

Attitude Of Chennai's Primary School Teachers Towards Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT: *This paper focuses on the attitude of Primary school teachers towards teaching profession. Teaching being a self-motivated activity demands a favourable attitude and specific competencies from its practitioners. Teachers' proficiency depends on the attitude he/she possesses for the profession. Teachers' positive attitude helps students to have healthy discussions and thereby produce improved learning outcome. The purpose of this study is to understand how different variables like age, education, qualification influenced teachers' attitude towards teaching profession; and how teachers' attitude influence student's academic performance. The samples were selected using stratified random sampling. The study used mixed methodology for data collection. Questionnaire, scales and focused group discussions were the tools used for data collection. The findings show that attitude of teachers correlated positively and significantly with students' academic performance. There were several factors like lack of job satisfaction, monotony of work, students' learning interest and absence of teaching materials/instructional aide influenced the attitude of teachers. More qualified teachers seemed to be having more positive attitudes than that of the less qualified teachers. Similarly, younger teachers appear to possess more positive attitudes than that of the older teachers. The paper strongly recommends among others that teachers should go beyond Instruction and focus on the interpersonal aspects of teaching; constant in-service training should be provided for teachers and also provision should be made for teachers to attend educational conferences both locally and internationally as this would help them grow on the job. This study also provides suggestions for the school system to adapt based on the findings from the study.*

Keywords: *Attitude, Teacher attitude, Teaching profession, Student performance.*

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the purposes of education is to develop all round personality of the child. It is a systematic, efficient and deliberate influence exerted by the teacher upon the pupils. It also unfolds and expands the inherent powers, capacities, capabilities, interest, aptitude and attitude of the learners. Teacher is expected to be committed to his profession, learner, society, nation and to high human values. If quality education is a goal, it cannot be achieved without the sincere efforts of dedicated and committed teachers.

People's attitude towards their professions has a result on their performance. This is also valid for teaching profession. In teaching how a teacher performs their duty as a teacher depends to a great extent on their attitude. Attitude of a teacher towards teaching becomes influential so far as children can perceive the nature of feelings the teacher has towards them and there are evidences to show the presence of such a perception. If a teacher has dominant and autocratic attitude, the children are likely to be aggressive or over submissive. They show little satisfaction in their work and do not cooperate well with one another. In a class where a teacher has democratic and socially integrative attitude, the children feel relaxed and friendly. They work together and they are interested in what they are doing. A warm, sympathetic, friendly and understanding teacher is more likely to have a positive influence on student as compared to the one who is cold, unfriendly and autocratic.

Attitude towards teaching is a lasting perceptual organization of teacher's belief and learned inclination to react favourably or unfavourably in different degrees which determines their response towards teaching. Teaching is a performance activity to provide the pupil with opportunities to learn. The aim of the teacher is to make the students learn and achieve their educational goals. Teacher plays different roles when he/she works with the pupils, sometimes is a friend and the other time is an instructor, guide and director. So, teaching may be summed up as decision making, direction, leadership and instruction. In order to understand teacher's attitude towards teaching in its correct prospective, it seems relevant here to certain various definitions on teaching.

According to Keith Harrell (1998), "attitude is everything". It affects and influences a person's behaviour which in turn affects performance. It often involves feelings, opinions and dispositions which affects behaviour. How successful a person is in achieving his or her set goals is a function of the person's attitude. A teacher's attitude to teaching will certainly affect his or her performance in the classroom. Attitude is about emotions and feelings, and effective teachers willingly share emotions and feelings (i.e., enthusiasm, affection, patience, sadness, disapproval) as well as a sincere interest and care about their students.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Attitude was defined by Allport (1954) as, "a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all objects and situations, with which it is related."

Akinfe, Olofimiya, and Fashiky (2012) studied teacher characteristics as predictor of academic performance of students in Osun State. The study used a survey design in investigating the perception of SS3 students on teacher characteristics in relation to students' academic performance. Using purposive sampling, 16 secondary schools were selected (10 public and 6 private) and 100 SS3 students randomly drawn from each school giving a sample size of 1600 students. Questionnaire tagged "teachers" characteristics and students' academic performance (TCSAP) was used to elicit information. Data were analyzed using percentages. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Chisquare were used to test the hypotheses of the study. Findings reveal that students' academic performance correlate positively and significantly depending on teachers' attitude to teaching and learning in the classroom; knowledge of subject matter and teaching skills.

Thurston and Chave (1929) first used the term 'attitude' to denote "the sum-total of a man's inclination and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats, convictions about any specific topic." Later when motivational affective characters of attitude

were emphasized, Thurston (1931) defines attitude as, “the affect for or against a psychological object.”

Quality of attitude was also emphasized by Kresh and Crutchfield (1948). Teacher’s attitude towards teaching may be positive or negative but are of great significance for efficient and profitable functioning of any institution. Teachers who have great satisfaction with their job and teaching inspire of many economic or social abuses. On the other hand, a teacher who has a negative attitude will not enjoy teaching rather feel like a fish out of water.

Hight (1950) opinions that teaching is an act which in turn is dependent on certain variables such as liking for and understanding of pupils, knowledge of the subject matter along with planning and preparation for its presentation, the environment in which teaching and learning are taking place and certain attributes of the teacher.

Freud (1953) described the internal conflict which ranges within the individual, particularly between the id, ego and the super ego. Psychoanalysis seemed to be primarily concerned with generating some sort of balance between the aggressiveness and sexuality of the id and the guilt of the superego. But neither Freudian psychological theory nor psychoanalysis as therapy explains very well the many cases in which patients become fairly well reconciled to what has happened to them as children and change their interpersonal styles but still find themselves in considerable conflict with infantilisms which survive as social norms.

3. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Teacher attitudes, practices, and beliefs have a significant impact on student achievement (Palardy & Rumberger, 2008). Current and past research indicates that the teacher is the most important element in student achievement and growth (Marzano, 2003; Marzano, 2007; Palardy & Rumberger; Rivers & Sanders, 2002; Strong, 2007). Many studies have examined teacher knowledge and quality and not the importance of teacher attitude. Pryor and Pryor (2005) added to the research of Oskamp and Schultz (2003) and defined attitudes as beliefs that can be favorable, unfavorable, or neutral. Teacher attitudes influence teacher behaviors. The intent of the study was to add to the current research related to teacher quality and student achievement by defining specific teacher attitudes that positively influence student achievement, essential elements of which could be identified and added to the concept of teacher quality.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the attitude of primary school teachers in Chennai district towards teaching profession.
2. To compare the attitude of government, corporation, government aided and private primary school teachers towards teaching profession.
3. To compare the attitude of primary school teachers with varied number years of experience in teaching.
4. To compare the attitude of primary school teachers with undergraduate and post graduate degree.

UNIVERSE:

The universe of the study consists of teachers teaching in primary schools at Chennai. Out of this a total of 400 teachers were selected to be part of the study.

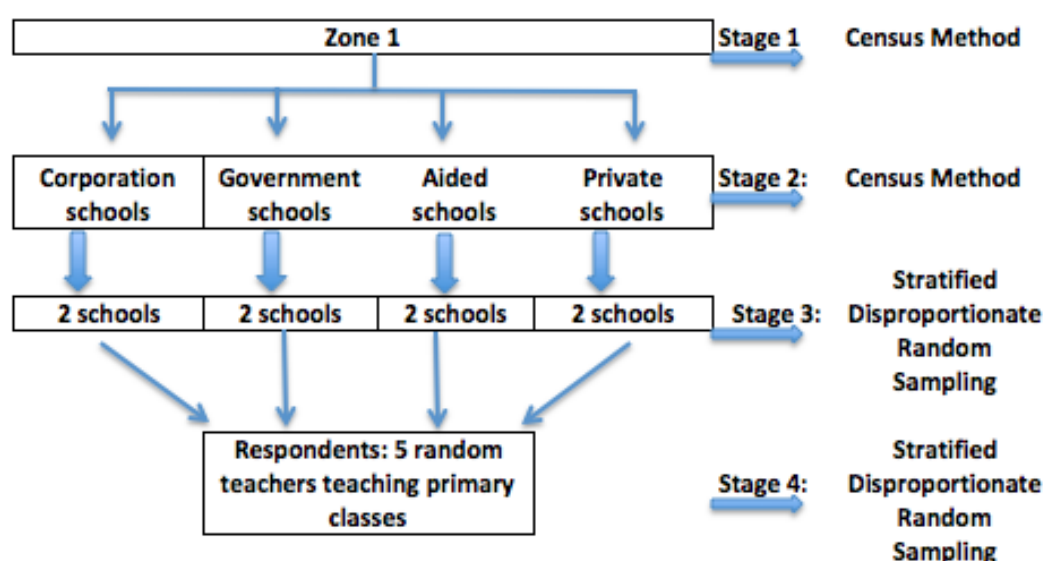
SAMPLING TECHNIQUE:

The researcher adopted Multi-stage Sampling. Multi-stage sampling is a more complex form of cluster sampling that contains two or more stages in sample selection. In simple terms, in multi-stage sampling large clusters of population are divided into smaller clusters in several stages in order to make primary data collection more manageable.

SAMPLING FRAME WORK

Census Method and Stratified Disproportionate Random Sampling Method were adopted to identify the respondents. Samagra Shiksha (SSA) classifies Chennai into 10 Zone

Fig 2: Flowchart depicting sample selection for ONE Zone
 This structure was followed for ALL 10 Zones



For 1 zone: 5 teachers x 8 schools = 40 teachers
For 10 zones: 10 zones x 40 teachers = 400 teachers

RESPONDENTS:

The Respondents in this study are primary class teachers from 80 schools in Chennai. 5 random teachers from these 80 schools from all 10 zones. A total of 400 respondents were part of the study.

5. METHOD OF THE STUDY

The researcher adopted descriptive method, as it involves survey and fact finding enquiry relating to attitudes of teachers in elementary schools towards teaching profession in Chennai District.

INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION

The study adopted a four-point structured Likert scale developed by Mary L. Renthleil & Dr. H. Malsawmi with Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) as options.

TOOL USED

The researcher adopted scale developed by Mary L. Renthlei & Dr. H. Malsawmi titled Teachers' attitude towards teaching as a profession. The reliability of the tool was established on a sample of teachers both from primary and secondary schools of Bangalore. A total of 180 teachers were drawn from 22 primary and secondary schools of different managements. Criterion related validity was established by the author. This scale was developed with adaptation from an already standardized Attitude Scale Towards Teaching Profession (ASTTP)" developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Umme Kulsum, Bangalore Volume 01, No.4, April 2015 Page32 University, (2008). The scale was validated by means of concurrent validity by employing the product moment correlation. A co-efficient of correlation between these two scales was found to be .84 which is regarded as acceptable concurrent evidence.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Objective No. 1:

To find out the attitude of primary school teachers in Chennai district towards teaching profession.

Table 1: Attitude of primary school teachers

S.No	Attitude level	No. of Teacher	Total	Percentage
1	High Attitude	1	18	4.5%
		17		
2	Moderate Attitude	102	361	90.3%
		175		
		84		
3	Low Attitude	16	21	5.3%
		5		

Table 1 on Attitude of primary school teachers reveals that 4.5% of teachers had high attitude and 5.3% of teachers had low attitude, while a majority of teachers (90.3%) had a moderate attitude towards teaching as a profession. The analysis also revealed that there were no teacher with very high or very low attitude towards teaching as a profession.

Objective No.2:

To compare the attitude of government, corporation, government aided and private primary school teachers towards teaching profession.

Table 2: Attitude of government, corporation, government aided and private primary school teachers towards teaching profession

S.No	Interpretation	Corporation	Government	Management – Aided	Private
1	High Attitude	33%	22%	33%	11%
2	Moderate Attitude	28%	28%	23%	21%

3	Low Attitude	24%	29%	33%	14%

Table 2 reveals that 33% of teachers teaching in corporation and management aided schools, 11% of teachers teaching private schools and 22% of teachers teaching Management aided schools had high attitude towards teaching profession. 28% of teachers from Corporation and Government schools had moderate attitude, while 23% and 21% teachers teaching management aided and private schools had low attitude respectively.

Objective No.3:

To compare the attitude of primary school teachers with varied number years of experience in teaching.

Table 3: Years of experience and their attitude towards teaching profession

S.No	Interpretation	Less than 5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years
1	High Attitude	39%	22%	33%	6%
2	Moderate Attitude	48%	33%	18%	1%
3	Low Attitude	38%	33%	24%	5%

Table 3 reveals 39% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 22% of teachers with 6-10 years of experience, 33% of teachers with 11-15 years of experience, and 6 % of teachers with 16-20 years of experience had high attitude. 48% of teachers with less than 5 years of experience, 33% of teachers with 6-10 years of experience, 18% of teachers with 11-15 years of experience, and 1 % of teachers with 16-20 years of experience had high attitude.

Objective No.4:

To compare the attitude of primary school teachers with undergraduate and post graduate degree.

Table 4: Attitude Of Primary School Teachers With Undergraduate And Post Graduate Degree

S.No	Interpretation	Undergraduate	Postgraduate	Diploma
1	High Attitude	83%	6%	11%
2	Moderate Attitude	69%	7%	24%
3	Low Attitude	67%	10%	24%

Table 4 reveals that out of the teachers with high attitude 83% teachers were with Under graduation degree, 6% of teachers were with post graduation degree, and 11% of teachers were diploma holders. While, out of the teachers with moderate attitude 69% teachers were with Under graduation degree, 7% of teachers were with post graduation degree, and 24% of teachers were diploma holders. While, out of the teachers with low attitude 67% teachers were with Under graduation degree, 10% of teachers were with post graduation degree, and 24% of teachers were diploma holders.

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Vast majority (90.3%) of the teachers teaching in Chennai primary schools have moderate attitude towards teaching profession.
2. Corporation school teachers and management aided school teachers have similar attitudes (33%) towards teaching profession. However, Government school teachers had higher attitudes (22%) when compared to private school teachers (11%).
3. Majority (83%) of teachers with under graduation degree had higher attitude towards teaching profession.
4. Majority of teachers with less than 10 years of experience had higher attitude compared to teachers with 20 years of experience.
5. Considerable few (7%) teachers with post graduate degree had moderate attitude towards teaching profession.

6. CONCLUSION

Attitude being a dynamic entity gets influenced by variables like age, previous experience, beliefs, gender and stream of education. The intent of this study was to add to the current research related to teacher's attitude and student achievement. The researcher believed that by identifying specific teacher attitudes that positively impact student achievement, defining elements could be added to the concept of teacher's quality. The researcher can conclude from the study results that a positive relationship exists between a teacher's disposition toward student achievement.

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