Chapter – 6

Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

Education is considered to have the potential to maintain a social order that is considered desirable in the modern civilised societies through its individual and societal functions. Therefore qualitative, egalitarian and universal educational system at different levels (school, college and university) holds the key to have a dream of that social order in the society. Education, a social institution, has its impact on various social institutions like stratification, polity, economy and religion and is constantly affected by them. Social change, one of the societal functions of education, is the large scale change in the value system of the society. Sometimes undesirable or mundane values take preference over desirable or essential values of human living, in the course of time and space, especially among those, who are made responsible by the society to transmit desirable values across generations, like teachers.

Numerous studies like Chand and Mishra (2004); NUEPA (2005-06); IIM-A (2006); Ghuman (2006); PRATHAM ASER (rural) (2006); UNESCO’s IIIEP (2007); Punjab Education Development (amendment) Bill (2007); Public Interest Litigation (2007); People Forum (2008); Sen (2008) and Survey Report (2008) have highlighted the
plight of school education and, a deviation from basic and desirable professional values among school teachers.

What would be the situation if the deviation from the desirable professional values is among the school teachers, the founder professionals of the entire educational system?

In the light of these observations, the present study was planned to investigate the prevalence of various types of unprofessional practices.

The aims and objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the role of socio-economic and demographic profile of school teachers in the prevalence of unprofessional practices.
2. To examine the role of the type of the institution in the prevalence of unprofessional practices in school teachers.
3. To learn the status-role of the administrator (officials in the upper hierarchy or management) in the prevalence of unprofessional practices among school teachers.
4. To understand the status-role of students in the prevalence of unprofessional practices among the school teachers.
5. To investigate the status-role of the parents in the prevalence of unprofessional practices among school teachers.
6. To explore the importance of the role of the community (members of parent-teacher association and village educational development committee) in the school system in containing the prevalence of unprofessional practices in school teachers.
7. The primary objectives of this study were to examine the prevalence of unprofessional practices among the school teachers. Six unprofessional practices investigated are:
**Absenteeism:** People are not going to work or school when they should be going. Teachers are away from school during their duty hours. Those who have equation with the principal are adjusted with non-teaching duties out of the school. Others take the advantage of higher bureaucratic and political connections in abstaining from school. Kin of the members of the management in private schools, working as teachers in the school, misuse their connections in abstaining from school.

**Dereliction of Duty:** Dereliction of duty is the failure on the part of the people to do something that they have to do because it is the part of their job. While in the school, teachers do not teach during their teaching hours. Other leisure activities like gossiping, sitting idle in the classroom or in school canteen etc. take priority over teaching.

**Lack of Responsibility:** People do not have a sense of being accountable for the work or job that is necessary or wanted. School teachers are supposed to possess the knowledge and desired skill to impart that knowledge to the students. Besides transmission of knowledge, they are expected to reconstitute personalities and create productive, moral and responsible social beings. On the contrary, they lack the required zeal and commitment to do this.

**Discrimination:** To treat a person or a group of people differently on the basis of their skin colour, caste, class, race, religion, sex etc. A sense of universalism is lacking in the teachers. Personal whims do play a role while doing one’s duties. Students are not treated without the distinction of caste, class and creed.

**Authoritarianism:** A manner in which total acquiescence is demanded and there is no freedom for the people to act as they wish. Total obedience is expected from the students and there is no space for empathetic understanding of their feelings.

**Commercial Venality:** Commercial venality is a corrupt practice that is connected with, profit, and not quality or morality. Public funding funds the professional knowledge
and skill acquired by the teachers. This knowledge should be used for the welfare of the society and students, but on the contrary it is used for individual welfare and self-development of the teachers through private tutoring.

6.2 Method of Research

In the present study an attempt has been made to learn the deviation from the desirable values called the unprofessional practices among the school teachers followed by the reasons and remedies for each unprofessional practice. The universe of the study was Roopnagar district school teachers. Three hundred and eighty five teachers were included in the sample and 195 teachers were from public schools and 190 were from private schools. Further, 177 male and 208 female teachers were interviewed. Rural and urban differences in the prevalence of UPPs were analysed by interviewing two hundred teachers from rural schools and 185 from urban schools. Case studies were conducted with the other respondents like students, administrators or members of school management, and parents to supplement the findings.

6.3 Major Findings of the Study

Major findings of the study were presented in the preceding chapters. Chapter second presents socio-economic profile of the teachers in the light of the variables like age, marital status, religion, caste, educational attainment, place of origin and rearing, educational level of the previous generation, occupational mobility, family income at the time of joining teaching profession, type and size of the family, family income, occupational preference, age at which first thought of becoming a school teacher came in mind, career decision makers, and length of service. In the third chapter prevalence of six UPPs viz. absenteeism, dereliction of duty, lack of responsibility, discrimination, authoritarianism and commercial venality, were lineated against the type of the institution, sex and place of posting. Fourth chapter was an endeavour to see the relationship between six UPPs and socio-economic factors like age, marital status, religion, caste, designation, place of nurturing, education of the father, occupation of the
father, income of the family while joining teaching profession, age at which first thought of becoming a school teacher came in mind, career decision makers, and length of service among the teachers. An attempt was made to ascertain the reasons and corrective measures for six UPPs in chapter five. The reasons and remedies for six UPP were studied according to the type of school, gender and place of posting. The summary and conclusions of these chapters are presented in the following paragraphs.

6.3.1 Socio-economic Profile of the Teachers

A vast majority of the teachers were young. Private school teachers were younger than their public school counterparts. Male and female teachers were almost of the same average age but average age of urban school teachers was more than the rural school teachers. More than two-third of the teachers were married. Among the married more than three-fourth were public school teachers. The sample had equal dominance of teachers belonging to both Hindu and Sikhs religions. Other religions were marginally represented in the sample. More than three-fourth of the teachers were from General Castes. Schedule Caste teachers outnumbered the Other Backward Castes.

A little more than three-fifth of the teachers were Post Graduates. Among the Post Graduates, urban male teachers teaching in public schools were more than their counterparts. A great majority of the teachers were brought up in an urban environment. Female teachers outnumbered in urban schools as compared to rural schools. A great deal of inter-generational mobility could be seen from the time of father to the present incumbent. Private school teachers were numerically in preponderant position in inter-generational mobility. Nearly three-fifth of the teachers were living in nuclear families. Average size of the family was $1.98 \pm 0.62$. Minor variations were noticed in type and size of the family in terms of type of the school, gender and place of posting. Average income of the family was Rs. 30528.2 per month.

Public school teachers held sway over their private school counterparts in terms of family income. Female teachers and those posted in urban schools were in sound
financial position than their counterparts. While revealing their ambition in life, three-fifth of the teachers wanted to become school teachers. Female and private school teachers were numerically in preponderant position. Nearly four-fifth of the teachers recalled the first thought to become a school teacher at realistic stage. Two-fifth of the teachers decided themselves to become school teachers and other one-third revealed that their parents took the decision for them. Influence of parents was more on female teachers in the choice of their career.

6.3.2 Prevalence of Unprofessional Practices

Before drawing conclusions based on the responses, magnitude of each UPP was analysed. It was found that discrimination against the students, commercial venality, and lack of responsibility were leading UPPs among the teachers. Dereliction of duty, absenteeism, and authoritarianism were next less prevalent UPPs among the teachers. Except commercial venality that was the leading UPP among the private school teachers, public school teachers were front runners in all other five UPPs. The differences were quite significant in terms of dereliction of duty, absenteeism and authoritarianism. Male teachers were quite ahead of their female counterparts in absenteeism and dereliction of duty, whereas female teachers were leading in four other UPPs studied. The differences were quite noticeable in discrimination against the students and authoritarianism. Commercial venality, absenteeism and discrimination against the students were more prevalent UPPs among rural school teachers while dereliction of duty was the leading UPP among urban school teachers.

6.3.3 Correlates of Unprofessional Practices

Commercial venality was the most prevalent UPP among the young teachers out of lust for making money. Mostly private school teachers represented the youngest group of teachers indulging in private tutoring due to limited salaries. With the increase in the
age of the teachers there was a decrease in the prevalence of various UPPs. Unmarried teachers were generally private school teachers and young computer teachers of public schools, and had inclination towards private tutoring. Desire for lavish living and limited salaries was forcing them to indulge in private tutoring instead of teaching during school hours. Most of them had established private academies that guaranteed passing the board examinations in lieu of money. Many of them were not dependent on their jobs in the schools; rather they were working there for the advertisement of their academies to get students from the schools. On the other hand, majority of the married teachers were public school teachers and having those UPP among them which were caused by the poor management of the schools.

Absenteeism, dereliction of duty, and lack of responsibility were prominent UPPs among the teachers belonging to General Castes whereas commercial venality, authoritarianism, discrimination against students were the leading UPPs among the teachers belonging to Scheduled Castes and Other Backward Castes. Various UPPs investigated in the study were most prevalent among teachers teaching middle standard classes followed by masters or mistresses teaching high standard classes and least prevalent among the lecturers teaching the senior secondary classes. The prevalence of various types of UPPs was on the average three times more among the teachers that were brought up in the urban environment than their rural brought up counterparts. With the increase in the educational level of the father there was a decrease in the prevalence of various UPPs among the school teachers.

There was a relationship between the lower income of the family at the time of joining teaching profession and higher prevalence of various UPPs among the teachers because on the average more than half of the teachers came from low income families. Commercial venality was associated with lower income of the family whereas absenteeism, lack of responsibility and dereliction of duty were associated with higher income of the family. Getting the status of a teacher by joining teaching profession and later on making good money by indulging in private tutoring attracted the youngsters to become school teachers. Making easy money without taking pains for the duties and
responsibilities attracted many youngsters to the profession. Those UPPs that were related with basic value system like commercial venality, authoritarianism, discrimination etc. were more prevalent among the young teachers where as UPPs that were related to professional value system like absenteeism, dereliction of duty, lack of responsibility etc. were more prominent among the experienced teachers.

6.3.4 Reasons and Remedies for Unprofessional Practices

Anticipating the poor response in admitting to the prevalence of various unprofessional practices among their fraternity by the school teachers, an attempt was made by asking the teachers to state reasons and remedies for various UPPs in order to judge the grimness of the problem as highlighted by other similar studies. Absenteeism, the first UPP studied among the school teachers, was more prevalent in public schools due to ineffective local and hierarchical monitoring system. The prevailing practice of populism, that principal does not want to spoil relations with subordinates in public schools was another reason for this practice, which was not the case in private schools which, were better governed. The easy going public school teachers are considered the best personnel for doing Census, health surveys and other similar jobs at the cost of teaching. Lack of appreciation for efficient and punctual teachers, disheartened them and others. Strict monitoring by the stakeholders in education like parents, community and awakened students was felt desirable to put things in order.

Most of the public schools in the district do not have fulltime principals due to lack of regular promotion policy. In their absence, senior teachers of the school are given the responsibility to run the school. Without authority he is unable to use strict measures against the staff to contain the UPPs like dereliction of duty. Most of the times, the officiating duties are furthered passed on to junior teachers, when some senior teachers
specially female teachers refuse to take the responsibility of officiating principal, thus undermining the worth of the chair.

Due to non-availability and incompetency of the supporting staff, all the non-teaching duties within the school like; maintenance of records, preparing pay-rolls, carrying reports to the district offices etc., rest on the teachers at the cost of teaching. Department of school education has made compulsory for all teachers to attend in-service seminars to reinvent the lost glory of professionalism among them, for the last several years. Some senior fellow teachers are chosen as resource persons in the seminars. Teachers take them lightly and consider them as the wastage of time due to their inability to add to the knowledge and skills of the seminarians due to lack of knowledge of the subject related to pedagogic practices and professional ethics at the cost of their basic duties. Autocratic style of the officiating principal sometimes further polarises the school staff to take part in day-to-day functioning of the school thus further deteriorating the school atmosphere.

Public schools generally cater to the needs of the students coming from lower middle class and poor families. Some of them sometimes happen to be first generation school goers and unaware of their rights and obligations that teachers owe towards them. Further, they have no courage to raise a voice against irresponsible teachers. Here, role of PTA/VEDC members, the ultimate beneficiaries of education system, was advocated in monitoring the school affairs, though that may not be welcomed by the irresponsible teachers. Role of teacher’s associations who cater to the welfare of the teachers could also have some significance in this regard. Involvement of responsible teachers in running the day-to-day affairs might convey some message to their irresponsible colleagues. These activities could have a supportive role for the principal in mending the affairs of the school.

Students were discriminated on the basis of their socio-economic conditions in public schools. Ordinary students were sometimes not promoted to the next class with the fear of spoiling teacher’s Board results and thus undermining their rights for personal
fulfillment. Those who conformed to the lifestyle of the teachers were bestowed with special privileges at the cost of the deserving ones. Students coming from poor families, who were unable to maintain cleanliness, were not paid much attention. The physical education teachers who are bound to educate students, about cleanliness and personal hygiene that affect their performance, are hardly bothered. District Roopnagar is easily approachable from Chandigarh, the state Capital of Punjab, and its satellite towns of Panchkula and Mohali. Most of the teachers, specially the female teachers, come from these towns by chartered vehicles, in large groups. They are both kin and kith of the state bureaucracy or political masters and have got posted adjoining to Chandigarh by using their social and cultural capital. They get their postings here, to get coaching of their wards from reputed coaching institutions in Chandigarh for entry into high-tech engineering, medical and other such courses. They are hardly bothered to uplift the students coming from lower socio-economic background and serve as pressure groups if some one dares to question them for that. They are here to preserve their cultural capital with the help of their social capital. Caste based polarisation is prevalent among the teachers and is extended even to the student community. Principals make little effort to control it and sometimes they are a part of it. Making pressure groups on the basis of caste are also prevalent in many public schools.

The core of the teaching-learning activity is the teacher-student relationship. If teacher is in the possession of knowledge and desired skill to impart it, his attitude is empathetic, cooperative and supportive, and the student is ready to acquire the knowledge then the purpose of the teaching-learning activity is achieved. Sometimes, authoritarian attitude of the teacher comes in the way of the formation of teacher-student relationship. The data shows that authoritarian attitude is prevalent among the teachers and was comparatively more among the public school teachers as compared to their private school counterparts. Hardly any provision was available to diffuse this attitude among the teachers, though legislation is there to adopt the child centered approach, but nobody is aware of it. In-service seminars are only subject oriented, in the absence of resource persons from the fields of Sociology and Psychology. Empathetic attitude was totally missing among the teachers, students were treated as numbers by the teachers, and so
many passed or failed, instead of so many personalities made or spoiled. In practice, the morality is, that which is to be practiced and reflected by the teacher, and copied by the student rather it is coerced. Co-curricular activities are limited in public schools as they are taken as extra burden on the teacher.

Commercial venality was the only UPP that was heavily prevalent among private school teachers. Private schools that were philanthropic social institutions earlier have now become profit ogranisations. Though principal and members of management committee were governing the schools excellently but there was a large gap what they charged from the students and what they paid to the teachers. Low salary forced private school teachers to indulge in private tutoring, a practice declared unethical by UNESCO. When teachers asked for increment in salary they were told to make way for others willing to work on low salary. This stop-gap-arrangement took the toll on teaching-learning activity. There was no provision of in-service seminars for private school teachers. Some teachers joined private schools to acquire teaching experience for doing B.Ed. through distance education or joining government service. Very few public school teachers were indulging in private tuition due to lack of check on this practice by the authorities. Private schools were serving as breeding grounds of teachers making education a private commodity, to make huge profits out of it.

6.4 Conclusions

The teachers studied were young and majority of them were married. Public school teachers were more experienced than their private school counterparts. The profession was dominated by teachers belonging to both Hindu and Sikh religions. Teachers belonging to Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Castes were in minority and majority of the teachers were Post Graduates. Urban schools had accommodated a major section of female teachers and a vast majority in the sample came from urban background. Higher inter-generational mobility was observed in private school teachers as compared to public school counterparts. A preponderant section of teaching community was living in nuclear family. Female teachers of public schools were
financially well off than their counterparts. Female teachers of private schools were more ambitious about the school teaching profession as compared to their colleagues but at the same time a major section of them joined the profession when avenues exhausted for them. For female teachers parents had a role in the choice of the profession.

Among the six UPPs studied among the school teachers, discrimination against the students, commercial venality and lack of responsibility were some prominent UPPs among the school teachers. Besides commercial venality public school teachers were front runners among the other five UPPs. Absenteeism and dereliction of duty were prominent UPPs among male teachers whereas female teachers had inclination towards authoritarianism and discrimination against the students. Rural teachers were leading in commercial venality and absenteeism, while urban teachers were ahead in dereliction of duty.

Reciprocal relationship was found between age and the prevalence of various UPPs among teachers. Married teachers were prominent in UPPs like absenteeism, dereliction of duty and lack of responsibility. A similar observation was noticed among the teachers belonging to General Castes. Commercial venality was the leading UPP among the young unmarried teachers belonging to Scheduled Castes. On the whole UPPs were more prominent among General Castes and least among Other Backward Castes. An inverse relationship was found between UPPs and the classes being taught according to the designation of the teachers. High prevalence of UPPs was found among teachers coming from urban background.

In the absence of regular principal and other monitoring staff, absenteeism was plaguing the public schools. The officiating principal were ineffective in monitoring the public schools and moreover the practice of populism at the part of officiating principals was keeping the teachers away from schools during duty hours. Involvement of public school teachers in non-teaching duties like Census, health surveys etc. at the cost of teaching and was taking the toll of teaching-learning activity. Supportive role of other stakeholders like parents and community was suggested to overcome this practice. This
practice is absent in private schools due to effective monitoring system of the local management. Dereliction of duty was also the repercussion of ineffective governance and erosion of professional commitment, among the teaching community. Shortage of non-teaching staff and lack of coordination with the officiating principals in public schools, the involvement of teachers in performing non-teaching duties were keeping them away from classes. Rampant factionalism among teachers due to poor governance in the schools was another reason in spoiling the congenial environment of the public schools.

In-service seminars which were organised only for public school teachers were not found effective to motivate the teachers due to incompetent resource persons. Supportive role teacher associations and other stakeholders were suggested to reinvent the lost professionalism among school teachers. Subjective outlook of teachers and poor socio-economic conditions of the students were the main reasons found for discrimination against students. Caste based polarisation was found among the teaching community in the formation of pressure groups to assert their individual motives. Authoritative attitude was observed among the teaching fraternity and was undermining the formation of student-teacher relationship. Provision of in-service seminars was there for public school teachers to overcome authoritarian attitude but lack of competent resource persons undermined their effectiveness. In spite of legislation, to adopt child centered approach, in the formation of student-teacher relationship but nobody was aware about it. Private schools were better governed than the public schools but they were the breeding grounds for private tutoring. Teachers were underpaid and forced to take tuitions to meet the both ends. Consistent reshuffling of teachers in private schools, due to job insecurity and low pay, was undermining to the teaching-learning activity in private schools. Private schools were virtually left for the commercialisation of education.

6.5 Theoretical Importance and Practical Significance of the Study

In the process of acquisition of formal education the desirable status-roles, contents and context of learning are predefined and determined. Desirable status-role is
the action or behaviour expected of the individual holding a particular status in a particular situation of interaction. Sometimes personal belief system, priorities of life, context of activity etc. put such an effect that a particular status-role holder deviates from the desired role. If the deviance is to such an extent that starts affecting the outcome of a particular activity, then the role of the particular status-role holder become undesired. If the status-role holder is a professional then his/her role becomes unprofessional. In case of education, if various status-role holders deviate from the desired roles, then the structure of social relationships change, which ultimately affect the functions of education in society. To study the change in the social structure of education is the concern of sociology. To study the change in the behavioural pattern of a professional (school teacher in this case), is the concern of sociology of professions.

The present study is an endeavour to assess the prevalence of unprofessional practices, reasons behind the prevalence of a particular unprofessional practice and remedial measures in containing that unprofessional practice, among school teachers. Inferences drawn from the study may also help the researchers for doing the comparative studies and setting hypothesis for the future studies. Findings of the study may help the policy makers for the prevention and remedy of the prevalence of unprofessional practices among school teachers in general. Nevertheless, there are certain suggestions for the state and policy makers:

1. In the present system appointments of school teachers are made on the basis of academic and professional qualifications only, and there is no measure to assess the teaching aptitude of the candidates. Some questionnaire to assess the teaching aptitude may help the appointing authorities that right people join the teaching profession.

2. The regular promotion policy may help the public schools to get full fledged principals to strengthen the monitoring system at the institution level as well at the upper level which is the need of hour.
3. The private schools should come in the purview of state auditing agency so that they should not serve as the profit making and teacher exploiting agencies in the name of quality education providers.

4. Public school teachers should be entrusted with teaching duties and should not be engaged in maintaining the school records while in the school and other enumeration duties outside the school.

5. The collective vigilance by the parents and the community, like the case in Himachal Pardesh that played an important role in preserving the accountability of the state run schooling system, should be replicated in the other states.

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