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A Review of Challenges Faced by Educators and their Ripple Effects on Learners' Outcomes

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Abstract

This study investigates the challenges affecting educators' performance and their impact on learners' outcomes at the secondary level. Drawing on a comprehensive review of existing literature, the paper critically analyzes the difficulties faced by school educators in the Punjab province of Pakistan. The study population consisted of secondary-level educators from government schools and their secondary-level learners in District Rawalpindi. The sample included educators with a minimum of five years of teaching experience and learners from grade 9 in selected schools. The study was conducted in two phases. In Phase 1, an opinionnaire utilizing a five-point Likert scale was used to gather educators' opinions regarding the challenges they faced. In Phase 2, educators were divided into two groups: those experiencing the most significant challenges and those facing minimal challenges in the teaching-learning process. Subsequently, tests were conducted to assess and compare the academic achievements of the learners taught by each group of educators. The findings revealed that a majority of educators encountered various challenges, including financial difficulties, inadequate medical and healthcare support, low social status, issues related to students and their parents, political interference, frequent transfers, lack of accommodation, teaching in non-native languages, transportation problems, insufficient teacher training, inadequate training aids, limited study materials, frequent syllabus changes, lack of refresher courses, and teacher shortages leading to excessive workloads. These challenges adversely impacted educators' teaching performance, which in turn negatively influenced students' learning outcomes at the secondary level. The study recommended that educators should be provided with adequate salaries and associated benefits. They should also receive proper social recognition and support from both the government and society. Other recommendations included ensuring suitable accommodation, a conducive school environment, appropriate teaching aids, and effective teacher training



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programs. Schools should be free from political interference, and adequate staffing should be ensured to address teacher shortages and prevent excessive workloads. Finally, the study suggested conducting broader research to explore additional aspects of the topic.

Key Words: Educators, Challenges, Critical analysis, Impact, Learners, Outcomes

Introduction

Education serves as the cornerstone of societal progress and the key to success. The remarkable advancements in science and technology we witness today are largely attributed to education (Bregman & Muhammad, 1998). A nation's educational level is closely linked to its global standing, with countries prioritizing education and research often emerging as global leaders. Education transforms individuals' skills and potential into valuable resources, driving positive societal change (Hoodbhoy, 1998). Teachers play a pivotal role in this transformation, as they shape the future of a nation. The quality of education largely depends on the competence and effectiveness of teachers. However, in Pakistan, there has been inadequate focus on improving the education system, especially in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers. As a result, Pakistan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world and struggles to deliver quality education (Farooq, 1990). This study examines the challenges faced by school teachers in Punjab, Pakistan. Education is widely regarded as a powerful tool for cognitive development, social transformation, and national progress. The social and economic advancement of a nation is closely tied to the availability of a literate and technically skilled population. As Nelson Mandela famously stated, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." These words are more relevant today than ever before. Research indicates that individuals with higher levels of education tend to earn significantly more over their lifetimes and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Education not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures critical thinking, creativity, and resilience, serving as the key to unlocking potential and transforming lives. Rahmat and Inam (2018, p. 8) highlighted that education serves as a tool for developing human resources, ultimately supporting a nation's economic, industrial, and scientific progress. Education plays a crucial role in preparing responsible citizens for the future. As Mehboob (2013, p. 8) observed, every nation strives to educate its younger generations. The education system in Pakistan is a neglected and fragmented sector. Education has never been a priority for any civilian government leadership. Since its inception, Pakistan has allocated less than 3% of its GDP to education, far below the international standard of 4% or the recommended allocation of 20% of the total budget. This inadequate investment has resulted in one of the lowest literacy rates and poor-quality education compared to other countries. In addition to government neglect, the education system is plagued by challenges such as linguistic diversity, inconsistent policies, and a divided structure. These issues have adversely affected Pakistan's economic, political, and social development. Government schools in Pakistan fail to meet societal needs due to poor management, underfunding, and inadequate evaluation processes. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning in these schools is frequently questioned by people from all walks of life (Government of Punjab, 2002).



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Despite various initiatives of government to improve the education system and align it with national and international standards, significant progress remains elusive. The worsening state of the education sector suggests it is approaching collapse (Ashraf, 1983). A critical issue within the system is the role of teachers. Research highlights that teachers are pivotal to the success of any education system. However, in Pakistan, the challenges faced by teachers have intensified over time, further undermining the education sector (Government of Pakistan, 1998). Teachers often feel undervalued and disconnected. The teaching profession is regarded as one of the least attractive, poorly compensated, and least rewarding careers (British Council, 1988). The difficulties faced by teachers, particularly at the school level, significantly impact the overall teaching and learning process. Despite the gravity of these issues, limited research has been conducted to address them. This study aims to identify the primary challenges faced by government school's teachers in Punjab, Pakistan, and propose practical solutions. Education is one of the most valuable tools in life, playing a critical role in a child's development and serving as a key to success. It improves living standards by transforming a nation's population into skilled and productive workers, thereby fostering positive societal change (Ahmad, Thomas & Hamid, 2020). Teachers, often referred to as the "builders of the nation," hold a pivotal role in the education system, as the quality of education relies heavily on their skills and dedication. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not prioritized its education sector, particularly in recruiting and training skilled teachers (Ahmad, Ali & Sewani, 2021). Over the past five years, approximately 43% of government school's teachers have received no formal training, leading to a decline in student enrollment and academic performance. Teachers are essential to the success of any school, as they shape students into responsible citizens. Research indicates that the quality of teaching directly impacts student performance (Ahmad & Hamid, 2020; Ahmad, Sewani & Ali, 2021).

In Pakistan, teachers are evaluated through the "Performance Evaluation Report" (PER) system. However, this system focuses on teachers' personalities and general behavior rather than their teaching abilities and classroom performance. While these evaluations determine annual raises, they do little to enhance teachers' professional skills. Modern teaching approaches emphasize that teachers should be fair, patient, and attentive to students' needs (Ahmad, Thomas & Hamid, 2020). Pakistan ranks among the lowest globally in effective education and learning outcomes. This failure is attributed to numerous issues, including the prevalence of unqualified teachers. Many teachers lack proper training, are unmotivated, and are influenced by bias, dishonesty, and political favoritism rather than merit. Schools also face staff shortages and resource constraints, resulting in overburdened teachers. Additionally, some teachers engage in unprofessional behavior, such as using abusive language, or view teaching merely as a source of income. These challenges undermine the education system, harming students' well-being and disrupting the learning process. Teaching forms the foundation of any society, serving as a critical determinant of a nation's progress or decline (2012, p.8)

Teaching is a specialized profession that demands (i) understanding the factors influencing students' development, (ii) selecting the appropriate content structure and teaching methods to develop necessary skills, and (iii) assessing whether learning has been effectively achieved. The report emphasizes that enhancing a teacher's practical and skill-based abilities within the classroom requires knowledge of educational philosophy, learning theories, child psychology, teaching strategies, and evaluation techniques. Teachers have a profound impact on classroom instruction, and the quality of teaching is



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directly tied to the practices and standards upheld by teacher training institutions. Several factors influence the quality of teacher education in a country, including ideological and socioeconomic demands, the current structure of the education system, and inadequately defined teaching and learning theories and practices. Concerns about the quality of teacher education are also linked to the formulation of effective policies, efficient management of teacher education programs, and the availability of adequate infrastructure in training institutions. Essential components include pre-service and ongoing in-service education for teacher educators, regular updates to curricula, enhanced teaching methodologies, effective evaluation strategies, access to teaching aids, and other resources for teachers. Education, and particularly teacher education, plays a crucial role in societal development.

Within the realm of teacher education, secondary-level teachers hold a pivotal role in promoting values within the community. Primary teachers lay the foundation for building a strong and resilient nation, while secondary teachers shape the character and aspirations of the youth. Bukhari and Rahmat (2008, p. 18) claimed that secondary education, plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' personalities and laying the groundwork for their future endeavors. The entire trajectory of a person's life often revolves around the education they receive during their secondary years. Proper attention and quality education at this stage can transform learners into constructive members of society, capable of leading the nation to great heights. Given the significance of secondary teachers and secondary education, it is essential for the government and society to provide them with the recognition, support, and resources they deserve. Investing in secondary education and teachers will ultimately foster a more prosperous and enlightened society. The literature highlights numerous factors that influence teachers' performance in the teaching-learning process.

These factors include aptitude, attitude, subject mastery, teaching methodology, personal characteristics, classroom environment, general mental ability, personality, relationships with students, preparation and planning, and effectiveness in presenting subject matter. Additionally, several challenges hinder teachers' performance, which in turn negatively impacts students' learning outcomes. Despite the high intellectual potential of many students, their academic results often remain poor due to the inadequate performance of teachers and unfavorable school environments. Acknowledging the vital role of teacher education in student success, the researcher explored the factors influencing primary school teachers' performance in providing quality primary education. Several factors affect the quality of teacher education in the country, including ideological and socioeconomic demands, the current structure of the education system, and the dominant theories and practices of teaching and learning. Additionally, population growth continues to drive the rapid expansion of education in the coming years. Addressing these factors is crucial to improving teacher education and achieving better educational outcomes. As a core component of the education system, teacher education programs have grown significantly and are expected to expand further to meet the country's evolving needs. However, it is imperative to prioritize the qualitative dimensions of teacher education while addressing the increasing demands on the system. The quality of teacher education is intrinsically tied to effective policy development, strategic planning, and the efficient design and management of teacher education programs.

Key aspects include providing adequate infrastructure for training institutions, offering both pre-service and continuous in-service education for teacher educators, and regularly enhancing curriculum content, teaching methods, evaluation techniques, instructional



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aids, and other teacher-related resources. Numerous challenges and concerns have been raised regarding teacher education in Pakistan. To improve the current situation, any strategy for the development of teacher education must carefully address these pressing issues and concerns. Literature highlights several significant issues and challenges in the field of teacher education. Teaching is often viewed as a profession of last resort for young men, leading to a lack of commitment and motivation among many teachers. This issue is more pronounced among male teachers compared to female teachers. Teacher training programs often lack balance between courses focused on academic knowledge of the subject and those on curricular activities. This imbalance is largely due to the short duration of most existing teacher education programs. The teacher appointment process frequently disregards merit, with political interference and other societal malpractices playing a significant role.

Teacher training institutions in Pakistan struggle with financial and budgetary limitations, leaving them unable to meet the requirements of a dynamic, quality-focused teacher education system. There is a lack of effective coordination between the demand and supply of teachers across all levels of education. Training programs are conducted without a cohesive policy and planning framework, resulting in discrepancies between teacher availability and demand. The quality of textbooks used in teacher education programs is poor, and the learning materials often fail to represent real-world educational contexts or inspire prospective teachers to pursue further studies. Additionally, there is no effective system for providing teachers with guides and supplementary materials. The process of appointing teachers to training institutions is inconsistent and unstandardized, allowing individuals from school or college cadres to be transferred without proper consideration of their qualifications for the role. Teacher training institutions face a significant shortage of essential resources, including adequate buildings, equipment, furniture, teaching aids, library books, and other reading materials. Furthermore, these institutions suffer from a lack of effective supervision. In-service training programs for teacher educators are almost non-existent, and there is no established system to provide regular training for teachers and teacher educators. Sporadic training opportunities, when available, are typically of low quality. The examination system is deeply flawed; being largely external, it suppresses students' creativity and leadership potential. Other significant issues in teacher education programs include teacher absenteeism, ineffective management, lack of supervision, and insufficient accountability practices. These challenges need to be addressed to enhance the quality of teacher education.

Problem Statement

The education system in Pakistan ranks as merely satisfactory in terms of quality teaching and learning on the global scale. Several factors contribute to this decline, with educators being one of the key issues. Teachers, as integral components of the teaching and learning process, face various challenges that hinder their ability to perform effectively in their roles. Despite ongoing discussions about the challenges faced by educators and their impact on learners' achievements, there is a lack of specific studies addressing this issue comprehensively. This review seeks to analyze the different challenges that affect educators' performance in delivering education at the secondary level. Additionally, it investigates the impact of educators' performance on the achievements of learners in secondary education.

Study Objectives



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The primary objectives of the study were:

- a) To find the challenges faced by educators at secondary education level.
- b) To examine the impact of teachers' performance on learners' Academic achievements.
- c) To propose measures to minimize the challenges and enhance students' Academic achievements.

Research Questions

1. What challenges affect teachers' performance in delivering effective learning?
2. What is the impact of educators' performance on students' academic achievements?

Methodology of the Study

This research employed a descriptive design and was conducted a survey approach and conducted achievement tests. Data collection tools included a Likert-scale to collect opinions and carried out students' achievement tests, as well as an analysis of school marks and results.

Sampling

The study targeted all government secondary schools, including educators and learners of both genders from urban and rural areas. However, due to time and resource constraints, a sample of 150 respondents, comprising both male and female educators and their respective learners, was selected. To control intervening variables, the educators included in the sample had a minimum qualification of B.A/B.Sc and B.Ed, along with at least five years of teaching experience. Students were selected based on their previous academic performance, belonging to average-income families, and being mentally and physically fit. The learners, all from Grade 9, were assessed in the subjects of Mathematics and Social Studies at the secondary level.

Research Instruments

Two tools were developed for this study:

- a) An opinionnaire addressing 16 different factors that influence the performance of teachers at the secondary education level.
- b) Learners' achievement tests and an analysis of their previous school marks to assess the impact of challenges on teachers' performance as reflected in students' achievements.

Validation of Tools

The opinionnaire and tests were reviewed by educationists and experts in the relevant field to ensure their validity in terms of content, language, format, and objectives. Revisions were made based on the experts' suggestions and recommendations. The revised questionnaire and tests were then pilot-tested with secondary-level teachers and students who were not part of the main study sample.

Data Analysis

The raw data were organized in alignment with the study's objectives and presented in tabular form. Quantitative analysis was conducted using statistical tools, specifically percentages. To assess the challenges impacting educators' performance, the percentage



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of responses for each factor in the opinionnaire was analyzed. Furthermore, achievement tests were designed and administered to students. Two groups of students were tested: the first group consisted of students taught by educators whose performance was significantly affected by various challenges (as identified in the surveys), while the second group included students taught by educators whose performance was less or not affected by these challenges. The percentage of marks scored by students in both groups was calculated and classified into various achievement grades. A comparative analysis was then performed to examine the grade distribution across the two groups. The following items in divisions of responses were used for challenges affecting the educators' performance, Strongly Agreed(SA), Agreed(A), Uncertain (UNC), Disagreed(DA), Strongly Disagreed(SD). Moreover, for calculating the grades / category of learners' achievements, the following grades / categories were calculated:

| Marks Obtained by the Learners | | Grade / Remarks / Categories |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Less than 33 % | = | Poor |
| 33 to less than 45 % | = | Average |
| | = | Good |
| 45 to less than 60 % | = | Very Good |
| 60 to less than 70 % | = | Excellent |
| 70 to less than 80 % | = | Outstanding |
| 80 % and above | | |

Findings of the Study.

Findings of the study from the analysis of data from Opinionnaire are as under:

PART-A: A Review of Challenges Faced by Educators

Personal Life-Related Challenges

A total of 28% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 37% agreed with the statement that personal life-related challenges significantly impact educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. However, 10% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent of this impact. Meanwhile, 16% disagreed, and 9% strongly disagreed with the assertion. These responses indicate a range of opinions among the participants, reflecting differing perspectives on how personal life challenges influence educators' effectiveness in their professional roles.

Accommodation-Related Challenges

With respect to accommodation-related challenges, 22% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 40% agreed that such challenges significantly affect educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. On the other hand, 12% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent of this impact, while 16% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings suggest that a considerable portion of the respondents recognize accommodation-related challenges as a factor influencing educators' effectiveness, while a smaller percentage either disagrees or remains uncertain about its effect.

Medical and Health-Related Challenges



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Regarding medical and health-related challenges, 25% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 35% agreed that such challenges have a significant impact on educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, 18% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent of this impact. In contrast, 14% disagreed, and 8% strongly disagreed with the statement. These results indicate that many of the respondents acknowledge medical and health-related challenges as influential factors affecting educators' effectiveness, although a portion of the respondents either remains uncertain or disagrees with this view.

Students' Irresponsibility-Related Challenges

Among the respondents, 25% strongly agreed, and 41% agreed that challenges associated with students' irresponsibility have a significant impact on educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. On the other hand, 11% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent of this effect, while 15% disagreed, and 8% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings highlight varying perceptions among the respondents regarding the influence of students' irresponsible behavior on the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities.

Transportation/Distance-Related Challenges

In relation to transportation and distance-related challenges, 29% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 33% agreed that these challenges have a significant impact on educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Conversely, 11% of the respondents were uncertain about the degree to which such challenges influence educators' effectiveness. Meanwhile, 15% disagreed, and 12% strongly disagreed with the statement. These results indicate that a majority of respondents recognize transportation and distance-related issues as factors that can hinder educators' performance. However, a portion of the respondents either remains uncertain or does not view these challenges as having a substantial impact.

Posting-Related Challenges

With respect to posting-related challenges, 25% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 35% agreed that such challenges significantly affect educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. On the other hand, 16% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent to which these challenges impact educators' effectiveness. Additionally, 16% of the respondents disagreed, and 8% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings highlight that while a majority perceives posting-related challenges as influential factors affecting educators' performance, a notable portion either remains uncertain or disagrees with this viewpoint.

Study Material/Content-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to study materials, 30% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 34% agreed that these challenges significantly impact educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, 14% of the respondents expressed uncertainty about the extent of this impact. In contrast, 11% disagreed, and another 11% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings suggest that a significant majority acknowledges study material-related challenges as a factor influencing educators' effectiveness. However, a smaller percentage of respondents either remain unsure or do not perceive these challenges as having a considerable effect on educators' performance.



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Politics-Involvement-Related Challenges

Regarding political involvement-related challenges, 23% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 41% agreed that such challenges significantly affect educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Conversely, 10% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent of this impact, while 15% disagreed, and 11% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings indicate that a substantial portion of the respondents acknowledges political involvement-related challenges as influential factors affecting educators' effectiveness. However, a notable percentage of respondents either remain unsure or do not perceive these challenges as having a significant impact on educators' performance.

Relations Among Teachers-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to relationships among teachers, 8% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 12% agreed that these challenges significantly impact educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. However, 15% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent of this impact. In contrast, a larger portion disagreed, with 30% expressing disagreement and 35% strongly disagreeing with the statement. These results suggest that while a small minority perceives teacher relationship challenges as influential, the majority either disagrees or strongly disagrees, indicating that these challenges may not be widely viewed as a significant factor affecting educators' performance.

Behavior of Head of Institutions-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to the behavior of the head of the institution, 14% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 11% agreed that such challenges have a significant impact on educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. However, 16% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent to which the behavior of the institution's head influences educators' effectiveness. In contrast, a larger portion disagreed, with 27% expressing disagreement and 32% strongly disagreeing with the statement. These findings suggest that while a minority of respondents view the behavior of the head of the institution as an important factor affecting educators' performance, the majority either disagrees or is uncertain about its significance.

Financial Crisis-Related Challenges

Regarding financial challenges, 25% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 36% agreed that financial difficulties significantly affect educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, 14% of the respondents expressed uncertainty about the impact of financial challenges on educators' effectiveness. In contrast, 15% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed with the statement. These results suggest that most respondents acknowledge the influence of financial challenges on educators' performance. However, a smaller proportion either remains uncertain or disagrees with this perspective, indicating that financial challenges may not be universally perceived as a critical factor affecting teaching and learning.

Examination Irregularities-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to examination irregularities, 8% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 14% agreed that such irregularities significantly impact educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. However, a larger proportion, 19%,



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were uncertain about the extent to which examination irregularities affect educators' effectiveness. In contrast, 22% of the respondents disagreed, and 37% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings indicate that while a small minority perceives examination irregularities as a factor influencing educators' performance, the majority either disagrees or remains uncertain about their impact. This suggests that examination-related challenges may not be widely regarded as a significant issue affecting teaching and learning.

Teachers' Training & Lack of Refresher Courses-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to teacher training and the lack of refresher courses, 27% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 35% agreed that these challenges significantly impact educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Additionally, 14% of the respondents were uncertain about the extent to which these challenges influence educators' effectiveness. In contrast, 15% disagreed, and 9% strongly disagreed with the statement. These results suggest that a majority of respondents recognize the importance of teacher training and refresher courses in influencing educators' performance. However, a smaller proportion either remains uncertain or disagrees, indicating that not everyone perceives these factors as critical to teaching and learning outcomes.

Frequent Syllabus Changes-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to frequent syllabus changes, 26% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 38% agreed that these changes significantly affect educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. In contrast, 14% of the respondents were uncertain about the impact of such changes on educators' effectiveness. On the other hand, 11% disagreed, and another 11% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings suggest that a substantial portion of respondents recognizes the challenges posed by frequent syllabus changes in affecting educators' performance. However, a smaller percentage either remains uncertain or disagrees, indicating that not all educators view syllabus changes as a major factor influencing their ability to teach effectively.

Classroom/School Environment-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to the classroom or school environment, 24% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 32% agreed that such challenges have a significant impact on educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. Meanwhile, 19% of the respondents expressed uncertainty about the extent to which the classroom or school environment affects educators' effectiveness. In contrast, 15% disagreed, and 10% strongly disagreed with the statement. These results suggest that most respondents acknowledge the influence of the classroom or school environment on educators' performance. However, a notable portion remains uncertain or disagrees, indicating that the impact of the environment on teaching and learning may not be universally perceived as a critical factor.

Overload on Teachers-Related Challenges

Regarding challenges related to the overload on teachers, 32% of the respondents strongly agreed, and 34% agreed that such overload significantly affects educators' performance in the teaching and learning process. This indicates that a substantial portion of respondents recognizes the negative impact of excessive workload on teachers' effectiveness. On the other hand, 11% of the respondents were uncertain



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about the extent to which overload affects educators, while 11% disagreed, and 12% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings suggest that while a majority acknowledges the challenges posed by teacher overload, a smaller proportion either remains uncertain or does not perceive it as a major factor influencing teaching and learning outcomes.

PART B Educators Performance and Learners' Academic Achievements

The findings in Part B indicate that students whose educators encountered fewer challenges performed better than those whose teachers faced more challenges during the teaching and learning process. A comparison of the achievement levels between the two groups of students revealed significant differences in the distribution of performance across various categories. In the group where educators faced fewer challenges, 6.7% of the students were categorized as "Poor," while 22.7% of students in the group with more challenges fell into the same category. In the "Average" category, 58.25% of students in the group with fewer challenges performed at this level, compared to 52.8% in the group with more challenges. For the "Good" category, 11.8% of students from the group with fewer challenges achieved this performance level, while 12.5% of students from the other group did so. Regarding the "Very Good" category, 14.4% of students with fewer challenges performed at this level, while only 8.9% of students from the group with more challenges reached this category. In the "Excellent" category, 4.15% of students in the group with fewer challenges achieved this status, compared to just 1.2% in the other group. Finally, for the "Outstanding" category, 1.6% of students with fewer challenges were classified as outstanding, whereas only 0.6% of students from the other group reached this level. These findings suggest that the challenges faced by educators directly influence their students' performance, with those in less challenging teaching environments generally achieving higher levels of success across all categories.

Conclusions

The majority of educators agreed or strongly agreed that various challenges, such as personal life-related challenges, accommodation-related challenges, medical/health-related challenges, students' irresponsibility-related challenges, transportation/distance-related challenges, frequent posting-related challenges, study material/contents-related challenges, political-related challenges, financial crises-related challenges, teacher training and lack of refresher courses, frequent syllabus changes, and inadequate coaching courses, classroom/school environment-related challenges, and overload/workload on teachers, all significantly affect educators' performance. Most teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed with the challenges related to relations among educators, behavior of heads of institutions, and examination irregularities, believing these challenges do not have a significant impact on teachers' performance. In terms of the impact of challenges on learners' achievements, the group of students whose educators' performance was greatly affected by various challenges achieved lower marks and grades compared to the group of students whose educators' performance was either not affected or less affected by such challenges during the teaching and learning process.

Recommendations

The government should enhance teachers' salaries and benefits to alleviate financial difficulties that may impact their teaching performance. Teachers should receive the same level of respect and support as their counterparts in developed countries. Priority



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should be given to providing medical and health facilities for teachers. Additionally, efforts should be made to improve the physical conditions of schools to create a more attractive environment for both students and teachers. Recreational facilities, such as play equipment, should be provided to enhance the appeal of schools. Special attention should be given to improving schools in rural and underdeveloped areas. Teachers should be allowed to work in an environment free from political interference, irrespective of their background or beliefs. Teacher training programs should incorporate a continuous self-assessment mechanism to ensure that the training aligns with the evolving needs of students and the community. Schools should also implement initiatives to involve parents more actively in their children's education, helping bridge the gap between home and school. In conclusion, the government must prioritize the enhancement and revitalization of the teaching profession. Both the government and the public should follow the example of developed countries by valuing, acknowledging, and rewarding teachers accordingly.

Future Research

This study focused on the challenges faced by government schoolteachers at the secondary level in the Rawalpindi region of Punjab province. Future research could expand to include other provinces and regions of Pakistan, as well as encompass elementary and higher education levels. Such research would contribute to ensuring higher standards of education across different levels and lead to improved learner outcomes. It would also provide a deeper understanding of the issues within Pakistan's education system. Further investigations in these areas would be valuable for policymakers, education researchers, universities, and schools.

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