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Short Report

THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY AND VALUE OF FEMALE TEACHERS IN PAKISTAN.

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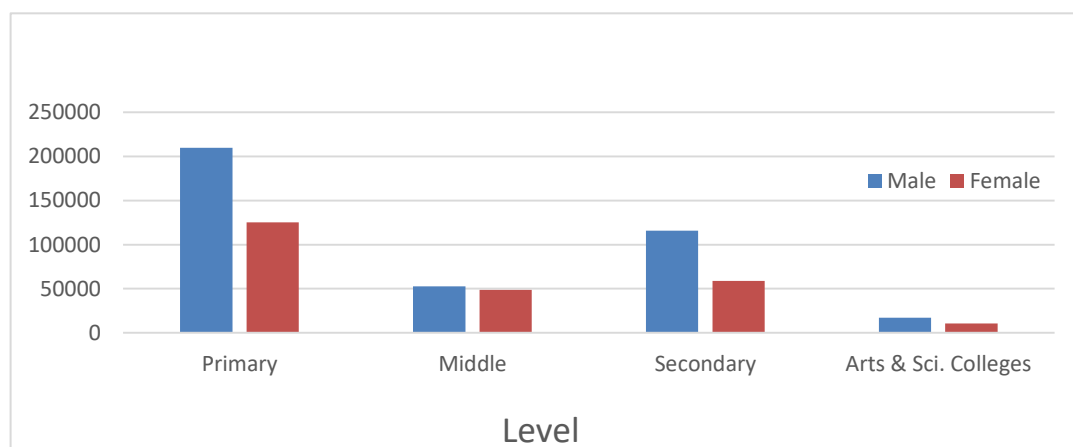
In Pakistan, the largest concentration of working women is in the teaching profession. Yet, compared to male teachers, the ratio of female teachers is low in the public sector of education i.e., only 36.5% of all teachers are females (Table 1). In primary schools, too, the ratio is almost 35%. This could be explained by the fact that there is an almost similar proportion (31%) of girls' schools in the country, and few co-education or mixed schools.

Table 1: Distribution of Male and Female Teachers (2000-2001) in Public Sector

Level/Gender	Primary	Middle	Secondary Education	Arts & Science Colleges	Grand Total
Total	335,100	106,200	174,611	27,822	638,733
Male	209,800	52,700	115,731	17,173	395,404
Female	125,300	48,500	58,880	10,649	243,329
Ratio of female teachers	37.4%	47.9%	33.7%	38.2%	38%

(Govt. of Pakistan, Economic Survey (2002-2003), Economic Affair Division, Islamabad
 Table No 10.3, Statistical Appendix – Page 106

Graphic View of Gender Disparities in Public Education Sector of Pakistan



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In developed countries the ratio of female teachers, at primary and lower secondary levels is far higher than that of their counterpart male teachers, which is evident from the Table No.2 below

Table 2: Ratio of Female Teachers in OECD Countries

Level	Pre-Primary	Primary	Lower Secondary	Post Secondary	All Levels of Education
Ratio (%) of Female Teachers (OECD Mean)	95	77	63	49	64

It is widely believed that females prove to be better teachers, particularly for children at the primary level.

Problems of Female

Teachers Pakistan's track-record in empowering its female citizens falls far short of expectations. Female literacy in Pakistan is among the highest in the world. Pakistan's gender empowerment measure (GEM) is 0.179, among the lowest in E-9 countries (UNESCO 2000). The percentage of women in the labor force is very low.

The problems of female teachers referred to here are those, which have been identified in four research studies on female teachers and one evaluative study of an in-service teacher training programme.

- Female teachers in Rural Schools UNESCO (2000)
- The Education and Retention of Rural Primary Women Teachers by the Working Women's Association (1989).
- Problems of Working Women by the Fatima Jinnah Women University (2001). In this study the sample comprised of teachers of high schools.
- Evaluation of present in-service training programmes for teachers and development of more cost effective methods of INSET at various levels. Pakistan Education Foundation (PEF 1998).

The problems identified by these studies can be discussed as follows:

Social Problems

Social conservatism, rigid and oppressive cultural traditions, and religion are the main forces considered to restrict the functioning of the female section of the population. Despite the fact that there are a fair number of women in the teaching profession, there is an acute shortage of female teachers especially in the rural areas. The factors that contribute to this situation range from social disapproval to lack of facilities for housing and transport.

- Family problems arising out of joint family systems affect the working life of females.
- Demands of married life with the added burden of household chores, child raising and the mental and physical pressures of a job take their toll.
- Many male members do not share in the maintenance of household duties.

Logistical Problems

The logistic problems of female teachers are related to school locations, faddy life and child-care. Transportation is a major problem for women. Traveling long &stances alone to schools is both time consuming and hazardous.

- Women with higher qualifications apply for lower qualified jobs because they are unable to leave their families for work.
- Single women face an accommodation problem.
- Single women face a security problem.
- Married women have to move whenever their husbands are posted and as such may not be able to hold a post for any length of time.
- Additional responsibilities are given without proper financial acknowledgement.
- The medical care entitlement for the family is at times not adequate.
- Old age benefits-pension process is cumbersome.

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