National Professional Standards
for Teachers 2009 and Their Implementation by
Female Primary School Teachers in Lahore

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Abstract

Standards are the level of quality or model in the comparative evaluation of Professional teachers. The aim of this article is to see the implementation of National Professional Standards 2009 by the female primary school teachers in Pakistan. The results of these standards give the reflection about teacher's performance, skills, knowledge and abilities. The key finding of this study shows the agreement of teachers with the implementation of 10 National Professional standards. The historical and conceptual background of the National Professional Standards has been discussed in this article. National Professional standards provide framework and plans to teachers for the quality of education. Standards measure the achievement of professional educators as well as their students. To assess the implementation of National Professional Standards data was collected by using Questionnaire technique. After the analysis of data it was concluded that standards are efficiently implemented by female primary school teachers.

Key words: National professional standards, primary school, skillful teachers, quality assurance in education.

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Introduction

Standards are a system by which performance of the teachers can be defined in terms of their achievements. The most important factor for improving the outcomes of students is the quality of their teachers. The National Professional Standards for Teachers enable them to know about the different levels of professional expertise. Standards provide planning to teachers and through this teachers can enhance their capacity over time. The scope of National Professional standards is increasing to check the competencies for teachers in primary, secondary and higher education since last decade. Education is considered as one of the basic elements which contribute to the development of a country and the prosperity of the masses. It promotes awareness among people by making them able to 'read' the world (Freire, 1987).

The increasing use of technology has transformed the world into a global village. This global community has accepted the principle that education is a basic human right. Accomplishment of such right does not only involve being given access to schools and being trained for life-long learning via either formal or non-formal means, but more importantly, being provided quality education (Ahmed& Ibrahim, 2008, p. 402).

In the UK a Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education was developed in 2006 (Higher Education Academy 2006). In the Netherlands a standard for teacher educators was developed around the turn of the millennium (Koster andDengerink 2001; Houston et al. 2002). In Pakistan, Federal Ministry of Education in collaboration with UNESCO and USAID has been introduced National Professional Standards for teachers. The declarations of the 1990 Jomtien World Conference on Education and the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum both emphasized that to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015 would require, in addition to increased access to education, all countries to improve the quality and equity of education "so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all" Ross, K. (2007).

Teacher education plays a vital role to form and construct the education system of any country. In Pakistan, Government Colleges for Elementary Teachers (GCETs), Colleges of Education (GCEs) and University Departments of Education/ IERs are major institutions that impart teacher training through various academic programmes. As far as pre-service teacher education is concerned, 135 institutions with 36563 teacher educators are operating in Pakistan. Of them, 114 institutions are established in public sector and 21 are set up in private sector (International Reading Association

[IRA], 2008). Total number of students enrolled in B.Ed. programme is 16196; 13629 students are studying in public institutions. On the other hand, enrolment in M.Ed. at private institutes is 800, compared to 9453 at public institutions (Government of Pakistan, 2005).

In Pakistan through teacher education quality of education can be assured and enhanced. In general standard based education and in particular teacher based education can take part in the assurance of quality education in Pakistani context. Pakistan aspires to world class education which is not possible without dedicated, competent and professional teachers. To prepare competent teachers and teachers for future generation it is necessary that they must act upon the National Professional standards for teachers.

For quality assurance, the HEC has constituted the National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE) as an autonomous body to accredit all teacher education programs offered in the public and private sector institutions in the country. For this purpose, NACTE has developed National Standards for Accreditation of Teacher Education Programs.

When we talk about the usability of these standards, all standards cannot be helpful in all teachers' communities. Because every society has its own culture, norms and needs. The sheer numbers of objections indicate that the value of standards or competencies approaches for professional accountability and quality assurance may be over-emphasized. A number of authors state, for example, that lists of competencies do not take into account the complexity and the unpredictability of teaching and learning (see, for example, Eraut 1994; Korthagen 2004; Zeichner 2005). Another criticism is that professional standards, as normative structures, may lead to de-professionalization (Cochran-Smith 2001; Valli and Rennert-Ariev 2002), because they leave little incentive for professionals to reflect upon their own norms and values.

This is reflected in the international trend to give greater attention and effort to improve the quality of teachers. If any country has a strong desire or hope to compete successfully in the global knowledge economy and convert the raw talents of its people into productive asset it has to create a world class educational system from pre-school to postgraduate levels. A world class education is not possible without world class teachers who instruct, inform and inspire their students to quality learning.

The purpose of this research study is to measure the ability and performance of the teachers and explore the skills and qualities required for a teacher to provide quality education. Further the study will check the quality of education & teaching in

our educational institutions and see the crucial roles of these standards are playing to improve the quality of education and as a motivating factor for teachers for their continuous professional development (CPD). The study will be helpful to various stakeholders such as government, teachers, curriculum developers, teacher's trainers, policy maker and students in order to get awareness about quality education and quality teaching at national level. For this research study the following review of related literature is conducted. To produce world class teachers and authorize them to educate generations of learners, the basic requirements have been clearly delineated in this literature. It includes standards of what teachers need to know and be able to do.

Meaning of standards

Standards define the requirements for specific and essential components of a teacher education program. They guide towards the detailed documentation of program and processes for accreditation. (National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education, 2009)

Standards are measures of performance they describes a desirable level of performance. There are two main types of standards as applied to teaching: The first defines the basic tasks or duties of a teacher "what a teacher is hired to do". The second are standards for good teaching specific to particular subject and curriculum fields. These standards are based on professional values and images of high quality learning specific to subject fields (Ingvarson,L. 1998a,pp. 32-33).

Purpose of standards

The purpose of standards is to describe what is required to teachers at every step of teaching. Standards encourage teachers to identify and engage in professional activities. They help teachers to meet high level of professional skills to enhance their student's learning. It is expected that existing teaching standards, as well as future work in this area, will complement the capabilities described in these National Standards and provide further explication of what the standards look like for teachers working in different teaching contexts, phases of schooling and various disciplines. (National Professional Standards for Teachers, 2010, p.3)

Professional Standards for Teachers

Professional Standards for teachers provide platform to teachers to enhance their skills, abilities, knowledge as well as the better learning of students.Professional

standards for teachers are being used as a tool to improve the quality of education. Standards are the measures of achievement for both the professional teachers and educators and their students. Standard-setting and authorization of teacher education are key instruments to make sure the quality of teacher training. Quality assurance (QA) requires professional standards of teacher education and an effective mechanism of teacher accreditation of teacher education institutions and programs. Developing and implementing standards of professional practice to reflect a new model of teacher professionalism is emerging as a priority in a number of countries across the globe. Professional teaching standards help to make teachers‟ knowledge and capabilities more clear, as well as provide a powerful mechanism for defining and communicating what constitutes good teaching. They can also provide a useful framework for ongoing professional learning. Quality of teachers is reflected in their quality of teaching. To ensure quality in teaching, Standards for what teachers should know and be able to do should be developed.

History of Development of Professional Standards

There is considerable interest worldwide in the potential of professional teaching standards to support improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. This interest reflects the findings of recent research on quality teaching (Darling-Hammond. 2000; Cuttance, 2001; Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2000).

The development of professional standards has proceeded with remarkable speed within a number of countries. Developments have been "driven by a diverse range of factors. It includes the demand for greater accountability, the desire to reform education, the need to strengthen teacher professional development and the introduction of teacher performance appraisal" (Mulcahy, 2003).

The United Kingdom

The issue of standards for teachers has been a focus of policy development in England for most of the last decade. Four separate agencies are now involved in the development, monitoring and accreditation of teachers against educational standards. They are; (1) The Teacher Training Agency (TTA) or Training and Development Agency (TDA); (2) Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED); (3) The General Teaching Council (GTC); (4) The Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO).

The General Teaching Council (GTC) was established by the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998, started work on 1 September 2000 as the independent professional body for teaching in England. The Act gave effect to a long-held aspiration

to give teaching the same status as other self-regulating professions, such as nursing. It set the GTC two aims: (1) to contribute to improving standards of teaching and the quality of learning, and (2) to maintain and improve standards of professional conduct among teachers, in the interests of the public. The GTC code has been revised and is effective from September 2009. The Code describes professionalism in practice in relation to registered teachers: (1) Put the wellbeing, development and progress of children and young people first (2) Take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice (3) Help children and young people to become confident and successful learners (4) Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote equality (5) Strive to establish productive partnerships with parents and carers (6) Work as part of a whole-school team (7) Co-operate with other professional colleagues (8) Demonstrate honesty and integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the teaching profession (The General Teaching Council (GTC), 2009).

Pakistan

The Ministry of Education, with the cooperation of United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the financial support of United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has developed National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan. These standards frame a vision of the qualifications Pakistan expects of its teachers. These expectations need to be of national concern because teachers are the heart of the nation's effort to assure a better future for all children and youth (United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2011).

These standards were launched on the 23 of February of 2009 and it is hoped that with them, a wider discussion on teacher quality will emerge and be accompanied by concrete actions dedicated to its improvement. The standards are; (1) Subject matter knowledge (2) Human growth and development (3) Knowledge of Islamic ethical values/social life skills (4) Instructional planning and strategies (5) Assessment (6) Learning environment (7) Effective communication and proficient use of information communication technologies (8) Collaboration and partnerships (9) Continuous professional development and code of conduct (10) Teaching of English as second/foreign language (ESL/EFL) (Government Of Pakistan, 2009).

Significance of the study

It will be helpful for Government (Federal Ministry of Education) to encourage quality education and quality teaching at national level, for teachers for designing strategies about curriculum and teaching methodology to strengthen or improve their practices or performance, for the curriculum developers to make the necessary changes in designing the courses and curriculum. This study will also be helpful for teacher's trainers to know about quality teaching techniques and type of skills and aptitude require for a good teacher and to know about the required qualities and skills to make a good teacher.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this research study were to:

1. Provide guideline to teachers for professional and practical improvement in teaching
2. See the role of Federal Ministry of Education in the development of these professional standards for teachers in Pakistan
3. Check the development of educational system at primary level
4. Analyze the motivating and developmental role of national professional standards in teachers perspective
5. Know about the performance of organizations such as UNESCO and USAID with the help of Ministry of education
6. Analyze the ability and performance of the teachers

Research Methodology

All the teachers of public schools recognized by Punjab Examination Department (PED) situated in Lahore district were considered as the population of my study. Ten female primary schools were selected from different areas of Lahore conveniently. To see the effect of implementation of national professional standard on teacher's performance only public sector schools were selected. 100 teachers from the selected schools in equal were taken and 10 teachers were selected through purposive sampling. The sample size was 100. A survey questionnaires technique was used as a research instrument to collect the data in this study. For this purpose, a structured questionnaire was developed after reviewing relevant literature that consists of 10 standards and 40 statements. For ranking these statements, likert scale technique was used. The scales were quantified as: 5=Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=N; 2=Disagree; 1=Strongly Disagree. The average of the scale was taken as criteria value which is "3". Statements falling within mean value 1- 2.99 are considered as disagreement to the statement. Whereas, statements falling within mean score 3-5were considered as agreement.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed through the software "SPSS". The data was coded and edited after collection. The data was analyzed through frequency distribution, mean, and one sample t-test by using SPSS V.15.

Table 1

Questioning to assess standard: 1 One Sample t-test

Standard:1	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Subject matter knowledge	4.3175	0.709721	61.02987	0.000

N*=100, df * = 99

Table 1 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.22 which is significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers are strongly agreed with the statement that they have subject matter knowledge. And S.D is (0.709721) shows less variation from mean because it is less than 1.

Table 2

Questioning to assess standard: 2 One Sample t-test

Standard:2	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Human Growth and Development	4.45	2.199724	43.53258	0.000

Table 2 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.45 which is significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the statement that they implemented standard 2 which is about human growth and development. S.D is greater than 1 showing higher variability from mean.

Table 3

Questioning to assess standard: 3 One Sample t-test

Standard:3	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Knowledge of Islamic Ethical Values/Social Life Skills	4.2075	0.81194	57.63782	0.000

Table 3 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.21 which is significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 3 which is about Islamic ethical knowledge. S.D is 0.8 which is less than 1 and showing less variation from mean.

Table 4

Quiz to assess standard: 4 One Sample t-test

Statandard:4	Mean	S.D	t	Sig

Instructional Planning and Strategies	4.1625	0.891	47.31821	0.000

Table 4 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.2 which is significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 4 which is about planning and strategies. S.D is 0.9 which is less than 1having less variation from mean.

Table 5
Questioning to assess standard: 5 One Sample t-tests

Standard:5	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Assessment in the Class	4.2475	0.716051	61.1502	0.000

Table 5 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.23 which is significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 5 which is about assessment. S.D 0.7 shows less variability from mean because it is less than 1.

Table 6
Questioning to assess standard: 6 One Sample t-test

Standard:6	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Learning Environment	4.292	0.763256	56.76012	0.000

Table 6 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.3 which are significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 6 which is about learning environment. S.D is 0.76 which is less than one showing less variation from mean.

Table 7
Questioning to assess standard: 7 One Sample t-test

Standard:7	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Effective Communication and Proficient Use of Information Com Technologies	4.3	0.771398	56.01336	0.000

Table 7 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.3 which is significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 7 which is about effective communication and proficient use of information communication technology. S.D is 0.77 which is less than 1 showing less variation from mean.

Table 8
To check the implementation of standard: 8 One Sample t-test

Standard:8	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Collaboration and Partnership	4.3	0.761881	58.01243	0.000

Table 8 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.3 which are highly significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 8 which is about collaboration and partnership. S.D is 0.76 showing less variation from mean because it is less than 1.

Table 9

To check the implementation of standard: 9 One Sample t-test

Standard:9	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Continuous Professional Development and Code of Conduct	4.278	0.7446	58.23244	0.000

Table 9 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.27 which are significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 9 which is about continuous professional development and code of conduct. S.D is 0.74 showing less variation from mean because it is less than 1

Table 10

To check the implementation of standard: 10 One Sample t-test

Standard:10	Mean	S.D	t	Sig
Teaching of English as Second/Foreign Language (ESL/EFL)	4.236667	0.755134	56.537	0.000

Table 10 indicates that the mean score of the statement is 4.24 which are significantly higher than the criterion value (3.0). It means that teachers are strongly agreed with the implementation of standard 10 which is about teaching of English as second/foreign language (ESL/EFL). S.D is showing less variation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

To assess the implementation of national professional standard for female primary school teachers in Lahore, 40 questions were asked to the teachers which assess the 10 standards. Means of these 10 standards are greater than 3 which show all teachers are strongly agreed with these standards. Its mean that 10 standards are implemented by the primary school teachers effectively. And their standard deviations are less than 1 which shows less variability except standard 2 with standard deviation 2.199724. From the one sample t test all the 10 standards are highly significant.

Recommendations

- National standards should be implemented at all the levels in public schools
- There should be viable implementation plans so that teachers strictly follow and implement these ideas in their teaching learning practices
- Government and institutions should encourage the quality education within country by adopting these professional standards.
- Teachers should know that what qualities are required to make a good teacher.
- A large sample may be taken because sample of 100 teachers was a small sample and the results cannot be truly generalized on a large population.

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