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**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Perception of Prospective Teachers about the Quality of Pedagogical Course**

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**ABSTRACT**

Pedagogy is the discipline that deals with the theory and practice of education; it thus concerns with the practice of good teaching. It ranges from the general to the narrower essentials of vocational education. The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of prospective teachers about the quality of pedagogical course. The study was qualitative in nature. The data were collected from 10 prospective teachers of B.Ed. Elementary (Honor) at the Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, who were selected through purposive sampling technique. A focus group interview was designed to explore the perceptions of prospective teachers about the quality of pedagogical course. The trustworthiness of the data was ensured through triangulation and peer debriefing. The results of the study indicated that prospective teachers were satisfied with the quality of pedagogical course at the Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore. They mentioned that the pedagogical course enables them to teach at any level confidently. They reported that they joined this course by chance but if they got the chance to choose this course again they will join it by choice. They suggested that the current pedagogical course should be redesigned according to emerging trends.

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**Introduction**

Education combines new thoughts in a society and assumes the role of a change agent. It gets changed in the way of life of individuals. Teachers serve as the supporting of the whole arrangement of education. The excellence of education cannot be accomplished without excellence of teachers. Teachers are the absolute entirety of the education and without a dynamic and very much qualified teacher it won't be conceivable to have expressive advancement in this area. Teachers' improvement can't be seen in separation and must be seen together with the

improvement of a situation great in academics, as well as research and advancement in the education (Hammon & Cobb, 1996).

The teacher is the heart of the entire educational framework and the most imperative figure starting crucial and real changes in the learning prepare, all endeavors have made to produce innovative teachers who are subjectively talented and approved through a continuum proficient improvement process. The teachers in this manner can be a change agent, who can change the education framework with united deliberate considering, and through creating and executing novel and inventive methodologies in their classrooms (Marle, 1965).

Hammon and Cobb (1995) expressed that the sociological investigation of the professions started in the 1930s to recognize the vital attributes or characteristics for recognizing the teaching profession from different occupations. The attributes recognized are: ability in light of dynamic learning, procurement of training and education, for the most part connected with a university accreditation taking into account competency testing, formal association, adherence to a code of conduct and Altruistic services.

Ferreir (2006) talked in a meeting about the morals and obligations of teachers. At the meeting after purposeful talks a dream was received for a positive future. The teachers' code of ethics along these lines expected imagine a group of socially mindful, profoundly guided, self-moved and in fact skillful people maintaining the environmental suitability, sexual orientation uniformity, social affectability, appreciating financial advantages from the work and enveloping scholastic, specialized, spiritual, social and life-abilities for educational improvement.

Pedagogical method is the control that arrangements with the theory and practice of training; it along these lines concerns the study and practice of how best to educate. Its points range from the general (full improvement of the individual by means of liberal education) to the smaller essentials of professional training (the giving and securing of particular aptitudes).

Ferreir (2006) alluded to his technique for teaching as "basic instructional method". In connection with those enlightening techniques, the educator's own particular philosophical convictions of direction are harbored and represented by the understudy's experience information and experience, circumstance, and environment, and in addition learning objectives set by student and teachers. One sample would be the Socratic schools of thought. The educating of grownups, notwithstanding, might be alluded to as andragogy.

Herbart (1841) is the establishing father of the conceptualization of instructional method, or the hypothesis of training. Herbart's instructive reasoning and teaching method highlighted the connection between self-awareness and the

subsequent advantages to society. Herbartianism alludes to the development supported by Herbart's hypothetical points of view.

Indicating to the teaching process, Herbert recommended 5 stages as urgent segments. In particular, these 5 stages include: readiness, presentation, affiliation, speculation, and application. Herbert proposes that teaching method identifies with having suppositions as a teacher and a particular arrangement of capacities considering a planned finished objective.

In 2010, International Step by Step Association (SSA) exhibited a report which depends on quality education in right on time school years in European nations. They specified that for quality learning quality educating is a great deal more critical and for quality showing quality pedagogical course is imperative. To accomplish the objective of value training they set territories for quality instructional method these are: Interactions, Family and Community, Inclusion, Diversity, and Values of, Democracy, Assessment and Planning, Teaching Strategies, Learning Environment, Professional Development.

In Pakistan a task under the title "Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan (STEP)" was dispatched on October 12, 2005. The primary target of the undertaking was to upgrade the Government's ability to guarantee quality teacher training by enhancing arrangement structure, coordination and standard-setting. One of the imperative exercises of this undertaking was to create national norms for teacher accreditation and confirmation and to create methodologies for enhancing the status of teachers and their profession.

The Ministry of Education, with the collaboration of UNESCO and the Monetary Provision of USAID, established National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan. These standards were launched on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 2009. These criteria are:

- Subject matter knowledge
- Human Growth & Development
- Knowledge of Islamic Values/ Social Life Skills
- Instructional planning & strategies
- Assessment
- Learning environment
- Effective communication and proficient use of information communication technologies.
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Continuous professional development & code of conduct
- Teaching of English as second/foreign language (ESL/EFL)
- (Government of Pakistan, 2009)

These experts' guidelines as portrayed by the Government of Pakistan (2009) are intended to characterize abilities, aptitudes and ascribes esteemed to be vital for

prospective teachers, fulfilled expert teachers, teacher educators and other educational leaders. It additionally directs the advancement of pre-service and in-service projects of teacher training and help in building up approaches, methodology and frameworks for authorizing teacher training projects and institutions offering them and guarantee the general population about the nature of their teachers and instructive yield.

## Material and Methods

### Population and Sample of the study

The population was comprised of all B.Ed. Honors students (who had completed their course work). The sample description can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Strength of B. Ed. (Honors) Elementary Students**

Sr. No.	Program	Morning	Evening	Total Strength
1	B. Ed. Honors	59	42	111

The sample of 10 participants from B.Ed. Honors program (recently completed their course work) was selected by the researchers from the Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study. In case study research the most common form of sampling is purposive or purposeful sampling "based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Gay, 1987).

### Instrumentation

To check the perceptions of prospective teachers about the quality of pedagogical course focus group interview was conducted. Focus group interviews provide deep, detailed, and useful qualitative information and therefore illuminate evaluators in making decisions regarding education programs, curricula, courses, materials, and other related issues under investigation (Popham, 1993).

### Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected personally by the researcher with the legal permission from the director of the institute. All responses were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim in order to minimize the potential impact of the researchers' interpretation and remembering and being too selective and to reduce possible distortions (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

The data obtained through focus group interviews. Focus group interview was comprised of 2 groups; each group has 5 participants. The duration of interview was 62 minutes. Each participant avails 6 minutes and 2 seconds to response the

questions. The researcher read the data again and again, which was obtained from interviews. The researcher coded the data after this open coding (axial coding) was done. Through axial coding 3 themes were emerged. The researcher transcribed all the data under three themes which were taken through the interview. The transcribed data were scrutinized, keeping the conceptual framework of the study and research question in mind.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Perceptions of prospective teachers about the quality of pedagogical course**

Nine out of ten interviewees mentioned that they came in this field of study by chance not by choice. They reported that they came to realize in orientation what they were going to become. One participant reported *"that she knew that she was going to become a teacher and came in this field of study by choice"*. Participants discoursed that they were not expecting that B.Ed. honors could be so difficult, broad and the subject which made them busy all the time in papers, assignments and presentations. They said that their expectations were fulfilled due to their teachers. Even one participant said that *"he had an experience to dive in the deep sea of knowledge"*.

Participants opined that they were satisfied to some extent and the reason of their satisfaction and dissatisfaction was their teacher. One participant reported that *"his expectations were not fulfilled and the reason was that the background, he had there is no concept of teaching as a profession. So his expectations were not fulfilled yet. He was still not accepting that he was going to become a teacher."*

Eight out of ten interviewee's stated that this course would contribute to be a good teacher because after completing the course they were able to deal with individual differences, manage a classroom, knew about different teaching techniques, they would become professional and specialized in the field of teaching like doctors etc. Two participants said that this course would not contribute to be a good teacher because they were not being taught as elementary teachers, because the curriculum of elementary level was different to their subjects. Elementary teacher should be able to teach all the subjects at the elementary level.

### **The Strengths of Pedagogical Course**

Five out of ten interviewees reported that they were competent in Islamic studies when asked the reason they mentioned that *"their teacher were very competent and they gave the answer of the questions in a very good way"*. Two participants mentioned that they were competent in English and the reason was their personal interest in it. One interviewee reported that he is competent in Urdu because *"he liked it very much and he started to study it from the day he learned to read"*. One participant mentioned that she liked mathematics because *she liked it"*. One interviewee mentioned that *"she liked teaching methods because it told her how to teach students?"*.

Six participants said that they participated fully in the lessons. One interviewee cited that *"he liked discussion and if someone asked questions, then he gave the response. If he asked a question and the answer was not as per his standard, then he proved it till the end (teachers ki ladrai ho jati hai meri vaja sy)"*. Three participants stated that they tried to participate if the topic was according to their interest. One participant cited that he likes to listen. All the participants were agreed that they liked; assignments, group discussion, presentations, and quiz were the activities which help them to understand the topic.

Nine participants said that by and large instructional material was beneficial because it guided them for further studies. One participant cited yes, it helped them to understand the topic but it was not 100% practical, but 30% to 40% were practical like; teaching methods, English, research, Islamic studies etc. were practical subjects. One interviewee mentioned that instructional material was not facilitated me because *"she was used for self-study and self-reading"*.

All the participants agreed that the institute should include a detailed subject like educational psychology, mathematics, research, English, assessment, instructional technology and decrease the number of courses of Islamyt and history because they read it in all the semesters. They suggested that the institution should offer specialization in one field of study. They cited that practical work should be increased so that they become able to implement theory in real life situation. They mentioned that teachers should use innovative methods of teaching so that students learnt effectively.

Eight participants said that they would take this course again, even they said that *"they became the part of this course by chance but if they gained the chance to become the part of this program again and they would choose it by choice because they got the chance to learn more"*. Two participants mentioned that they would not try to take this course again, one participant said that *"she didn't have any interest in it"* and the other mentioned that *"if the condition of the course remained the same she would not join it again"*.

The strengths of this course described by participants that they became confident, their knowledge increased, communication skill improved and came to know that how they could teach and manage students of different levels. The subjects of this pedagogical course were informative.

### **The Weaknesses of Pedagogical Course**

Five participants said that they disliked educational psychology and the reason was that their teacher was unable to deliver the content of educational psychology very effectively. Two participants reported that they were incompetent in art and calligraphy and the reason was their teacher they mentioned that their teacher used to say that *"he was a teacher of Arabic and it was subject of girls and the administration gave this course to him"*. One participant mentioned that he was

incompetent in English because *“his mind was not working on it”*. One student mentioned that she didn't like mathematics *“her teacher was good, but she was unable to develop interest in English”*. The response of one participant was so different as she declared that *“as far as competency was concerned, she mentioned earlier that she came here by chance, she had no interest in teaching and she doesn't like it because she did not know how to conveyed knowledge. She mentioned that she did not like educational research, and took the decision that she would take part in PMS and CSS exams, but she would not take educational research again.* As far as weaknesses are concerned, all the interviewees mentioned that practical work should be increased. Likewise, the duration of teaching practice should be increased and theoretical work should be decreased.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of prospective teachers about the quality of pedagogical course at the Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab. The major study outcomes revealed that most of the prospective teachers were agreed about the quality of pedagogical course. Hammond and Cobb (1996) support that the education standard and professional competency of the teachers would dependably remain the primary concern and would require top priority for having the fruit of the educational enterprise in its true spirit All the prospective teachers were agreed that the quality of pedagogical course was satisfactory at the Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab.

Pedagogy is the discipline that deals with the theory and practice of education; it thus concerns the study and practice of how best to teach. Its aims range from the general (full development of the human being via liberal education) to the narrower essentials of vocational education (the imparting and acquisition of specific skills). Pedagogical courses are valued because of multiple reasons for example; it has a wide variety of subjects which enable individuals to have insight, and knowledge of different subjects. Through theory and practice they learned different methods and strategies which could be helpful for them to handle with individual differences at any professional responsibility. After completing the course they labeled professionalized in the field of education. They become able to teach at different levels with confidence. McCullough and David (2001) support that teaching was something men did on the off chance that they didn't have anything better to do.

Pedagogical courses have few limitations like; ineffective teaching methodology decreased the worth and value of that course. Jamil (2004) said that the connection between theory and practice of teacher education is lost in instructor planning programs with little weighted on practicum in target schools. The Less popularity of pedagogical course is due to the negligence of the Government, which is not providing sufficient opportunities in the practical field. Jamil (2004) supports and stated that the curriculum content substances of pre-service confirmation programs, especially in people in general segment are obsolete. The coursework does not completely mirror the developing worldwide patterns in pedagogical

techniques. The research findings indicated that the curriculum of pedagogical course redesigned according to emerging trends like information and communication technology and multiculturalism. Haughey (2000) agrees with these findings and includes that until very recently, education was mostly concerned about "learning about technologies rather than working with technologies as part of learning experiences." According to Haughey, it is basic that information and communication technology (ICTs) be viewed as not as an expansion of the traditional classroom, but rather as a tool to promote the use of learning strategies, especially as part of a constructivist epistemological perspective. To ensure better preparation of tomorrow's teachers, it is important that their training includes both theoretical and practical knowledge.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Most of the prospective teachers came in this field of study by chance not by choice. Results showed that most of the students were satisfied with the pedagogical course which was taught by the Institute of Education and Research. It was explored that students have the perceptions before talking the admission that B.Ed. Honors was not so difficult, broad and a subject which made the students busy all the time in papers, assignments and presentations.

The results revealed that participant's course would contribute to being a good teacher because after completing the course they were able to deal with individual differences manage a classroom, knew about different teaching techniques, they would become professional and specialized in the field of teaching. It was mentioned by a few participants that pedagogical course would not contribute to being a good teacher because they were not being taught as elementary teachers, because the curriculum of elementary level was different to their subjects. Elementary teacher should be able to teach all the subjects at the elementary level.

It was concluded that this course described by participants that they became confident, their knowledge increased, communication skill improved and came to know that how they could teach and manage students of different levels. The subjects of this pedagogical course were informative.

The pedagogical course has few limitations as most of the participants agreed that the as far as weaknesses are concerned, they mentioned that practical work should be increased. Likewise, the duration of teaching practice should be increased and theoretical work should be decreased.

On the basis of the results of the study it is recommended that the duration of practical work like teaching practice should be increased. All the subjects should be given equal weighed according to their worth and usability. Only specialized teachers should be offered to teach the subject. Aptitude test should be conducted before giving admission to students so that the quality of teachers should be improved. Subjects related to new trends should \be the part of pedagogical course, like; Information and Communication Technology's (ICTs), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

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