneficiaries of the ELTRP/NCE initiatives / courses have been English language teachers, some teachers of social and applied sciences have also benefitted. In addition to the ELTRP initiatives, the HEC’s National Academy for Higher Education (NAHE) conducts Master Trainers’ Practical Courses (MTPC) and PCEPT (Professional Competency in Educational Practice of Teaching) for content subjects teachers in public sector institutions across the country. Among the components of the two programs, namely, MTPC and PCEPT are: Teaching Practicum, and Principles and Practice of Adult Teaching and Learning.

1.2 Purpose of Study
The purpose of the study was to explore the beliefs, perceptions and values of some Pakistani tertiary teachers who teach English and Content Subjects so as to provide insights/ make recommendations for future national initiatives on teacher development. The principal objective was to develop an understanding about how practising classroom teachers believe about themselves, their profession, the teaching-learning situations, and the perceptions they have about their students, the higher education sector in Pakistan, and the values they adhere to as teachers by gleaning responses from focus group interviews (FGIs).

The strategy of ‘gleaning responses’ was an adaptation of van Driel, Bulte & Verloop’s (2007) notion that teachers’ general beliefs about teaching and learning, and their domain specific curricular beliefs are interconnected. An article by Donahue (2003) was the principal catalyst for the study, and later it was another one by Pajares (1992).

1.3 Main Research Question
What are the beliefs, perceptions and attitudes of some Pakistani college and university teachers and students about the teaching-learning situation that may / may not be affecting them?

1.3.1 Subsidiary Questions
1. What are the teachers’ beliefs about
   i) their own teaching-learning situations,
   ii) themselves, as classroom teachers,
   iii) their students?
2. How do they perceive their role as teachers?
3. What are their values as teachers?
4. Are the teachers themselves aware of their own philosophy about teaching and learning?
5. Do they believe that their own philosophy, held consciously or unconsciously, may be impacting their attitudes and behaviours?
6. Do teachers believe that their students also have some beliefs about the teaching process?
7. Do the teachers believe that students’ beliefs and perceptions need to be taken into consideration for effective teaching and learning to take place?
1.4 Variables
IV: (1, 2, 3) Teachers (English, Content Subjects) and students in tertiary level classrooms
DV: beliefs/ perceptions, behaviours, value systems
EV: setting (public sector colleges/ universities) as background for the teachers in the
focus group interviews, as well of those teachers and students who were the
respondents of Questionnaires A & B.

1.4.1 Definition of Key Terms (Dictionary and Operational)
- *Exploration* (dictionary): an examination of an area or journey through it to find out what
  there is or what it is like.
  (Operational): an investigation regarding the issues (beliefs, perceptions and values of
  teachers) taken up in the study in order to compile a database of beliefs, for further use.
- *College and university teachers*: primarily public sector colleges and universities
  (Operational): urban and some in rural Sindh.
- *Belief* (dictionary): the feeling that something is definitely true or definitely exists.
  (Operational) an abstract state of believing in something as being important.
- *Perception* (dictionary): the way in which someone regards something; the natural ability
  to understand or notice something quickly; a view of a phenomenon that is purely
  subjective.
  (Operational): the way in which the respondents see the reality about themselves, others
  and the teaching-learning contexts in Pakistan.
- *Value* (dictionary): thinking something is of value when comparing it with similar things.
  (Operational): a system of consciously/ unconsciously applying a ‘tag’- an abstract term
  (e.g. punctuality, dedication).

2. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY
This exploratory study compared the beliefs, perceptions and values of English language and
Content subject teachers through employing both qualitative and quantitative tools for data
collection. However, though it followed a mixed methods design, it is essentially a qualitative
and interpretive study. Accordingly, the study findings are presented as a narrative for rich
descriptions.

Purposive sampling strategy was used. Since Karachi, a cosmopolitan city with all ethnic
communities residing here, presents a reasonably representative image of the country’s diverse
population, the aim was to identify data sites in such a manner that they could be considered as
representative.

2.1 Tools for Data Collection
1) The data collection tools were bilingual questionnaires (A & B) for teachers and students.
2) Open-ended semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted wherein respondents
have used code-switching so that they could be participative.

Thus this study, being designed for the first time (as per available published records) was
designed to explore the beliefs and perceptions of tertiary level teachers and students in the local
Pakistani context, and therefore nested case studies and inventories of the dependant variables
were created to facilitate discussion. Thus the study and findings are interpretive and primarily
data-driven. The quantified data was analysed using statistical measures for validity and testing the hypotheses.

2.2 Staged Study
The data collection was staged. In the first stage, questionnaires A and B were administered personally by the researchers as well as through contacts to the targetted population. In the second stage, focus group interviews were conducted with teachers only in institutions/university departments according to their willingness to participate, and availability. The focus group members also filled in the questionnaire.

2.3 Sampling
The study, primarily a case study, used the purposive sampling method for a number of reasons, chiefly those of physical accessibility and resources. Hence, a mix of public and private sector institutions were tapped as data sources.

The target population were the tertiary/degree level teachers and students in Karachi. However, in spite of the fact that there are 77 colleges in the public sector offering basic undergraduate programmes, such as B.A./B.Com/B.Sc degree as affiliates of the Karachi University, and three (03) universities, only a few institutions were tapped for this study because of the limitations of time and accessibility.

Another source of additional narrative data were a few principals of colleges and department heads who came forward for informal discussions with the researcher regarding the teaching profession in general, and their personal views about the teachers and students of their own institutions.

2.4 Additional Data Sources
Literature review was done using resources (such as books, journals available in local libraries, as well as through Internet searches and using the facilities of the Higher Education Commission’s (HEC) digital library, and inter-library loans.

2.5 Data Analysis
Data were gathered qualitatively and quantitatively, but a narrative approach was used for rich descriptions of the phenomena. The mixed methods (MM) approach (advocated by Cresswell, 2003; Cresswell and Plano-Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie 2007, 1998; Greene, 2007; Denscombe 2008) were used for data collection and analysis. The discussion has been qualitative.

Data – questionnaires and interviews – were coded and entered personally by the researcher using SSPS V. 14 for confidentiality. Colour-coding was used for the transcriptions of the FGIs to highlight the categories for ease of identification and subsequent discussion. Profiles of the two main groups of teachers, namely, Cohort A (English language teachers) and Cohort B (Content subject teachers) were presented as smaller case studies within the large case study – Pakistani tertiary teachers. Hence, the discussion is mainly qualitative and interpretivistic.
2.6 Significance
The researcher, also a teacher educator, has been involved in course design and delivery of teacher training courses/modules for English language teachers in Pakistan for close to three decades. While numerous teacher training/education programmes, both short and long term, are conducted in Pakistan but there appears to be a gap in the input and output of such programmes despite the heavy investment of finance, time and effort. This study is intended to address the gap through its findings, and is aimed to benefit teachers of both secondary and tertiary levels.

2.7 Ethical Consideration
The study design incorporated all the required measures to ensure ethical considerations of the study. During the data collection stage every effort was made to protect the identities of respondents, as well as to protect them from psychological and physical discomfort and harm. Gaining access to respondents and getting their voluntary consent as participants in the study posed some difficulties due to power differentials between the researcher and participants, but efforts had to be made towards through building rapport directly or through mutual acquaintances.

3. FINDINGS
There are altogether 124 colleges in Karachi in the public and private sectors (60 for boys, 64 for girls), and six (06) universities offering general and professional programs. Of the 124 public sector colleges, only 77 offer both Intermediate (Higher Secondary Certificate) and degree programs (e.g. B.A., B. Com, B. Sc.). Questionnaire A (for teachers) was administered in 11 institutions and Questionnaire B (to students) in eight (08) in the institutions that offer degree programs. In all, 163 Type A questionnaires were distributed of which 116 were filled in and returned (i.e. 71% response), while 110 Type B questionnaires were distributed and 86 received back (78% response rate). The quantitative data from questionnaires were aimed at confirming/supporting the qualitative data from the FGIs.

Both sets of questionnaires were distributed among college and university teachers and students in single sex and co-ed institutions in Karachi on the basis of convenience sampling. Care was taken to prepare the questionnaires to make them user-friendly so as to facilitate the responses from all those who were administered the tools in face-to-face interaction personally by the researcher, as well by proxy. In some cases, where the researcher went in person to administer the tool, she had to explain what the respondents were required to do, as well, what certain lexical items meant. In a few cases, the respondents who were teachers asked direct questions about the questionnaire and the study even without reading the questionnaire. Hence, it has been assumed that the tools that were administered by proxy may or may have required explanations from the person(s) who administered them. Each questionnaire was given a code number, prior to its distribution to observe confidentiality of data and/or protect the respondents’ identities.

The data collected from the two methods used will be presented here in a sequence, that is, (1) the quantitative data generated by the two questionnaires administered to teacher and student respondents, and (2) qualitative data, including nested case studies.
3.1 Quantitative Data
The next set of data that follow relate to beliefs entered quantitatively from the questionnaire administered to teachers, labelled Questionnaire A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ background</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Subject specializations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universities (3) and Colleges (8) *Institute (01)</td>
<td>Professor 07</td>
<td>25 years + 12</td>
<td>Male 35</td>
<td>English 15 = 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assoc Prof 16</td>
<td>16-25 years 30</td>
<td>Female 81</td>
<td>Sciences &amp; Math + Medical Sciences 44 = 40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asst Prof 41</td>
<td>11-15 years 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Engineering &amp; Technology [18] = 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lecturer 47</td>
<td>06-10 years 18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Soc. Sciences &amp; Home Economics [33] = 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructor 04</td>
<td>Less than 05 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Profile of respondents of Questionnaire A

The items in the teachers’ questionnaire (A) were designed to gather data about the dependent variables (DVs), namely, beliefs, values and perceptions. However, these variables were not grouped together in clusters but were spread throughout the questionnaires so that the responses could be counter-checked with data from the FGIs. For example, Items 1-15 in Questionnaire A (for teachers) are related to beliefs and perceptions, while the metaphors (Items 16-20) were placed to correlate with beliefs about (a) the teachers themselves, (b) their pedagogy, (c) teacher-student relationship, (d) the curriculum. Likewise, in Questionnaire B (for students) the items were similarly placed to corroborate data from Questionnaire A as far as was possible, even though the researcher was aware that undergraduate level students are not very mature.

3.2 Administration of Questionnaire A for Teachers
To ensure gender balance, the population from the colleges and universities were selected using convenience sampling included both male and female participants. Most of the questionnaires were administered by proxy with the cooperation extended by colleagues/ fellow professionals in other institutions. Given in the table above are the demographic details about these respondents (percentages are given as approximate values).

3.3 Data Analysis
1. Teaching is a noble profession
The statistical data presented here show that 97 per cent of the total respondents believe teaching to be a noble profession [F 99 %, M 94 %].
** Item 2 asked ‘Teaching can be combined with another income-generating activity’ for which the cumulative ‘Yes’ response was 56 % [M 51 %, F 47 %]. This item was not a part of the FGIs and hence there are no data available to compare with.

2. *Teachers at all levels should have pedagogic training*  
The response to Item 2 show that both genders agreed about the need for pedagogic training; the males outnumber the female respondents [M 100%; F 95 %]. This data corresponds with data from the focus group interviews.

3. *A teacher deserves respect from only his/her students*  
The data for Item 3- ‘Does a teacher deserve respect from only his /her own students?’- show that 25% of the total number of respondents held this belief, while 73% did not, that is, they answered ‘no’ to this question. Only 17 % male and 25 % female respondents agreed that teachers deserve respect from only those students they may be teaching in a particular semester/academic session and not all students on that campus. However, there was some indirect evidence – about teachers expecting to be respected by students, ‘earning students’ respect’ – in the focus group interviews with teachers of sciences, mathematics, and medical sciences.

4. *A teacher should be a personal role model to earn students' respect*  
The data for Item 4 show that respondents (both male and female) believe teachers should be personal role models in order to earn the respect of their students, more females than males. There was a similar response in the focus group interview data of Sciences & Mathematics teachers; and teachers of medical sciences.

5. *A teacher should decide the sequence of learning (i.e. what is to be taught first, second.....last)*  
The data for this item show respondents of both genders (M 94 %, F 95 %) believe that it is the teacher who should decide the sequence of learning. These findings are similar to the data from the FGIs which indicate that the respondents believe in teacher- centred classrooms.

6. *Teaching is just common sense*  
The data for this item (No. 6) show that both male and female respondents, more female than male, believe that teaching is not simply a common sense activity. Only a small number (M 9 % and F 3 %) agreed that teaching merely required common sense. As the FGI data also show (5.47%), the majority of the respondents believe in the importance of pedagogic training for teachers at the tertiary/higher education level.

7. *A teacher has many roles to perform (e.g. facilitator, advisor, guide, manager)*  
The data for this item illustrate that respondents of both genders almost equally believe (97% male, 100% female) that teachers have many roles to play. The same belief is reflected in the focus group interviews as well (16.55%).
8. **Teachers should update their knowledge and skills**
The data for Item 8 about the need for teachers to stay abreast with current knowledge and possess updated skills show that respondents of both genders (100% male, 98% female) held nearly equal level of belief that it is an important need. The FGI data also reflect similar agreement.

9. **Teachers should use computer skills such as Word processing, PowerPoint and Web-searching**
The data for Item 9 – ‘Teachers should have computer skills such as word-processing…’ – show that nearly 95% of the respondents hold this belief. However, more male than female (100% male, 93% female) hold this belief. Only 3% said ‘don’t know’.

10. **Both teachers and learners have beliefs and expectations**
The data for Item 10 show that a total of 91% respondents hold the belief that both teachers and students have beliefs and expectations. Nearly 5% of the respondents did not give a clear response by saying ‘don’t know’. Nevertheless, there is a little difference between the beliefs of male and female respondents (M 94%, F 90%).

11. **Teaching and learning are essentially activities that require social interaction between teachers and students**
Item 11 illustrates the fact that this belief was held by 73% of all the respondents (M 60%, F 79%). More female than male respondents held the belief that there is social interaction between teacher and the taught. Less than one-third female respondents said ‘don’t know’ in response (M 23%, F 7%). It could be interpreted that the female respondents perhaps believe in more learner-centred classrooms (as was found in some FGI data).

12. **The age and sex of a teacher influence learners’ expectations of their behavior**
The data for Item 12 show that 57% male and 67% female respondents that the age and sex of a teacher affect learners’ expectation of their behaviour. However, it could also perhaps be taken to mean that female teachers are less authoritarian than their male counterparts.

13. **Students learn English by being taught grammar**
Here again there is a difference in the proportion of belief about students’ ability to learn English through the teaching of grammar 40% of teachers who hold this belief, versus 53% who don’t. Of those who hold this belief 31% are males, and 43% females, while M 54% & F 52% said ‘No’. It may also be interpreted that more female teachers teach grammar or follow Grammar Translation method.

14. **Teachers and parents should have some interaction about students**
The responses for this item show that 81% in all hold this belief, and more male than female respondents (M 94%, F 75%) were in agreement that there should be interaction between teachers and parents. It could perhaps be that the respondents who hold this belief are themselves parents.
15. **Teaching is telling**
This metaphor was entered as a belief item to imply that teaching is perhaps a mechanical activity. However, 93% of the respondents (M 94%, F 93%) appear to believe that teaching is not merely telling but involves a lot more skill and other qualities in a teacher.

16. **Teaching is like gardening**
The responses to Item 16 – ‘Teaching is like gardening’, another metaphor used here to represent belief – shows that 60% of the respondents believe in the nurturing and affective aspect of teaching (F 63% ‘Yes’, M 54%). This could perhaps mean that female teachers are more attuned to the nurturing aspect of teaching.

17. **Teaching is like cooking**
The data for item 17 shows that only 6% of the respondents believe that teaching is like cooking, that is, prescriptive. Nearly 89% of the respondents did not hold this belief (M 83%, F 92%). The proportion of female responses may be interpreted as that they do not consider teaching to be a formulaic/prescriptive activity, such as merely following a recipe.

18. **Teaching is an art**
The data for Item 18 show that more female than male respondents (F 82%, M 74%) see teaching as an art.

19. **Teaching is coaching**
The data for Item 19 show that only 17% of the respondents (M 11%, F 20%) believe that teaching is simply like coaching. Almost equal number of male and female respondents (M 83%, F 79%) believe that it is not so. It may mean that the respondents believe that teaching requires teachers to motivate students to take the onus for their learning.

20. **A teacher is a guide / facilitator**
The data for Item No. 20 – ‘A teacher is a guide / facilitator’ - show that 88% of the respondents hold this belief (M 77%, F 93%). It could be that females are more conscious about these roles, and may even be fulfilling them. Or, it could be that more female than male respondents attended workshops/courses on pedagogic issues.

21. **How satisfied are you with the present status of degree level education in Pakistan?**
A mere 8.6% stated that they were extremely satisfied or satisfied, 42% stated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, while 49% expressed their dissatisfaction.
Responses about this belief appear to indicate that more females than male respondents agree (F 56%, M 43%). It could mean that the female participants may have participated in research-related activities, or were aware of the fact that research is a part of a teacher’s scholarly activities.
The data about respondents’ belief regarding the efficacy of the Higher Education Commission show that most respondents (both male and female) appear to be similarly dissatisfied (M 49%, F 50%). The respondents did not put down their reasons in writing. However, this question was raised in the FGIs and the responses have been reported under “Perceptions”.

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The quantitative data set is followed by the qualitative data from the focus group interviews (FGIs) conducted with them.

3.4 Profile of Respondents in Qualitative Data [FGIs]

The qualitative data sets from the FGIs were transcribed simply as word-processed documents. These documents were then colour-coded to create inventories of dependent variables as DV1 (beliefs), DV2 (values), & DV3 (perceptions). The reasons given by participants for becoming a teacher was an additional variable. This last variable was chosen while reviewing the data transcripts as there were indications that this variable (reason) may/may not be linked with the beliefs and values. All the FGIs were transcribed and colour-coded using the Microsoft Word for ease of data management, but only some were purposefully selected for analysis and discussion so that the selected ones could be presented as small case studies within this whole study. These small case studies (four in all) were selected to match the focus of the study _ “Comparison of English Language and Content Subject Teachers”. There are four case studies within this case study of Pakistani tertiary teachers. These case studies were chosen to represent (a) English language teachers, (b) Content Subject teachers across fields such as Mathematics and Sciences, Medicine, and Engineering. English is the medium of instruction for all professional programs in Pakistan.

Each of the case studies listed in the table (shown above) profiles the respondents, describes their background and lists their beliefs, values and perceptions gathered from the FGI data. The analyses drew on the factual data from the interviews, as well as the researcher’s observations during the course of the interviews and the field notes. This combination of data and researcher’s notes helped to generate the rich descriptions of the phenomena being investigated.

Presenting case studies of English and content subject teachers’ groups was considered a better option to do the comparison of their beliefs and perceptions as comparison of beliefs, perceptions and values of the one independent variable, namely, English Language teachers and Content Subject teachers is the main focus of this study.

Bilingualism and code-switching are fairly common phenomena in the formal and informal discourse of literate Pakistanis (Ahsan, 2010; Khan 2004). Hence, the occurrence of code-switching was found in the FGI data sets. The responses in the vernacular (Urdu which is the official and national language) have been presented in the transcriptions as transliterations in English using caps. These transcriptions were colour-coded to facilitate discussion. The FGIs and the questionnaires also elicited respondents’ perceptions regarding the future of higher education (HE) in Pakistan. The FGI questions were open-ended and framed to encourage rich, meaningful discussions within the time slots given for the interviews. The questions were designed to facilitate and stimulate the discussions (interviews) to move forward. One of the interview questions aimed at both building and establishing a conversational tone as a sort of prompt for ice-breaking and rapport-building purposes, and to elicit demographic data of each member of the FGIs.

The data presented here is from the FGIs with corroborating data from Questionnaire A (teacher’s questionnaire), such as, the reasons for becoming a teacher data and the dependent variables: beliefs, values, perceptions.
3.5 Data from FGIs about Reasons for Joining the Teaching Profession (As Per Emerging Themes)

The data pertaining to participants reasons for joining the teaching profession obtained from the interviews which has been subjected to a thematic analysis, are presented here both as a pie chart as and as Table.

![Pie Chart](image)

**Fig 1: Reasons for becoming teachers**

The data above show that most respondents became teachers because of the circumstances they found themselves in rather than by conscious choice. Following in the footsteps of other family members appears to have been another important factor for their choosing the teaching profession. However, one’s family’s influence was the least mentioned reason for choosing the teaching profession.

3.6 Focus Group Interviews: Responses related to DV 1 (Beliefs)

There were 163 responses that related to teachers’ beliefs that were placed under four (04) categories first and then split into 26 themes. The categories presented in Fig 2 below illustrate the four categories as:

- Beliefs about themselves as professionals, individuals (attributes) 51%
- Beliefs about their knowledge, training needs 23%
- Beliefs about roles, pedagogic & management skills 12%
- Beliefs related to students, administration, curricula, parents, society at large 14%
## Belief Themes in FGI data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Teacher’s attributes / personal qualities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>Teacher’s pedagogic and scholarly roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Teacher’s own classroom environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Teacher’s subject knowledge case and expertise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Teacher’s additional knowledge and up-datedness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>Teacher’s communication skills (proficiency, effectiveness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>Teacher-student relationship (in and out of classroom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Teacher’s pedagogic training needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>Existence of affect in teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Teacher’s pedagogic skills and innovative practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Teacher: (i) a change agent; (ii) teacher’s self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Teacher: Reflective, Practitioner, and Creator of new knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Teacher: Lifelong learner; Open-minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Teacher’s social and moral roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Teaching means sharing knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Teaching includes imparting survival and life skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Teaching: a noble / best profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Teaching – a passion; requires dedication; personal choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Teaching is an enjoyable / fulfilling activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Negative aspects of teaching profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Age and sex of teacher affects teaching and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Beliefs related to Administration, colleagues, Higher Education Commission, Pakistan (HEC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Beliefs about students’ potential, behavior, and expectations from students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Beliefs about parents’ of student, society at large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Beliefs about syllabus / curriculum, standard of research in Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Extraneous / superficial things</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

List 1: Belief themes

## FGI Data on Values

The focus group interviews yielded similar data about the values held by the respondents. The professed values are listed below in sequential order.
Values Themes (FGI data)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Professed Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Honesty (teachers’’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Respect (from students &amp; others)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Sincerity (teachers’’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Nurturing students (rapport- mutual affection between teacher-students, enabling students with knowledge and skills, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Punctuality (teachers’ and students’’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Doing justice with the role of a teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Deriving pleasure from the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Teaching as a chosen profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Receiving students’ feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Doing good (for others)/doing virtuous deeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Good teaching (good communication skills, depth of knowledge and expertise)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Teaching profession offers status, respect &amp; adequate earning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Distribution of professed values (FGI data)

The data show that the respondents value two qualities/traits in teachers very highly, namely, sincerity and the nurturing ability, followed by good teaching ability. However, the data show that the respondents did not have a high regard for punctuality.

FGI data on Respondents’ Perceptions (summarised as categories)

- Perception that teaching and doing research are two entirely different activities, (and may therefore require different skills sets).
- Perception here appears to be that if a faculty member acquires a PhD degree from abroad and becomes a head of department, the investment on her/him is wasted.
- An apparently negative perception about Master’s degree holders’ unpreparedness for teaching jobs, and their inability to conduct research.
- A perception that authorities lay more emphasis on publications than on communication skills.
- A perception that more practical pedagogy carries more weight than a PhD degree.
- A perception that a teaching license is or should be necessary as in some other countries.
- A teacher should go beyond just the subject content.
- A negative perception about the future prospects of higher education in Pakistan that there is little likelihood of a positive change.
- Perception that students are now coming in with better knowledge and more positive attitudes.
- Perception that teachers need knowledge of Psychology as a subject.
- Perception that for some students teachers are role models.
- Perception that students know a lot of things which teachers do not know and yet teachers are happy as they are. (So probably this gap is going to increase with the passage of time if teachers don’t do anything about it.)
- Perceptions that many students think that Mathematics is so boring.
HEC is mostly focusing on Natural Sciences, and for a society, Social Sciences are as much important as Natural Sciences, but they are not focusing on the Social Sciences.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION
According to the qualitative (FGI) data discussed, more respondents from Cohort A (English language teachers) than their colleagues from other disciplines Cohort B, held the belief that teachers’ (a) personal attributes/ personal qualities, and (b) their pedagogic and scholarly roles were far more important than the other belief themes listed on page. English language teachers showed a higher belief in the personal attributes/qualities of a teacher far more than their counterpart groups (ELT 7.36% of total number of beliefs listed versus Science & Math teachers 2.45%, Medical Science teachers 2.45%, Engineering & Technology teachers 4.29%).

The beliefs with least importance given by both cohorts were about:
- Age and gender of a teacher affect teaching and learning
- Syllabi/curricula and standard of research in Pakistan.

The comparison of the responses between groups also shows a degree of variance, which may be accounted to their belonging to different disciplines. For instance teachers of medical sciences mentioned a number of issues that could not be listed as beliefs or values. Similarly responses from Cohort A indicate that English language teachers chose the profession because they had a passion for teaching, but none of respondents attributed their choice of profession to convenience such it accommodating time for family life. In contrast, for many respondents of Cohort B, circumstances played an important part in their career choice.

Another interesting finding was that most of the English language teachers as well as many sciences and mathematics teachers believed in the teachers’ pedagogic roles, whereas many of the engineering and medical sciences teachers laid stress on the socio-moral roles of teachers.

Findings from the quantitative data regarding beliefs show that:
- 99% respondents believe that a teacher has many roles to play
- 97% believe that teaching is a noble profession
- 91% believe that teachers and learners both have beliefs and expectations from each other
- 81% believe that parents and teachers should have interactions about the students
- 73% believe that teaching and learning are activities that require social interaction between teachers and students
- 64% believe that the age and gender of a teacher influence learners’ expectations of the teacher’s behavior
- 56% believe that teaching can be combined with another income-generating activity
- There is a difference between the beliefs of English language and Content subject teachers regarding their roles in and out of the classrooms (e.g. facilitator, guide, counselor), and teacher-student relationships (e.g. friendly, nurturing, social and moral role models). More teachers of Content subjects have mentioned the relationship roles as opposed to the English language teachers many of whom have specifically mentioned the academic/pedagogic roles.
Both cohorts have similar sets of values expressed in the FGIs, but there are differences in perceptions of teachers’ skills expressed as metaphors in Questionnaire A. The metaphors were adaptations of Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) set.

Teaching as telling: 93% (M 37, F 63%) did not perceive teaching to be a simple activity which could perhaps mean that female teachers are more attuned to the nurturing and affective aspects of teaching.

Teaching is like cooking: 88% said ‘No’ as they did not perceive teaching to be prescriptive or simply following instructions.

To conclude, the study design allowed for the main questions to be explored and addressed. The two major findings of the study, that is, that there are differences in the beliefs and perceptions of the two cohorts of teachers, namely, English language teachers and content subject teachers. Yet the values of the two cohorts are fairly similar and highlight the need for teacher education initiatives for this region to factor in the importance not only on the roles that beliefs and values play, but also to pay heed to the nature of these beliefs and values so that the courses have the potential to impact positively on participants. By extension, such initiatives is likely to significantly enhance the provision of education for the tertiary sector.
References


