Teacher Status & Career Paths in Asia Pacific: Promoting Teacher Growth in Education Policies and Practice

UNESCO Bangkok Regional Studies

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Background

- Experiences from the “EFA-Era” suggest that in some countries, rapid expansion of access to education resulted in a trade-off, favoring quantity over quality.

- Led to recruitment of teachers who are not qualified and inadequately trained - Concern of “Learning Crisis”

- “The Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Education 2030” places great emphasis on quality of education, especially teachers.

**SDG4 - Education 2030**

By 2030, “Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”

**SDG4 Means of Implementation 4.c**

By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small-island developing States.
Why value teachers and improve their status?

TOTAL NUMBER OF TEACHERS (IN MILLIONS) NEEDED TO ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION, 2015-2030

- Replacement for attrition
- New teaching posts needed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Recruitment (in millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>1.3 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 2020</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By 2025</td>
<td>16.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>By 2030</td>
<td>22.6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Replacement: 3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New posts: 19.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Why value teachers and improve their status?

• Despite rapid increases in teacher recruitment, in one-third of the 91 countries with data for 2012, less than 75% of primary school teachers were trained according to national standards.

• In some poor countries, pay levels do not even cover basic living costs. When salaries are too low, teachers often need to take on additional work - sometimes including private tuition - which can reduce their commitment to their regular teaching jobs and lead to absenteeism (2013/14 GEMR, p.254).
MAKING teaching a profession of choice

Data from 2014, based on 230,000+ survey respondents from 31 countries (Source: statista.com)

84% - Salary/Benefit/Financial incentives
MAKING teaching a profession of choice

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- 84% - Salary/Benefit/Financial incentives
- 64% - Work-life balance
Making teaching a profession of choice

Data from 2014, based on 230,000+ survey respondents from 31 countries (Source: statista.com)

- 84% - Salary/Benefit/Financial incentives
- 64% - Work-life balance
- 62% - Opportunities for advancement
MAKING teaching a profession of choice

Data from 2014, based on 230,000+ survey respondents from 31 countries (Source: statista.com)

- **84%** - Salary/Benefit/Financial incentives
- **64%** - Work-life balance
- **62%** - Opportunities for advancement
- **58%** - Training/development programmes
MAKING teaching a profession of choice

Data from 2014, based on 230,000+ survey respondents from 31 countries (Source: statista.com)
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2015
1. Cambodia
2. Indonesia
3. Mongolia
4. Pakistan
5. Republic of Korea
6. Samoa
7. Sri Lanka
8. Uzbekistan

2016
1. Indonesia
2. Mongolia
3. Pakistan
4. Republic of Korea
5. Samoa
6. Sri Lanka
7. Uzbekistan
8. Fiji
9. Philippines
Key findings

1. Pre-service education

- Steady progress in the development of their pre-service programmes but share concerns about its effectiveness, relevance, flexibility and quality of teacher trainers

2. Professional development (PD)

- Sending teachers for short courses is a fairly standard practice following changes in curriculum
- Other PD opportunities differ considerably among countries and they have concerns about its relevance and effectiveness
Key findings

3. Assessment of teacher performance

- Countries have some form of system in place, but frequency, focus, purpose and process of administration differ.
- Most countries face issues on how best to assess; a particular concern is that assessment need not only be fair, but perceived as being fair.

4. Teacher’s pay and working condition

- Countries face challenges in ensuring more reasonable workloads.
- Teachers’ pay has increased but it remains low compared to other professions of similar qualification.
Key findings

5. Involving teachers in decision-making process

- Upholding rights of teachers to participate in policy making through representative organization (e.g. unions or associations) is far from standard
- Most countries recognize the importance of giving space to teachers, but the form and degree of autonomy vary

6. Career pathways

- There is a lack of alternative professional pathways for teachers’ career progression
- Promotion tends to be hierarchical and linear, often leading out of the classroom to take administrative roles
Key findings

7. Career guidance

- Some countries provide career progression guidance with support of their supervisors, but effectiveness is questionable
- In other countries, it is often sporadic or non-existent

8. Promotion

- Promotion opportunities are made available and in most cases, the process is perceived to be transparent
- In some countries, they are little more than grade increments in tandem with length of service or limited to a fixed number of positions
Key findings

9. School leadership

- Principals and other senior administrative staff have clearly defined roles
- Principal’s tasks include managerial and administrative duties and teacher evaluation

8. Gender

- In many countries, schools are predominantly staffed by female particularly at the primary level
- Most countries have more male than female in leadership positions or equal in numbers
Policy recommendations

TEACHER’S STATUS AND RIGHTS

1. Provide salaries and benefits corresponding to the job requirement and comparable to the jobs with similar qualification and experience.

2. Ensure fair and open systems of teacher recruitment and deployment.

3. Ensure the pre-service curriculum is relevant, such that it prepares teaching candidates for the types of schools they will teach in.

4. Carry out teacher evaluation in a deliberate and fair way that also diagnoses teachers’ PD needs. The results of evaluations should be shared with teachers in the form of feedback and should be linked to the PD programme and career development.
Policy recommendations

TEACHER’S CAREER PROGRESSION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Establish viable, multiple career paths that enable excellent teachers to remain in the classroom, yet also allow them to assume leadership roles directly related to their areas of expertise

2. Accredit PD providers and courses and link these courses to specific roles and responsibilities, while supporting teachers to develop annual PD plans that reflect their changing needs

3. Enforce clear and transparent guidelines concerning qualifications, selection and promotion criteria, which are linked to specific roles and responsibilities

4. Provide regular career guidance to teachers and principals

5. Provide incentives to teachers that reward good practice and are locally appropriate
Next steps

- Further study - class size, continuous PD
- Regional references, guidelines, materials for achieving SDG4 through effective teacher policies
- Ideas welcome!
THANK YOU!