

PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH REFERENCE TO GENDER AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

ABSTRACT

* Dr. Pratima Pradhan

Teacher is an essential determining factor in the process of education. The teaching profession is losing status in many part of the world. It is not only for any other reasons but the teachers' attitude towards their profession is also responsible as they sometimes do not have a very strong positive attitude. Thus, the objectives of the research were to study and compare the mean professional attitude of the Secondary School teachers on the basis of gender and teaching experience. Descriptive survey method of research was adopted to carry out the study. A researcher made tool 'Professional Attitude Scale' was used to gather required data. A sample of 120 Secondary School teachers from Navi Mumbai were drawn through stratified random sampling. The analysis of the data revealed that overall the teachers has high level of professional attitude. Teachers from both the gender and varied level of teaching experience show equal level of professional attitude.

Key Words: Professional attitude, Gender, Teaching experience

All over the world, a quality education offers hope and the promise of a better standard of living. There can be no quality education without competent and motivated teachers. Teachers are amongst the many factors that keep children in school and influence learning. Teacher is an essential determining factor in the process of education. He/she helps students think critically, process information from several sources, work cooperatively and tackle problems. Still, the teaching profession is losing status in many part of the world. It is not only for any other reasons but the teachers' attitude towards their profession is also responsible as they sometimes do not have a very strong positive attitude. A strong positive attitude of teachers towards their profession plays a crucial role in building of the society as well as of the nation. Positive attitude of teacher towards their profession defines the parameters of teaching and learning. Thus the feelings, interests of teachers affect the performance of teachers. Teachers with positive attitude contribute more competently to the process of education of child. There is a close relationship between teachers' professional attitude and their performance. Attitude is defined as a relational mental state that directs the behaviors of an individual. Different individuals have different mental dispositions such as experiences, beliefs, desires, hopes, likes and dislikes and intentions. All these mental dynamics are essential components of attitude (Bain and Ken, 2004). Professionalism is performing of assigned work with dedication and fervor. It contains attitude, beliefs and behaviors. Attitude is the manifestation of professionalism. Professionals respect, care and coach others with whom they work. Their behavior is collaborative and disciplined. Teaching is a professional field. Teachers' beliefs, experiences and perceptions have deeper influence upon their teaching practices. Attitude is a strong component in human personality. In any profession negative or positive attitude affects the performance and the degree of realization of the

goals.

Professional attitudes are not inborn or innate. They are not inherited by the individual but are acquired by her/him during the growth process. Professional attitudes, once acquired, become permanent. They are lasting and enduring. They become stable over a period of time. Since they are more or less permanent, an individual's future behavior can be predicted on the basis of her/his attitudes. The situation of teachers merits the closest attention of all who wish to leave such a world to our children. This is the right time to focus the significance of teacher's job. As a result teacher's attitude towards the profession become very important aspect of the study, as any improvement in this area will help overall society and nation as a whole. Thus, teacher's attitude towards teaching profession forms the major variable for the present study on secondary school teachers.

Teachers who are generally unenthusiastic about the teaching profession (i.e. having a negative job orientation) reported in one study, that they were more distressed about their teaching situation than were teachers who were enthusiastic (Litt & Turk 1985, p.180). Thus, for the professional growth of the teachers and improvements in education, the attitudes held by them are very important. How a teacher performs his/her duty as a teacher is dependent, to a great extent, on his/her attitudes, values and beliefs. A positive favourable attitude makes the work not only easier but also more satisfying and professionally rewarding. A negative and unfavourable attitude makes the teaching task harder, tedious and unpleasant. In addition, a teacher's attitude also influences the behaviour of her/his students. Thus effective and productive learning on the part of students can be achieved only by teachers with desirable attitudes. Thus, teacher's attitude towards teaching profession forms the major variable for the present study on secondary school teachers. From the reviews of literature the researcher has also found that many researches were

* Assistant Professor, MES' Pillai, College of Education and Research, New Panvel, Mumbai

done mainly on graduate and post-graduate teachers, B.Ed. teachers and School teachers. The specific secondary school teachers were not studied much. There are many contradictory findings observed through the review of studies. The various components of professional attitude were not studied in detail other than a few. Almost no study could be located on the same topic conducted in the geographical region of Navi Mumbai. It is the extension of Mumbai, a metropolitan city. It might have been a factor for the secondary school teachers to have a differential attitude towards the teaching profession. Thus, there was a need to understand the professional attitude of secondary school teachers. Relevant information concerning this topic might support the educational community in minimizing the negative reflection and stress in secondary school teachers.

Objectives of the Study

- 1 To study the professional attitude of Secondary school teachers.
- 2 To study and compare the mean professional attitude scores of secondary school teachers on the basis of gender.
- 3 To study and compare the mean professional attitude scores of teachers on the basis of their level of teaching experience.

Method

Methodology-The descriptive comparative survey method of research was adopted to carry out the study.

Sampling- As per the nature of the present study, stratified

random sampling technique was used to select the required sample of teachers. The researcher has taken into account the different boards while selecting the sample and effort was made to cover the maximum area possible to make the sample a representative group. The data producing sample of teachers consisted of one hundred and thirty five Secondary School teachers of Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra. However, out of one hundred and thirty five teachers, ten teachers did not return the tools and five of them returned it in complete. Hence, the actual data producing sample was reduced to one hundred and twenty (120).

Measures- A self-made professional attitude scale was used by the researcher. The tool was comprised of five main components of professional attitude such as Professional commitment, Self Motivation, Ethics and code of conduct, Professional Growth, and Student-Teacher relationship. There were 100 statements (including both positive and negative) covering all the components of professional attitude. The reliability coefficient of the tool was found 0.86 which indicated a high level of reliability of the tool.

Data Analysis

Analysis of data means studying the organized material in order to discover inherent facts. The data was studied from as many angles as possible to explore the new facts. The data obtained from the Secondary School teachers were scored and tabulated carefully as per the category. The tabulated data was analyzed by employing statistical techniques such as mean, S.D., skewness, kurtosis, t-test and ANOVA.

Table-1: Mean Difference in Professional Attitude Scores of Male and Female Teachers

	Gender	Mean	N	df	t-value	t-critical	Level of Significance
Professional Attitude	Male	404.74	120	118	1.177	1.98	NS (at 0.05)
	Female	399.27					

Table 1 shows that the calculated t-value 1.177 is less than the table value of 1.98 at 0.05 significance level. Therefore the difference of mean between male and female teacher's professional attitude is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis is

accepted. It means in other words that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers in their professional attitude scores.

Table 2: Summary of one way ANOVA Result: Professional Attitude Scores of Different Experience Levels of Secondary School Teachers

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F-statistical	F- critical	Level of Significance
Between Groups	4941.05	4	1235.26	1.83	2.45	NS (at 0.05)
	77538.28	115	674.24			

The ANOVA result presented in the Table 2 shows that F-statistical value 1.83 was found to be lesser than the table value (2.45) at 0.05 level of significance. As a result it is interpreted that there exist no significance difference in the mean professional attitude scores of Secondary School teachers' from different level of teaching experience. It means that the teachers from different levels of teaching experience do not differ in their professional attitude scores. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Major Findings of the Study

After collecting and analyzing the data the researcher had to accomplish the task of drawing out inferences through which she could expose relations and processes that underline the findings. The purpose of the research is not well served unless the findings are made known to others. Thus, the findings of the study are presented below.

1. The mean value of professional attitude of secondary school teachers show that the overall attitude of teachers towards their profession was on the higher side.
2. No significant difference was found between male and female secondary school teachers in their professional attitude scores.
3. There existed no significant differences among the secondary school teachers from different experience level in their professional attitude.

Conclusions

On the basis of the above findings the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The study shows that the overall professional attitudes of secondary school teachers are on the higher level.
2. Male and female secondary school teachers do not differ in their professional attitudes. Thus, gender is not a factor associated with the professional attitude of the teachers. Teachers from both the gender show equal level of professional attitude.
3. The professional attitude does not differ with years of experience of the secondary school teachers. Teachers at any level of their teaching experience have a high level of professional attitude. Thus, years of teaching experience as a factor is not associated in lowering or enhancing the professional attitude of teachers.

Implications of the Study

Quality of education is directly linked with quality of teachers. In teaching profession teachers should give more importance to their professional attitudes.

Professional attitude is the attitude of teachers towards the teaching profession. The teachers who have favourable professional attitude are likely to promote potentials of the students as well as can promote the healthy and positive atmosphere at the working place. The favourable or positive attitude of teachers can produce a good favourable teaching-learning situation for the children. Since the attitude plays a major and prominent role in the manner how teachers behave in classroom, staff room, with their colleagues and supervisors, it is essential to measure their professional attitudes while recruiting them apart from their knowledge and skills. It should become a major criterion for the selection of the teachers at the same time various programmes should be organized for development of the positive professional attitudes in them. The teachers may go for self assessment periodically to understand their own level of performance and attitude towards the teaching profession. The working conditions should be such that the teachers should feel like growing in their own field and committed to the profession. As teachers' professional attitude plays a very important role in educational system more and more researches based on this aspect should be undertaken.

References

- Abdal-Haqq, I. (1996). Making time for professional development. ERIC Document Reproduction Service (No.ED400259).
- Allport, G. W. (1935). Attitudes. In Murchison, C. (Ed.) *A handbook of social psychology*, 34-36. Clark University Press, Worcester, Mass.
- Best, J. W. & Kahn, J. V. (1996). *Research in education*. Prentice Hall of India, New Delhi
- Darling-Hammond, L. (1989). Accountability for professional practice. *Teachers College Record*, 91 (1) 59-71.
- Edwards, A. L. (1969). *Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction*. Vakils, Feffer & Simons, Bombay.
- Litt, M. D. & Turk, D. C. (1985). Sources of stress and dissatisfaction in experienced high school teachers. *Journal of Educational Research* 78, 3, 178-185.

