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The Changing Perspective of Teaching as a Profession

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Abstract

The study aims to determine the changing perspective of teaching as a profession in the Philippine Context. To determine the changing perspective of teaching as a profession, the study employed a qualitative method utilizing 52 participants. The data were gathered using the open-ended questionnaire and focus group discussion protocols. Thematic analysis was used by the researchers to determine themes for the responses of the participants. Findings show that the majority of the teachers and retired teachers dreamed of becoming a teacher. They regarded teaching as a low-status profession before. However, today, they said that teaching can equally compare to other professions. Salaries and benefits are better than before. The community regarded it as the noble and dignified profession in the world. Furthermore, findings indicate that teaching is a female dominated profession. Along with this line, the study concludes that there is a notable change in the perceptions of teaching before and today. Teaching is more attractive today than before.

Keywords: Changing, Perspective, Teaching, Profession

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Introduction

According to Donaldson (2010), the forces which are shaping twenty-first-century economies and societies also pose significant and sustained challenges for school education. Technological advances are not only invading industries but schools as well. Likewise, it changes the nature of both work and leisure and contributing to societal shifts already affected by migration and demographic change. The skills required of the twenty-first-century workforce are changing and increasingly associated with the creative use of technology. Far from being immune to such forces, education lies at the heart of any response to this challenging context. Twenty-first-century teachers must help to equip future generations to thrive in an environment of fast, continuous and fundamental change and must themselves capitalize on the potentially far-reaching implications for teaching and learning.

Obemeate (1999) then again said that no country can develop past the nature of its training (instructors) and a country can just grow definitively and achieve demonstrable skill through a virile educating calling. Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO once stated: "instructors are the absolute most compelling and intense power for value, access, and quality in training". In this way, it is auspicious and appropriate to recognize the showing calling here and abroad.

The Teaching Profession in the World

Teachers and education in Singapore are valued regardless of socio-economic backgrounds (Nisbet, 2013). They are exceptionally respected yet are not held in indistinguishable regard from specialists and attorneys as they are in Finland. This is principally in light of the fact that Singapore has other alluring alternatives for capable youngsters –, for example, a flourishing universal money related area. A noteworthy strategy in Singapore which draws in individuals to the calling is that learner instructors are paid amid their Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

In Germany, the problems facing teaching are the same everywhere in the world: there are too few men in teaching; there is a perception that people who do not know what they want to do with their lives become teachers; primary school teachers don't have enough specialist subject knowledge; rural areas struggle to attract teachers. And like in New Zealand, remuneration in Germany "is related to a very limited number of aspects – in essence, qualification, age and years of experience" (Santiago, 2004).

In Finland, specific policy interventions have raised the quality of the teaching profession. The status of teachers as a cultural characteristic that cannot be altered by policy and therefore as not replicable is still in practice. But among the top performers, the status of teachers on closer examination appears to the implementation of specific policies and practices that are quite replicable (Center on International Education Benchmarking, 2013).

Moreover, there is a discernment in the West that instructing is a simple vocation in Finland – a 'pleasant' profession with enthusiastic youngsters prepared to learn. Moreover, educating is an alluring vocation decision and a very respected calling in Finland. Most (90%) prepared educators remain in the calling their entire working life (Center on International Education Benchmarking, 2013).

However, in England, research shows that teachers go into the profession out of commitment and the desire to make a change, but leave because of a lack of recognition. As Gove says: Having their pay increased is important not so they can buy a bigger Chevrolet but because it is a way of conferring recognition (Gove, 2013).

As of not long ago, England confronted indistinguishable issue from New Zealand, in that fantastic educators were not perceived by pay and instructors moved consequently up the compensation scale each year. The Upper Pay Scale (UPS) in England was initially intended to compensate magnificent execution, however, most instructors proceeded into the UPS with time served.

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Like the majority of the nations, females involve a higher extent of showing staff than males. At elementary schools, the sex isolate is more noteworthy. Just 19% of grade teachers are male, contrasted and 42% at auxiliary school. Be that as it may, women keep on being underrepresented in positions of authority. In the essential division, for instance, just 57% of school pioneers are female, and in the auxiliary segment, 61% of school pioneers are male.

Then again, educating isn't a calling of decision for the most capable Australian scholarly alumni or higher auxiliary school understudies. The normal scholarly level of those examining and entering showing tumbled from the 70th to the 59th percentile of scholastic accomplishment somewhere in the range of 1983 and 2008, which is "a significant decrease in the scholarly inclination of the ordinary instructor" (Dinham, 2013). While scholarly capacity does not ensure extraordinary instructing, the McKinsey research of 2007 expressed that the best performing educational systems pulled in learner instructors from the best third of the graduating class, while inadequately performing frameworks chose educators from the base third of graduating secondary school understudies. There is a general agreement that the initial phase in enhanced results in training is to pull in the best individuals into educating. In Australia, plainly the nature of ability picking instructing as a vocation is in soak decay, and the nation isn't delivering graduate educators that address the training framework's issues.

In Europe, the need to draw in more fittingly qualified staff into the teaching profession is a developing need. All European nations or areas report that they have found a way to enable them to figure the possible future supply of educators and interest for them. Twelve nations have executed or are at present actualizing advancement crusades to improve the picture of the showing calling and pull in newcomers into educator preparing, and in addition, recently qualified instructors into the calling.

Occupation fulfillment and teacher perceptions of the esteem that society joins to the training calls are great intermediaries for surveying its engaging quality for the individuals who are its experts. When all is said in done, educators are fulfilled or exceptionally happy with their calling yet consider that society does not esteem it.

In parts of the Asia Pacific locale, there are dire calls to change teacher training and plan programs for the administrations to position their countries to contend in the worldwide economy (Niu, 2009). Moreover, in numerous different nations, occasions throughout the years have demonstrated that the status and view of educators towards the instructing calling have crashed (Hall and Langton, 2006; Hargreaves et al, 2007; Hoyle, 2001). This low status and impression of teachers and the training calling could be credited to the way that the social sources of educators and the earth of teaching and learning are genuinely ruined (Kottler and Stanley, 2000).

On the other hand, Filipinos have a profound respect for education, which they see as an essential road for upward social and financial versatility. In this regard, teachers have a potent role in mobilizing this claim. This statement implies that quality education cannot be attained without the value of the teachers. How the countries of the world value education are synonymous of how teachers are valued. Thus, Filipinos are educated formally in the hand of the loving and dedicated teachers of the land. It is a must therefore that we should pay tribute to the teaching profession.

Salandanan (2005) further stressed that teaching is a profession with a long and cherished tradition. It is universally acknowledged as a highly-esteemed career. Its lifelong mission consists of relentless pursuit of knowledge, development of skills and proficiency in work dimensions and inculcation of values and attitudes of all practitioners. It is embraced by a characteristic culture of committed service.

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However, teaching was not as attractive as any other professions in the Philippines in the early years. Teaching was regarded as a low-status profession and a profession only for poor and average students in the class. In other words, teaching before had seemingly lost its prestige to attract students and even parents of bright students to pursue such a career. These scenarios motivated the researchers to conduct a research on the changing perspective of teaching as a profession in the Philippine context.

Purpose of the Study

This research investigated the changing perspective of teaching as a profession in the Philippine context. Furthermore, this study sought to determine the trends in the reforms of the teaching profession in terms of social, economic status, and the claim that teaching is a female-dominated profession.

Methodology

Design

This study employed a qualitative research method using open-ended questionnaire and focus group discussion (FGD) as techniques for data collection. The FGD technique was used as it has qualities that are like unconstrained and casual exchanges that occur in regular daily existence which enable the researcher to comprehend the changing point of view of instructing as a calling. Then again, an open finished survey was utilized to approve responses from the FGD.

Participants

The participants of the study were 21 public elementary and secondary teachers, 18 retired teachers and 13 other professionals. Public elementary and secondary teachers were randomly selected from the different cities and municipalities of the northern and southern part of Negros Occidental. Retired teachers and other professionals, on the other hand, were determined using snowball sampling. In this type of sampling, each research participant is asked to identify other potential research participants who have certain characteristics as required in this research.

Data Collection

To gather information from the participants, the following were undertaken by the researcher:

1. Development of an open-ended questionnaire and an interview guide for the proposed FGD.
2. Cross-examination of the open-ended questionnaire and interview guides by experts in the field. This is to check whether or not questions in the interview and FGD are aligned to the purpose of the study. After which interview guide and items for FGD was prepared.
3. Selection of the participants. In selecting teachers as participants of the study, teachers who are enrolled in the graduate school summer class were utilized by the researchers since they represent the different municipalities and cities in the northern and southern part of Negros Occidental. They were randomly selected from the enrolled graduate school students. Thus, 21 of them were selected. However, to determine retired teachers and other professionals as participants of the study, snowball sampling was used.
4. In the conduct of the FGD, the researchers asked the professors of the graduate school and the participants themselves regarding their vacant time for the researchers to conduct the FGD so that information pertaining to the study will be determined.
5. The conduct of FGD. In the conduct of FGD, the researchers conducted three separate focus group discussions. One group was from the group of teachers while the two groups were from the group of retired teachers and other professionals. Thus, 10 participants from each group were considered by the researcher.

6. Data processing. Data processing includes recording data and preparing memos, establishing codes through memos, organizing data into similar categories, and summarizing the main themes for presentation, analysis, and interpretation.

Analysis

Thematic analysis was utilized in this study. According to Braum and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a qualitative method used for 'identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. In this study, inductive thematic analysis proposed by Boyatzis (1998) was utilized by the researchers. The initial stage is coding. The coding procedure starts with reducing the raw information by written outlines of each unit of text. The text units are 'chunks' of information expressed by the participants in an open-ended questionnaire and FGD, which was interpreted in terms of what the participants explicitly or implicitly is saying or responding. The next stage is the process of identifying themes. In this study, themes were identified in each of the issues presented such (a) the likelihood to become a teacher; (b) teaching in terms of social status, economic status; and (c) teaching as a female-dominated profession then and now.

The result of the thematic analysis was presented in the results section.

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

The respondents of the study consisted of three groups. These are the 21 elementary and secondary teachers, 18 retired teachers, and 13 other professionals. Other professionals consisted of nurses, engineers, social workers, and chemists.

1. Teacher's Desire to Teach

Dream of Becoming a Teacher

Teachers frequently mentioned that they have dreams of becoming a teacher. Majority of them have said that it is really their aspiration and dream to become a teacher. One said that *"I have desires of this profession because I want to impart knowledge to the students"*. This statement is supported by Watt et al. (2012) when they said that teacher's dream of becoming a teacher is their motivation for working with the children and adolescents and making a difference in their lives. Thus, becoming a teacher implies love and passion for teaching. Alrubail (2015) once ask *"what does it mean to be a great teacher? Of course credentials, knowledge, critical thinking, and all other faculties of intelligence are important. However, a great teacher should be much more than credentials, experience, and intelligence. This statement is very clear that teaching as a profession is not all about credentials, knowledge, and intelligence. It is more than anything else, a complete package of credentials, knowledge, intelligence and a passion for teaching."*

Status of the Family

Although a majority of them desire to be a teacher; however, some teachers do not dream of it. As quoted by one participant *"I became a teacher because during those times my parents have experienced financial difficulties that led me to enroll in teaching. Teaching is the only profession my parents can afford to"*. Another participant said, *"I have no choice but to enroll at Philippine Normal College because my parents cannot afford to send me to other schools due to financial concerns"*. Another reason provided by one participant is that *"My parent is only farm workers and their earnings are not sufficient enough to pay for my tuition fees in other schools, thus, I have no other choice but to enroll in a teaching course"*.

It can be gleaned from the responses of the participants that family status in relation to financial aspects determines the preference of the students on the profession they ought to be in the future. Ackaert and Verhaeghe (2000) in a study conclude that three financial factors - the direct and indirect study costs of higher education and the income of the parents - still have a significant influence on higher education participation. Likewise, Ahmed, Sharif, and Ahmad

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(2017) expressed that the career choice of the students is also influenced by the level of their social class, financial resources, affordability and future employability.

Loving Teaching as a Profession

Although it was not really their dream of becoming a teacher, however, according to them they learn to love the profession. One participant said, *“It is a warm feeling that students learn something from me”*. Another has said that *“I am very happy seeing pupils learn during my class. It inspires me to do more, to impart more knowledge so that they will leave the school with contentment and happiness in their heart”*. In a testimony of an American teacher, she speaks *“for the many for whom the intrinsic rewards come at a high personal cost. Yet, however, small the satisfiers’, making a difference in the lives of children is the repayment for the frustration and disappointment which, for many teachers, is encountered on a daily basis”*. This statement proves that teaching is not all money, but teaching is a profession that provides contentment and happiness to the teacher.

These responses of the participants can be deduced from the fact that there are students who entered the teaching profession not actually their career choice. Maybe they are influenced by factors like family, finance, etc. However, there is still a fact that a profession can be learned and love. Their responses show that they learn to love teaching as a profession. In the article "Professional Development: How to Love Being a Teacher" Cox explained that there are many reasons to love being a teacher. Oftentimes it's hard to remember when you are burned out, but it's also easy to remind yourself of why you chose a teaching career. She added that teaching is one of those professions that keeps you on your toes and keeps you young at heart. It allows you to use your brain and continue learning each day, sometimes. Indeed teaching is a profession that needs to be loved. Aside from the level of satisfaction, it brings to every teacher, the fact still remains that molding young minds and looking children grow in the classroom is one of the most valuable things teachers owned in this universe.

2. View of Teaching as a Profession in Terms of Social Status

Teaching is not only for the Poor

Participants disagree that teaching profession during the 1990's and today is only for the poor. According to them, teaching is for all. One participant quoted that *“Anybody can be a teacher regardless of one's economic status”*. They also added that teachers today are well-paid and the security of tenure is stable. This is quite true because the salaries of other professionals are low compared to the teachers here in the Philippines. Nurses, for instance, working here in the Philippines receive only around 8,000 pesos a month. Thus, many other professionals nowadays are enrolled as Certificate for Teacher Program (CTP) students because they are attracted to what the Philippine government has to offer about the teaching profession. This means that the Philippine government is doing its best to elevate the status of teaching as a profession. The increase of 50% in the salary of teachers distributed in five trances (yearly basis) is proof that the government believes in the professionalism of every teacher in the country.

Teaching is a Commitment

One teacher commented that *“Teaching is a commitment”*. Another has responded that *“I came from a well-off family; however, I love children, so my parent decided to enroll me in teaching”*. They also added that since then, teaching as a profession was being admired and ambioned not only by the poor but also by the well-off families in the society. Furthermore, they said that a lot of students from all walks of life wanted to enroll in education courses. One said that *“There are bright children of wealthy families who are attracted to the teaching profession because they are committed to impart knowledge to the learners”*.

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These responses from the three groups of participants clearly show that once a teacher you need to have dedication and commitment believing that imparting knowledge, love, and values to the school children will bring them far as they unravel the complexities of life. As cited by Manalac (2016) “Give a man a fish, feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish; feed him for a lifetime.” This ideology portrays education and teaching a lifelong commitment. Cox added that the teaching profession requires commitment. An effective educator needs to be committed not only to their students but to the teaching profession as a whole. This means abiding by the rules and regulations, embracing the principles of the teaching profession, as well as the requirements. She added that committed teachers are not only committed to their students and their school but are also lifelong learners who are committed to the teaching profession.

The Noblest Profession

As regarded by the members of the community, teaching as a profession before and even today is noble, dignified, responsible and well-respected. They consider teachers as molders of young minds and models of society. One participant quoted that *“teachers are well-respected because of their vital role in nation building”*. The community view teaching as one of the most important professions in the world. Another participant expressed that *“I entered this profession because I know teaching is the noblest of all professions for no one can be a nurse, engineer, doctor etc. without the effort of the teacher”*.

It is indeed a claim that teaching is the noblest profession. No one can be other professionals without the tutelage of the teacher. Doctors, lawyers, engineers, and many other professionals are all products of teachers and their teaching profession. No one can dare to question that. As cited by Dave (2013) “A teacher is never an ordinary person. Construction and destruction can be produced in his lap.” The above-given quotation shows the power of teachers and teaching. Teaching is a very important activity on which the base of any nation and culture is established.

Dave added that teaching is the noblest among all the professions since all professionals underwent education with a teacher. It's also a process to prepare the next generation of skilled professionals and workers like a politician, engineers, doctors, policemen, priests, educators, legislators, and good citizens. Teaching, therefore, is considered as a means for which God uses a teacher as an instrument to touch lives.

Furthermore, Aristotle rightly said, “Those who educate the children are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well.” So teaching is a profession that provides an art of living. It is not only a duty but a moral duty. It is not a profession but a noble service to the world to create a more beautiful and peaceful world.

Communities Regard to Teaching

According to the retired teachers, teachers were respected and well regarded by the members of the community. The community believes that they have vital roles in the progress of one's country. Likewise, the community trusted teachers; they considered them as credible people and leaders in the community. In this regard, the majority of other professionals observed that teaching is a well-respected and noble profession. A nurse said that *“Everybody in the community looked-up to teaching as one of the best professions because teachers are well-mannered, molder of young minds, and service-oriented”*. Their responses reflected that they are the product of teachers. An engineer also said that *“There are no other professionals without teachers”*.

Responses of other professionals on the status of teaching as a profession are commendable. They always believed that no matter how far they have gone to their profession, they always believe that at the back of their minds are their teachers during their preschool years, elementary, high school and college life. They regarded their teachers as the second parent. They believe in their capacity and patients in imparting knowledge to them. How they value and

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love their teachers is reflective of the fact that without their teachers they are not nurses, engineers, etc.

Finally, a 2013 study by the Varkey Foundation looked at the social status of teachers and found that there was great respect for teachers in many Asian societies -- especially in China, South Korea, and Singapore. On the other hand, the Global Teacher Status Index found that of the 21 countries surveyed, on average, teachers ranked 7th in a poll on 14 respected professions, just above social workers and librarians. China was the only country where teachers were considered as highly skilled as doctors.

Professor Peter Dolton, the author of the Global Teacher Status Index which compared attitudes to teachers in 21 countries, said that teacher status measures differently "based on the history and values and mores of a particular culture". For example, he cites New York City, where society is focused on financial earnings, status correlates to how much a teacher is earning. Whereas in China, where cultural norms are to respect your elders, teachers are given higher status despite the lack of a high salary.

Countries with a higher respect for teachers are more likely to encourage their child to enter the profession, the report states. China, South Korea, Turkey, and Egypt are most likely to give encouragement to children to become teachers.

3. View of Teaching as a Profession in Terms of the Economic Status

Teaching is not Well Paid

Participants responded that teaching before is not well-paid. However, they agree that teachers in the Philippines nowadays are well-paid. However, there are still who claim that their salary is not enough for the services they have rendered. But somehow, they said, "it is better than before". One participant said that "*aside from the salary that we receive we also have benefits which really help us in our expenses*". Another participant expressed by saying that "*with the salary, I receive as a master teacher, I think this is already enough for our daily needs*".

In such manner, Hall and Langton (2016) in their discourse said that while choosing a profession, individuals distinguished the pleasure that they would experience, and the compensation that they would get as the two most essential factors. Basically, the vast majority are searching for a vocation that they appreciate and are generously compensated.

Furthermore, qualified teachers who are certified will find a variety of salaries, benefits, and opportunities available to them. Teacher salaries and benefits vary by location and school, but in general, many of the benefits are comparable (<https://teach.com>). However, between 1986 and 1994, a group of researchers working under the auspices of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) cited reasons people give for choosing a career in teaching. Among the reasons cited, job security was the least which means that during the early decades, salaries of teachers is not compensatory of their tasks. But as cited by Arends, Winitzky, and Tannenbaum (2001) many individuals choose a teaching career because of its unique mixture of benefits. They added that teacher salaries, although not immense, have risen to respectable levels over the past three decades. This is also true in the Philippines where teaching before are paid less than any other profession, but nowadays teaching in the Philippines is more attractive than any other profession in the country.

4. View of Teaching as a Profession in Terms of the Claim that Teaching is a Female-Dominated Profession

Teaching is for the Females

Majority of the teachers retired teachers, and other professionals responded that teaching as a profession before and even up to this day is female-dominated. They said that teaching is a female-dominated profession because females are more patience and understanding than male

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teachers. Furthermore, they reasoned that teaching needs patience and perseverance. One male retired teacher said, *“I am not resourceful and artistic compared to females”*. Another reason cited by one teacher is that *“I see to it that my classroom is attractive to the learners, thus, I am doing my best that my classroom is conducive for learning”*. These responses from the female teachers might be some reasons why males are less attractive to the teaching profession

On the other hand, Arends, Winitzky, and Tannenbaum (2001) contend that the demographic profile of teachers has changed dramatically over the course of several nations history. In Colonial times, teaching attracted mostly young men who worked as tutors and kept school a few weeks each year. They also describe that in the United States, the majority of teachers are women. However, according to them, the trend has changed somewhat, but still, the majority of teachers are women. They also added that data from the United States shows that only a small percentage of males are attracted to the teaching profession, but as times goes by a large percentage of males are already attracted to the teaching profession. This scenario is also true in the Philippines especially at Philippine Normal University Visayas as a teacher training institution, year by year an increase in the number of males entering the teaching profession is noticeable. This scenario is a good indication that males are already attracted to the teaching profession.

Males in the Teaching Profession

However, a large percentage of males nowadays entered into the teaching profession. One male participant said *“I decided to become a teacher because teaching nowadays is a stable job. Being in the government is a lifetime security”*. Another participant quoted that *“Many young men are already attracted to teaching because of what we call a change of perspective”*. They believe that teaching is not just for women. Men can also teach.

However, according to them, females dominate the teaching profession because females are more passionate about teaching. Men believed that teaching is more typical for females. They also agree that females were more diligent, caring and patient. But they noted that nowadays males are starting to engross in themselves the art of teaching. They are more receptive to the needs of their students as compared to what they are doing before. In fact, there are more male teachers who are active participants in any seminars and training regarding classroom management, teaching strategies, and methodologies. This paradigm shift of male teachers' perceptions and participation in teaching is an act among teachers worth emulating.

Conclusion

Majority of teachers' and retired teachers' dream of becoming a teacher. It is really their dream and aspiration of becoming a teacher. Working with children and making a difference in their lives is a pleasure for them. Thus, their dream of becoming a teacher implies love and passion for teaching which will influence students' academic success.

However, there are some which are influenced only by factors such as financial. Their parents cannot afford to send them to private schools for other courses because their parents are only farm workers and the income is not enough to pay for tuition fees. Despite all these, they learn to love the profession. Seeing pupils learn during classes inspires and motivates teachers to impart knowledge.

Considering teaching as a profession in terms of the social status, the majority of teachers and retired teachers disagree that teaching profession today is for the poor. Majority of them stressed that teachers today are well paid. Besides according to the majority, teaching is a commitment.

On the other hand, members of the community regarded teaching before and today as the noblest profession. Teachers are dignified, responsible, molders of young minds, and models of the society. They are well-respected because of their vital role in nation building. The community believes that they have vital roles in the progress of one's country.

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In terms of the economic status, teaching profession before according to teachers, retired teachers, and other professionals are not well paid, but nowadays, the majority of them agreed that teachers received a better salary than before. The benefits today are better than the benefits before.

In terms of the claim that teaching is a female-dominated profession, participants agree that teaching as a profession before and even up to this day is female-dominated. However, an increase in the participation of males in the teaching profession was observed.

This research clearly shows that changes have taken place in regard for teaching as a profession. One of the most significant changes that happened was on the monetary aspects of teaching. Salaries and benefits of being a teacher today is more attractive than before. The government is allocating a large amount of budget to education whereby salaries and benefits of the teachers are included. Although, teaching is female-dominated even up to this day, however, it was noted that there is a noticeable increase in males who are already attracted to the teaching profession.

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