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Mini-Review

**THE AREAS OF EDUCATION PROFESSION THAT NEED THE INTERVENTION TO
IMPROVE THE SCHOOL EDUCATION SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN.**

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The following are some areas where action can be taken to improve the status of teachers in Pakistan and uphold the esteem of the teaching profession.

Professional autonomy through the establishment of independent Teachers Councils

Many professional groups in Pakistan have their own professional associations such as the Pakistan Medical Association, the Pakistan Council of Engineers, and the Pakistan Bar Council. Each association has wide-ranging powers and a great deal of control over such important matters as entrance to the profession, standards of conduct and other aspects of work. Such entities protect the interests of their members and in the process enhance their standing and status. It might be considered to give the teachers of Pakistan the opportunity and resources they need to establish their own professional associations, for example, a National Teachers' Council. The majority of members for this council should be teachers directly elected to represent the different sectors of the education system.

Merit-based recruitment

Every effort must be made to ensure that the principal criterion defining and underpinning teacher recruitment is merit, thereby strengthening the status and performance of teachers as well as the quality of the education they provide. There are reports indicating that there are 65000 trained but unemployed teachers in Pakistan. Identifying these teachers and recruiting them would represent an important step in this direction.

Empowerment of female teachers

Urgent steps are needed to dismantle the social, cultural, political, economic and legal barriers that marginalize and disenfranchise Pakistani women and girls. Female teachers must receive utmost priority in capacity building, training in leadership roles, remuneration, job security, and adequate representation and participation in matters concerning them.

Decent working conditions and remuneration

Teachers occupy a central position in society. The tasks and responsibilities entrusted to them and the demands and expectations placed on them make the teaching profession a unique enterprise. As a result teachers need to be given a special consideration, particularly in matters relating to remuneration and working conditions.

Enhanced and relevant pre- and in-service training

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Teachers should be provided with adequate pre- and in-service training courses characterized by efficacy, creativity and innovation. Utmost attention should be paid to the utilization of the latest, relevant techniques and technologies in the field of teacher education, including those relating to distance education. Distance education would open up vast opportunities, especially for working and prospective female teachers, particularly in remote areas.

Recommendations for Teachers Betterment and Welfare

UNESCO received a number of suggestions from a teacher organization: some of the important recommendations are given below:

- The selection procedures, training system and salary package for persons related to teaching profession should be improved.
- To achieve the goal of nation building, the system of teachers' appointments on contract and adhoc basis should be stopped.
- All teachers should be given the facility of travel allowance and hardship area allowance.
- Children of serving teacher should be allowed the facility of admission and free education in their parents' institutions.
- To solve teachers residential problems, "Teachers' Colonies" should be established & other departments and professions.

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