Gender Comparison of the Attitude of Serving and Prospective Elementary School Teachers in Mizoram towards Teaching Profession

Abstract: One of the important factors that affect a teacher’s success and efficiency is his/her attitude towards the profession. The fundamental objective of this study is to determine the attitude of prospective and serving teachers towards the teaching profession. To this end, it is questioned whether “the attitudes of prospective and serving teachers towards the profession differ according to the variables including their gender and educational qualification”. The study group of the research consists of 300 serving elementary school teachers and 300 prospective elementary school teachers from eight Districts of Mizoram who were selected using random sampling method. In order to evaluate serving and prospective teachers’ attitudes towards teaching profession, 5-point Likert-type attitude scale developed by the authors was used. For the analysis of the data, t-test was used. The research findings shows majority of serving and prospective elementary school teachers have positive attitude towards teaching profession. No significant difference occurred in the attitude of serving and prospective teachers in relation to the gender factor. A significant difference occurred in favour of graduate serving and prospective teacher in relation to education.

Keywords: Attitude, Serving and Prospective, Elementary School Teachers, Teaching Profession.

INTRODUCTION

Attitude is important to understand human behaviour. In literature many attempts have been made to define what exactly an attitude is. Generally attitude is defined as a complex mental state involving beliefs. Anastasi (1968) defined attitude as a tendency to react in a certain way towards a designed class of stimuli.

Attitude is a social concept but related with the mental aspect of the behaviour. It studies the views, direction and thoughts of a specific person or a group towards an object, person, organization, institution or situation.

In other words, we can also say that attitudes are those personality depositions and motivating force which decide the behavioural dimension – either positive or negative side towards any specific events, situation, object, person of group (Bhargava, 2007).

One area of interest in education, to both educationists and laymen is attitude. Allport (1967) a major contributor in the study of attitude, referred to the subject as “a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related”. Though there are number of principles on attitude formation, there is no specific principle which tries to explain attitude towards teaching. This lack of principle may be attributed to the disagreement among educationists as to what is meant by "attitude towards teaching".

Attitude towards teaching is a broad concept, having several scopes in its explanation. One dimension views teaching as a profession. Another dimension refers to the actual teaching process in the classroom. A third dimension is linked to the client in the classroom-i.e. the pupils. This dimension may regard teaching as the interaction between teacher and pupils. A fourth dimension refers to the workload of teachers (Yaakub, 1990). For the purpose of this study, attitude towards teaching can be defined as "teacher-pupil rapport and attitude towards school work". This definition implies the human interpersonal relationship between teachers and their pupils in the school and classroom settings. It is hypothesized that teachers with a good disposition towards their pupils reflect positive attitude, while those teachers with a poor disposition towards their pupils possess negative attitude.
People’s attitude towards their profession has an effect on their performance which is also valid for teaching profession. The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction. Teacher is instrumental for better instruction. He/She is required to have a higher professionalism because of rapidly changing circumstances. He/She is expected to use the best practices and strategies to meet the challenging demand of his career, which involves imparting knowledge and developing essential skills in the students. A good teacher is expected to be committed to his work and have an ability to take the initiative (Sparks, 1979). Teacher is expected to not only to master the subject and various methods of teaching but also to show that he is capable of selecting the various study materials according to the teaching goals and varied group of pupils. He also possesses the potentials to create a learning environment for the students.

People perceived teaching as a difficult job, a number of reasons may lie behind this perception. When a teacher enters a teaching profession they are faced with several difficulties, they start to feel deprived, self-contained and isolated from the society and it may cause a negative attitude towards the teaching profession. Attitudes of teachers play an important role in the teaching profession. Negative attitude of a teacher may have a negative impact on teaching.

Attitude towards profession means a person’s feelings, behaviours and commitment to the profession or job. The success of education depends upon the attitude of teachers, if a teacher is committed and have positive attitude then it is sure that his/her performance will be better and his/her efforts will be fruitful when he/she works in the teaching field.

Therefore, an effort was made to assess the attitude of serving and prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession. It is believed that prospective teachers choose teaching profession than the other professions and the ones who have intrinsic motives for teaching as a profession were the ones who possessed high levels of positive attitude towards teaching. On the other hand, the serving elementary school teachers might not possess high attitude towards teaching profession as most of the present serving teachers got into teaching profession by opportunity and not by choice. This study may provide information on the attitude of serving and prospective elementary school teachers and provide a way towards developing a positive attitude among prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession.

The problem of primary education is much emphasized in India today, it being the 1st stage of formal education, where normally the child is enrolled in school at the age of five or six years. This is the most formative age when the entire growth, development and enrichment of mental as well as physical potentialities of the child converge. This is the stage at which the child starts developing knowledge and attitudes which should be possessed by all good citizens. Therefore, to attain the aspired goal; the role of the teacher is very significant and vital in imparting the right type of education.

Several positive steps were under taken to improve the quality of teacher education, organized climate and socio-economic status of the teacher. But unfortunately these measures have not helped to lift the morale of the teachers or to develop favorable attitudes towards the teaching profession by way of upholding the dignity and status of the teaching profession. Hence, improving the quality of education continues to be a burning issue.

Iniobong (2005) opined that the future of any nation depends on the quality of teachers. The maxim that no educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers and that no nation can rise above the level of its teaching staff shows the important role of the teacher and the potency of teacher education programmes for national development. With the introduction of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) only well trained teacher can successfully translate the objectives of UEE to reality. Education, according to Lassa (1996) is the key to national development and teachers are the key to national development. In order to acquire practical proficiency to fulfill the above task, the prospective teachers need extensive orientation. Only then will the prospective teachers be well prepared for the rendition of responsibilities professionally, motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers who will encourage the spirit of inquiry, creativity and intellectual development among the beneficiaries of the educational system.

The present paper is based on a study which was undertaken to find out the attitude of serving and prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in Mizoram.

The following specific objectives were framed for the present study:

- To find out the level of attitude of serving elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in Mizoram.
- To find out the level of attitude of prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in Mizoram.
- To compare the attitude of serving elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation to their gender.
- To compare the attitude of prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation to their gender.
The following hypotheses were framed in relation to objectives no iii and iv:

- There is no significant difference in the attitude serving elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation to their gender
- There is no significant difference in the attitude of prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation to their gender

**Methodology:**

The study adopted descriptive survey study and determined the attitudes of serving and prospective elementary school teachers. The variable studied was attitude of serving and prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation gender.

**Population:**

All the prospective elementary school teachers of DIETs and serving elementary school teachers of Mizoram constituted the population of the study.

The population was large and therefore a sample was drawn from the population.

**Sample:**

The sample consisted 300 prospective elementary school teachers of eight DIETs and 300 serving elementary school teachers with the bifurcation of 150 male and 150 female each, proportional sample was maintained and sample was collected by way of stratified random sampling method.

**Tool used:**

The tools used to collect the required information for the study were:

- An Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession, developed by Investigator
- Student teachers Personal Information Sheet, Prepared by the Investigator

**Statistical Techniques Used:**

The following statistical techniques were used for analysis of data

1) percentage
2) mean
3) standard deviation
4) coefficient of correlation
5) T-test.

**Major Findings**

The following are the major findings of the present study.

A. **Attitude of serving elementary school teachers towards teaching profession.**

Majority of the serving elementary school teachers have positive attitude towards teaching profession.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stanine</th>
<th>Raw score</th>
<th>Distribution of respondents (out of 300)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>125 and below</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td>Negative Attitude</td>
<td>38.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>126-131</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>132-137</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>138-143</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>144-149</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Moderate Attitude</td>
<td>21.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>150-155</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>156-160</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>161-166</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>167 and above</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An observation of the data in Table 1 revealed that 40 percent of the serving elementary school teachers have high level (150 and above) of attitude/positive attitude towards teaching profession, 38.67 percent having low levels (143 and below)/negative attitude and 21.33 percent having moderate levels (144-149) of attitude towards teaching profession.
Majority of the female respondents have positive attitude towards teaching profession whereas majority of the male respondents have negative attitude towards teaching profession.

B. B. Attitude of Prospective Elementary School Teachers towards Teaching Profession.

Majority of the prospective elementary teachers have positive attitude towards teaching profession.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents’ (Prospective Elementary School Teachers) levels of Attitude Towards Teaching Profession

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Z-Score</th>
<th>Stanine</th>
<th>Raw score</th>
<th>Distribution of respondents (out of 300)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below -1.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>125 and below</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1.75 to -1.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>126-131</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>Negative Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1.25 to -0.75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>132-137</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.75 to -0.25</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>138-143</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.25 to 0.25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>144-149</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Moderate Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25 to 0.75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>150-155</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.75 to 1.25</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>156-160</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>Positive Attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.25 to 1.75</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>161-166</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1.75</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>167 and above</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (p) (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>147.01</td>
<td>11.05</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.402</td>
<td>.298</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>145.09</td>
<td>12.37</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table-2 showed that among the prospective elementary school teachers, 17 percent have average level (144-149) of attitude towards teaching profession, only 31 percent have low levels (below 144) of attitude and 52 percent have high levels (above 149) of attitude towards teaching profession.

Both majorities of the female and male prospective elementary school teachers have positive attitude towards teaching profession.

C. Difference in the Attitude of Male and Female Serving Elementary School Teachers towards Teaching Profession

A ‘t’-test was applied to compare the attitude of serving elementary school teachers towards teaching in relation to gender difference and a result was obtained as follows.

Table 3. Comparison of the Attitude of Female and Male Serving Elementary School Teachers towards Teaching Profession

Overall, the attitude of serving elementary school teachers presented fairly high positive attitudes towards teaching profession. The mean score of female of serving elementary school teachers on the attitude scale is 146.98 with standard deviation 11.04 and standard errors of 0.95; the mean score of male of serving elementary school teachers on the attitude scale is 145.09 with standard deviation 12.37 and standard error of 0.97.

A glimpse of the result vide Table 3 showed that the ‘t’ value for the significance of difference between the attitude of graduate and under graduate prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in Mizoram is 1.38 and p is 0.168. The required ‘t’ value to declare the difference as significant is 1.96 at 0.05 level and p value should be less than 0.05. Since the calculated ‘t’ value is less than the criterion ‘t’ value and p value is more than alpha 0.05, it was observed that levels of education did not have a significant influence on attitude of serving elementary school teachers. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

The result showed that gender has no relation with the attitude of serving elementary school teachers towards teaching profession. Analysis of the significance of difference between means of the male and female serving elementary school teachers shows that the ‘t’ value is insignificant which means that, there is no real difference in the levels of attitude of male and female serving teachers. However, it appears that female serving teachers have a higher level of attitude towards teaching profession than the male counterparts.
D. Difference in the Attitude of Male and Female Prospective Elementary School Teachers towards Teaching Profession

A ‘t’-test was applied to compare the attitude of prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching in relation to gender difference and a result was obtained as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (p) (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>Std. Error Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>148.67</td>
<td>10.93</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.706</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>.481</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>147.65</td>
<td>14.07</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attitude of prospective elementary school teachers had a high positive attitude towards teaching profession. The mean score of female prospective elementary school teachers on the attitude scale is 148.68 with standard deviation 10.94 and standard errors of 0.84; the mean score of male of prospective elementary school teachers on the attitude scale is 147.66 with standard deviation 14.07 and standard error of 1.22.

A glimpse of the result vide Table 4.10 showed that the ‘t’ value for the significance of difference between the attitude of graduate and under graduate prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession in Mizoram is 0.706 and p=0.481. The required “t” value to declare the difference as significant is 1.96 at 0.05 level and p value should be less than 0.05. Since the calculated ‘t’ value is less than the criterion ‘t’ value and p value is more than alpha 0.05, it was observed that levels of education did not have a significant influence on attitude of prospective elementary school teachers. By conventional criteria, this difference is considered to be not statistically significant.

The result also showed that no relation exists in the attitude of prospective elementary school teachers towards teaching profession with gender. There was no significance difference in the attitude of prospective teachers in relation to gender. However, it also showed that female prospective teachers have a higher level of attitude towards teaching profession than the male prospective teachers.

Recommendations:
1. A teacher’s attitude towards his/her profession not only affects his behaviour in the class room but also influence the behaviour of his students, so it is desirable for the Government to test attitude towards teaching profession at the time of recruitment and give weightage for recruitment.
2. It is desirable on the part of Government authorities to recruit young men and women with high educational qualification, talents, potentialities and positive attitudes towards teaching for the betterment of elementary education.
3. The Government should take serious viewpoint and prepare plans for changing negative working conditions of teachers. Efforts should also be made to improve the infrastructure facilities like library, laboratory, classroom, teaching aids for academic development.
4. Government should provide individuals and institutions opportunities in terms of conducting research and attending refresher courses, workshops, seminars and orientation programmes. This will bring professionalism among teachers and in turn will enhance positive attitude towards teaching profession.
5. Some incentives like, special allowances, accommodation may be arranged to teachers who were posted in the far flung areas to enhance the attitude of teachers towards teaching profession.
6. Work load is another factor which affects the attitude of teachers. There are still many schools that have only two teachers. In this respect all the vacancies are to be filled up by the government so as to reduce the work load and increase teaching attitude.
7. Teachers who enter in this profession usually have love for the profession and desire to perform their duties enthusiastically and sincerely. So, there is a need for safeguarding such enthusiasm throughout the entire service period. Teachers should be given special capacity building programmes, special incentives and opportunities for enhancing their enthusiasm and positive attitude towards teaching profession. In-service training programmes can also be organised to give necessary motivation and opportunities to update their knowledge from time to time.
8. The present finding shows that graduate teachers have higher attitude than undergraduate teachers. So, teachers should be given opportunities to continue for higher educational as well as professional studies.
9. Teachers’ welfare or association may organize programme for attitude development. Group
discussions, seminars, workshops, and other social or group activities may be chosen for developing attitudes.

**REFERENCE**


