

Trainee Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching Profession in West Bengal

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession (ATTP) in terms of gender and locality of institution. The Teachers' Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession (Jan & Habib, 2021) was revalidated and standardised by the present researchers following the standard procedure. The investigators have randomly selected 155 trainee teachers as samples from four B.Ed. colleges (2 govt.-aided & 2 private) in North 24 Pgs. and Nadia district of West Bengal. Based on item analysis, items with a t-value less than 2.58 were rejected, and a t-value equal to or greater than 2.58 was accepted at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, 26 items were kept out of 30 in the final version of the scale. By using the internal consistency approach, the reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha is .827, and content validity was checked. The results revealed that there was an insignificant difference in the ATTP in terms of gender, but there exists a statistically significant difference in terms of the locality of institution.

Keywords

Attitude, ATTP Scale, Teaching Profession, Trainee Teachers.

1. Introduction

Attitude is particularly identified in social psychology through the theories of Gordon Allport (Andronache et al., 2014). Attitude is a person's inclination to assess a social aspect (fact, event, and person) as favourable or unfavourable, hence influencing their behaviour towards it (Kartz, 1960; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Doron & Parot, 1999). Numerous psychologists have explained this term in various ways. Allport (1935) defines attitude as "a mental and neural state of readiness organised through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence on the individual's response to all

objects and situations with which it is associated” (p. 810). In this regard, Britt (1958) describes it as a mental set of responses. Anastasi (1957) states that attitude is a predisposition to respond in a specific way to stimulus (cited in Bhargava & Pathy, 2014). Fishbein (1967) indicates it as a mental inclination of a person to respond favourably or unfavourably towards a specific object. Again, Thurstone (1946) defined it as the extent of a favourable or adverse effect linked to a psychological object.

On the other hand, the teaching profession is regarded as one of the prestigious professions globally, and a teacher's success is influenced by various elements, including attitude regards teaching, teaching aptitude, teaching competency, and adaptability (Bhargava & Pathy, 2014; Baruah & Gogoi, 2017). Attitude is an essential element of the teaching process, since it influences teacher competences (Oz & Kiris, 2018). Sharma (2013) also indicated that teachers' attitudes positively correlate with instructional success. Numerous researchers have found a correlation between attitudes regarding the teaching profession and teacher adjustment (Baruah & Gogoi, 2017). Bhargava & Pathy (2014) stated that the factors influencing a teacher's attitude include the domestic atmosphere, family background, socio-economic status, personal beliefs, and educational institutions. Teaching encompasses not only cognitive competences but is also influenced by affective competences (Derman, Ozkan, Altuk, & Mulazimoglu, 2008). Teachers play a crucial role in the teaching-learning process within an educational system. The teaching profession is essential to progress in society, as teachers significantly influence the shaping of the knowledge, skills, and values of future generations. The primary factors that affect a teacher's behaviour are knowledge and attitudes. Continuing knowledge enhancement and skill development are essential for sustaining teaching proficiency (Appadurai & Saraladevi, 2015). No teacher can perform their responsibilities effectively without a substantial amount of pedagogical skill (Kalaivani & Pugalenth, 2015). To fulfill the responsibilities of the profession effectively, teachers must possess a positive attitude towards occupation (Kaleli, 2020). Educators are the foundation of the system of education and the backbone of the society. In this context, Bodke & Dubey (2025) noted that comprehending educators' perceptions of their vocation is essential, as it directly impacts their motivation, work satisfaction, and entire efficacy in the classroom. Therefore, it is crucial to point out that in the teaching occupation; attitude is a significant variable, as it can profoundly impact the effective application of knowledge and skills pertinent to this profession (Andronache et al., 2014). Evidence from previous literature (Egwu, 2015; Khurshid, Gardezi & Noureen, 2014) prove that student-teachers' attitudes and perceptions regarding their future professions greatly influence their job performance. A positive attitude fosters proactive behaviour, whereas a negative attitude engenders avoidance, and a neutral perspective reflects apathy towards the teaching profession. An ideal teacher possessing the requisite personality traits can inspire, encourage, and cultivate a passion for the subject among students. Richardson (1991) asserted that education serves as a fundamental activity for nation-building. Learning will improve if the teachers are well-trained, inspired, and dedicated to their profession. Therefore, prospective teachers exhibit a favourable disposition towards their vocation, which may facilitate the enhancement of their future pupils' intrinsic motivation for learning. They will be better equipped to foster effective communication with their learners and will demonstrate greater engagement in the diversification and personalisation of learning experiences. The study may illuminate the promotion of a favourable attitude among trainee teachers regarding the teaching profession.

2. Review of Literature

Ustuner, Demirtas, & Comert (2009); Atalmiş & Kose (2018); Yasan-Ak & Yılmaz-Yendi (2020) found that pre-service teachers' attitude regarding the teaching profession a meaningful

difference exists in terms of gender. Musa & Bichi (2015) found that novice teachers have positive attitude and there exists a significant gender variation in their ATTP. Sahan & Zog (2017) in their study found that teacher candidates have a positive attitude regarding the teaching profession and a strong connection to their teaching-learning competencies. Kaleli (2020) examined that student-teacher attitudes regard teaching occupation and self-efficacy beliefs significantly differ in terms of their gender but there exists a significant relationship between both variables. Akdag & Akkus (2021) found that trainee teachers' attitudes of social studies towards the teaching profession were higher for female than that of male teachers. It was also observed that the social studies teacher trainees' ATTP did not differ in terms of class level and type of school. Mehmood, Munawar, & Qambar (2021) showed that male and female professionals exhibited no significant variations in their ATTP concerning teaching orientation, social standing, and job quality. Eleje et al. (2022) showed that the majority of teachers at the secondary level exhibited favourable ATTP. And also found that the female teachers and urban region teachers exhibited more favourable ATTP than the male teachers and rural region teachers respectively. Kavgaci (2022) demonstrated that psychological resilience has a direct impact on novice teachers' ATTP and their beliefs in self-efficacy. Yunkul & Gunes (2022) revealed that a positive correlation among attitude regards teaching occupation, academic motivation, and levels of digital literacy of trainee teachers. Nevmerzhytska et al. (2023) noted that to cultivate a value-orientated attitude regarding the teaching occupation among prospective teachers in higher education, a system was established that prioritised the development of motivation for professional engagement, the modelling and resolution of pedagogical works, and the continuous participation of students in practical tasks. Yadav (2024) stated that high teaching quality is enabled by teachers who possess high motivation and a favourable disposition towards their profession. The formation of a proficient workforce and a robust society is significantly reliant on the education system, especially teachers.

3. Rationale of the Study

Attitude is a predisposition to respond in a specific manner to a specified category of stimuli (Anastasi, 1957), and it influences teacher performance (Deringol, 2020). The term 'attitude toward profession' refers to the person's 'feelings, behaviors, and loyalty to the profession' (Hussain, Ali, Khan, Ramzan, & Qadeer, 2011), and it plays a crucial role in assessing the degree of loyalty to the profession (Deringol, 2020). Sener (2015) noted that the attitudes and actions demonstrated by educators can significantly enhance the lives and professional growth of learners. Chastain (1998) asserts that teachers' favorable attitudes, emotions, and perceptions of their students, the class, and linguistic culture enhance the standard of teaching-learning. Numerous researches reveal that educators' opinions about their profession can influence their teaching effectiveness (Guneyli & Aslan, 2009). The Attitude of teachers not only influences their own conduct in the classroom but also influences the conduct of their pupils. To enhance teachers' ability to perform their duties and enhance the standard of teaching, it is necessary to develop favorable attitudes towards the profession and acquire effective skills in that field before entering the job (Deringle, 2020). Trainee teachers are the future teachers and the backbone of the society who engage with students in a transitional phase marked by emotional challenges at various times. Hence, it is essential to comprehend their self-awareness, emotional states, and attitudes regarding the teaching occupation. Against this backdrop, the researchers endeavored to investigate "Trainee Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching Profession in West Bengal".

4. Objectives of the Study

- i. To revalidate the Teachers' Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession (Jan & Habib, 2021) on the sample of trainee teachers in West Bengal.
- ii. To compare the attitude regarding teaching profession of trainee teachers in terms of gender and locality of institution.

5. Hypothesis

H₀1: There is no significant difference between male and female trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession.

H₀2: There is no significant difference between urban and rural trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession.

6. Delimitation of the study

To conduct the study, the researchers have delimited their study in the following areas:

- a) The study has been delimited to Nadia and North 24 Pgs. districts of West Bengal.
- b) The study has been conducted at the teacher Education College.

7. Operational Definition of Important Terms and Concepts Used

- a) **Attitude towards Teaching Profession (ATTP):** According to Edwards (1957, p. 2) attitude refers to “the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object, how someone feels about that object”. In another side, ATTP refers to feelings or opinions, favorable or unfavorable regarding the teaching profession. Here, ATTP refers to the total scores attained by the trainee teachers on various dimensions in the scale.
- b) **Trainee Teachers:** It means students who are newly admitted to the two-year B. Ed. programme in the teacher education college (teacher training) affiliated by the university and recognized by the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE). As per NCTE 2014 norms, trainee teachers are also called student-teachers.

8. Method and Sources of Data

The investigators have adopted a descriptive survey method and quantitative in nature. Here, the investigators had utilized two types of variables - Major variables (attitude towards teaching profession) and Categorical variables (gender – male and female, locality of institution – urban and rural).

8.1. Tool Used

- a) **Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale (ATTPS):** This scale was standardized by Tasleema Jan and Hadiya Habib (2021). It is translated into the Bengali version with modifications by the present researcher with the consultation of the supervisor. The scale has been consisted with various dimensions namely, i.e. “co-curricular aspects of teaching profession, teacher-student relationship aspects of teaching profession, continuous learning aspects of teaching profession, classroom aspects of

teaching profession, and socio-psychological aspects of teaching profession". It has been a bipolar scaling method to indicate the response to a statement, and respondents have been asked to provide information for each item on one of five possible ratings. It has been based on Likert 5-points, such as: "Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD)". The ratings for the positive and negative statement responses given are as follows: 5, 4, 3, 2 & 1, and 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5 accordingly.

8.2. Population

All the trainee teachers in West Bengal (WB) who study in different teacher education colleges (training colleges) have been treated as the population of the present study.

8.3. Sample and Sampling Technique

The researchers have randomly selected 155 trainee teachers as samples from four B.Ed. colleges (2 govt.-aided & 2 private) in the North 24 Pgs and Nadia districts of WB. In this study, the 'simple random sampling technique' has been used.

Table 1: Demographic variables of the sample

Variables	Sub-variables	N=155	Percentage
Gender	Male	26	16.77
	Female	129	83.23
Total		155	100
Locality of Institution	Urban	88	56.77
	Rural	67	43.23
Total		155	100

9. Statistical Technique Used

In this study, a quantitative data analysis procedure was adopted. Here, the different statistical techniques, i.e., the 'mean, standard deviation (σ), and t-test', were applied through the 'IBM SPSS 22.0 version', and the significance of the t-value was tested at the 0.05 and 0.01 levels.

10. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis has been presented in accordance with the objectives and hypothesis of the study:

10.1. To revalidate the Teachers' Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession (Jan & Habib, 2021) on the sample of trainee teachers in West Bengal.

10.1.1. Standardise the ATTP Scale

The researchers have randomly selected 155 trainee teachers as samples from four B.Ed. colleges (2 govt.-aided and 2 private) in the North 24 Pgs. and Nadia districts of WB for a pilot study. The pilot study was done with several objectives:

- Rectification of instruction, if any, before finalization of the test.
- Calculation of validity and reliability of the test.
- Determination of norms of the test.

10.1.2. Item Analysis:

Here, the high group (27%) and low group (27%) were prepared based on the score of 155 samples taken for item analysis and item discrimination. The mean, standard deviation and t-value for evaluating the responses of the high and low groups to each statement were calculated. Items with a t-value less than 2.58 were rejected, and a t-value equal to or greater than 2.58 was accepted at a 0.05 level of significance. So, 26 items were kept out of 30 in the final version of the scale.

10.1.3. Validity and Reliability

To determine the content validity, the initial version of the draft scale has been provided to the three subject experts in the field of education to evaluate the quality and relevance of the statements in the scale. Considering their comments and recommendations, certain items have been modified or altered to enhance the quality of the items. Therefore, the scale's content validity has been confirmed through expert judgment. ATTPS consists of 26 items in the final version. The 'reliability coefficient' for all items on the ATTP was computed using Cronbach's alpha through IBM SPSS version 22.0, and is .827, which is good.

10.1.3. Norms

The scale statistics in terms of mean and standard deviation have been given in table 2. Norms of this scale have been prepared through $M+1\sigma$ and $M-1\sigma$. The interpretation index of this ATTPS has been established to analyze the overall scoring, which is shown in Tables 2 & 3 accordingly.

Table 2: Scale Statistics of ATTPS

Mean	Variance	σ	Total No. of Items
111.40	71.75	8.47	26

Table 3: Norms of Interpretation Index for ATTPS

Sl. No.	Obtained Score	Level of ATTPS
1	Above 119.87	High Favorable Attitude
2	Between 102.93 to 119.87	Moderate Favorable Attitude
3	Below 102.93	Poor Attitude

10.2. To compare the attitude regarding teaching profession of trainee teachers based on gender and locality of institution.

Table 4: Comparison of the ATTP of trainee teachers in terms of gender and locality of institution

Demographical Variables	Category	N	Mean	σ	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender	Male	26	107.92	8.461	.432	153	.666
	Female	129	107.16	8.226			
Locality of Institution	Urban	88	105.45	8.662	3.264	153	.001*
	Rural	67	109.69	7.022			

* Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Upon analysing the mean variation in the ATTP between male and female trainee teachers, the findings revealed that the difference was not statistically significant. Consequently, the relevant H_01 has been accepted. Here, gender is not a significant determinant in making a difference in connection to ATTP. But the result indicated that urban and rural trainee teachers were found to be significant. Consequently, the relevant H_02 has been rejected. Here, the locality of the institution is a significant determinant in making a difference in connection to ATTP.

11. Discussion and Conclusion

This study was done to revalidate and standardised to find out their ATTP for trainee teachers. This scale, ATTP, has been found to be very reliable and valid in terms of reliability and content validity.

While comparing the ATTP, it was found that male trainee teachers are not significantly different from the female student-teachers. The study of Kartal et al. (2012), Shaheen et al. (2016) & Mangai (2020) also supports these findings. Counterpart, it was found that urban trainee teachers are significantly different from the rural student-teachers. Both the work of Pancholi & Bharwad (2015) and Eleje et al. (2022) support this result, and their study reveals that rural student-teachers have a better attitude towards the teaching profession than urban student-teachers.

In this study, the present ATTP scale ensures high validity and reliability. Hence, this valid tool is recommended to measure trainee teachers' attitude towards teaching profession. After implementing this tool on the trainee teachers, the result will help measure their ATTP. This will enable them to take the necessary actions to improve their attitude. The present investigators also indicate that male teachers have a slightly more favourable attitude regarding teaching occupation than female trainee teachers based on their mean variation. Again, rural teachers have more favourable ATTP than urban trainee teachers, but significant variations are observed between urban and rural teachers. In the end, the constructive attitudes and behaviours of educators can positively influence learners' lives. Consequently, it will be beneficial to analyse the educational experiences of teacher trainees and the differences in their attitudes and provide them with practical programs that will inform them of the actions they should or should not take in their future classes. Ultimately, teacher educators ought to aim to develop independence in trainee teachers, foster good attitudes, and promote creativity while encouraging personal responsibility for their development.

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