

UNIVERSITY:

Separate pay scale justified?

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During the last few months the teachers of the DU along with their counterparts at the other universities have gone on strike in pursuance of their demand for a separate pay scale.

According to them, their remuneration should be above others and they should not be governed by the existing pay-scale as the nature of their job is much more demanding.

In order to achieve their target, these teachers have marched on the roads leading to the Gonobhaban and have squatted on its footpaths.

For some reason or the other they have till date failed to draw the sympathy of both the government and the common public.

Their image as idlers more interested in dirty politics than teaching is mainly responsible for not getting favourable response from different quarters.

What makes a university teacher different from the other teachers even from those who teach at the degree level needs elucidation.

According to their job description, a university teacher is expected to teach, guide doctoral research and publish research papers in leading reputed journals.

This second and third responsibility makes a university teacher different from the other teachers.

But here, in Bangladesh, our university teachers fulfil the first category and even that is done partially as they are used to long unscheduled vacations.

On top of that a good number of teachers at the universities have a tendency to take french leave at the eleventh hour letting the students do whatever they please.

The actual number of days a teacher seriously works can be counted on one's finger tips. From first hand sources it is gathered that a section of teachers particularly from the Departments of Economics, Management, Psychology, Sociology, Social Welfare and some from the BUET are busy with private consultancy work which fetches much more remuneration than their university job.

Quite logically in such circumstances it is wrong to expect that these teachers shall be sincere especially when they are using the university job as a bait to catch bigger fishes.

The number of persons who have obtained their PhDs from Dhaka under the supervision of local guides is like a drop in the ocean. Even then they are the products of certain specific departments—Bangla, Psychology and English mainly—

whereas in the other universities abroad a teacher's efficiency is judged by the number of doctorate students he guides. The more efficient a teacher is the greater is the number of students working under him for PhD.

This is the main reason why the work load of a university teacher is lesser

even face demotion.

There are on the other hand many teachers in different universities here whose only publication is his or her PhD thesis. Some others having link with the publishing department are keen to get their light matter published.

According to the DU's publication list very little matter has

should be given a separate pay structure baffles one.

If it is so, what is the fault of the doctors, engineers, agriculturists and technocrats that they should be paid under the existing pay scale?

In 1974 there was general consensus among people of all strata of the society that there should be a single pay scale in the country.

Accordingly the 2200 pay



Students of English Department, DU, busy in discussion while their teachers are on strike.

than his college counterparts to give him enough breathing space so that he can devote fully to his doctorate students.

The same trend is very much in practice in our neighbouring countries too whereas our university teachers have all the times to gossip at the university club or at the faculty club and indulge in group politics which in many cases is the ladder of success.

Hence once a person succeeds in getting a university job mother luck starts shining on him.

He does not have to work for promotion or increment, it comes automatically.

In the West there exists a maxim, publish or perish which is the Bible for the teachers. Each and every person is expected to publish something original in the academic session. If the number falls short of the stipulated figure he stands chance of losing his job or may

come out from their press which is of use to the students.

Over the years our master degree holders when they go abroad fail to get direct enrolment for PhD on the ground that our degree is not recognised by the foreign universities as our standard is low.

Hence they have to complete their MS first. This seems extremely paradoxical as most of our university teachers have higher degrees from abroad but what they teach in turn is classed as 'substandard'.

Till date no evaluation of any kind has been undertaken to ascertain where we stand so that we can take steps to arrest our faltering standard. We seem to be compromising "quality for quantity."

As things stand it will be impossible to regain our lost glory and standard unless we seriously take steps even examine whether we shall be the gainer by employing expatriate teachers or not as our teachers are not carrying out their duties properly.

Still what makes the teachers think that they are a separate entity and that their job is much more demanding than other jobs and hence they

scales were synchronised and brought under 22 heads.

The university teachers unjustified demands for separate pay scale is bound to trigger off a new wave of protest from others. It also means making a mess of the new pay scale and reverting back to 1974, making all efforts go in vain.

At best, what can be done is that special allowance may possibly be given to persons having an exceptional brilliant career and performance record.

For the brilliant heads there is always scope for promotion but what about those whose activities donot tally with the responsibilities vested upon them by virtue of their position? Who will evaluate their performance?

Had the university teachers been honest to their profession many students would be able to get their doctorate from here.

Due to financial constraints a good number of students having potentialities for undertaking serious research are being debarrred from doing so.

Still these teachers demand a separate pay scale but how far is their demand justified?