



In-Depth Analysis of Attitude Towards the Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT

The study evaluated the attitude towards the teaching profession among secondary school teachers in the Imphal West district of Manipur. Further, the effects of demographic variables - gender, experience, subject stream, and qualification on the attitudes of teachers were investigated. A random sample of 256 teachers from the 59 secondary schools available in the district was used as the representative of the whole population of secondary school teachers. The tool for data collection has 55 items. Analysis done using descriptive and independent t-test statistics revealed that the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the teaching profession is neither high nor low but moderate. It was also found that demographic variables of gender, teaching experience, and subject stream have no significant impact on the teachers' professional attitudes. However, Graduate teachers were found to have favourably higher levels of attitude towards the teaching profession compared to their postgraduate counterparts.

KEYWORDS: Attitude; Secondary school; Teaching profession, Education

INTRODUCTION:

Teachers have a significant influence on the education system. They are the essential pillars of the educational system, shaping mankind and contributing to the development of the nation. The "Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act" ensures that education is accessible to all children aged six to fourteen. The act also emphasises the need for well-trained teachers with proper qualifications to ensure high-quality education for every child. Secondary education not only serves as a very crucial link between the primary schooling and higher education, but also plays a pivotal role in shaping the national workforce. It is during this phase that students' personalities develop, their critical thinking skills sharpen, and they gain essential life experiences. Failing to achieve these objectives during secondary education risks producing individuals who are ill-prepared for life, thereby compounding economic, social, and political challenges within the nation. Well-trained teachers who are motivated, and dedicated to their profession significantly enhance student learning. However, teachers are frequently criticized for not fulfilling their duties effectively. Conversely, there are educators who excel in their roles due to their passion and strong commitment to the profession. Effective teaching demands training, expertise, a sense of social responsibility, adherence to ethical standards, and a strong sense of autonomy and personal accountability.

According to Allport (1935), "An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all the objects and situations with which it is related". Bobbit (1994) defined "Attitudes are evaluation statements, either positive or negative, about objects, people or events. Attitude expresses how an individual feels about something". According to Soibamcha and Pandey (2016), teachers who have a negative attitude are unlikely to succeed in their profession. The success of students and their personality development is significantly influenced by teachers' attitudes, emotional responses, and habits, as noted by Brooks & Sikes (1997).

Research Question

1. What do secondary school teachers think about their profession of teaching? Which demographic factors influence their attitude?

Significance of the Study

Teachers who maintain a positive attitude towards their profession contribute to fostering creativity, motivating students, and ensuring the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. Achieving effective and productive learning among students hinges upon teachers exhibiting a favourable attitude towards their profession. (Trivedi, T. 2011). Teachers' attitudes toward the profession can be an indirect reflection of teachers' teaching competency. Therefore, it is identified as a significant research area. While numerous studies have investigated teachers' behaviours towards the teaching profession in various regions of the country, scant attention has been paid to understanding the attitudes of teachers in Manipur. Therefore, this study is considered significant as it seeks to assess the perspectives of secondary school teachers towards their profession in one of the districts of the capital city of Manipur.

Research Objectives

1. Assessment of secondary school teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession in the Imphal West District of Manipur.
2. Identification of the differences in the secondary school teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession concerning their gender, experience, subject stream, school types and qualifications.

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁: The teachers from secondary schools have a high level of attitude towards the teaching profession.
- H₀₂: The female and male secondary school teachers have no statistically noteworthy difference in their attitude towards the teaching profession.
- H₀₃: No statistically noteworthy difference in the attitude towards the teaching profession between less experienced and experienced secondary school teachers.
- H₀₄: No statistically noteworthy difference in the attitude towards the teaching profession between science and non-science secondary school teachers.
- H₀₅: No statistically noteworthy difference in the attitude towards the teaching profession between postgraduate teachers and graduate teachers from secondary schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Various studies have examined the teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession. Banerjee & Behera (2014) found average attitudes among secondary school teachers in Purulia District, West Bengal, with significant differences based on gender and rural-urban divide. Trivedi (2011) noted generally unfavourable attitudes among secondary school teachers in Lucknow city, with variations based on gender, subject stream, and medium of instruction. Norjit Meitei & Suresh Singh (2018) reported moderate positive attitudes among government higher secondary school teachers in Imphal, Manipur, with no significant differences based on demographic variables. Lone (2019) found no significant differences in attitudes among secondary school teachers in Kashmir based on gender or rural-urban divide. Khamari & Tiwari (2015) found no significant differences in attitudes among secondary school teachers in Odisha based on caste or gender. Sudhakar & Reddy (2017) reported no significant effects of demographic variables on attitudes among secondary school teachers in Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh. Shitaljit Singh (2015) found significant differences in attitudes between male and female teachers in Manipur, but no impact from other demographic variables. Chakraborty & Mondal (2014) discovered significant differences in attitudes among prospective teachers in West Bengal based on academic qualifications, but not on gender, category, religion, or location. Banerjee (2016) highlighted significant differences in attitudes among pupil-teachers in Bankura and Purulia districts based on sex and academic qualifications. Singh & Singh (2016) identified significant differences in attitudes among primary school teachers based on gender, academic qualifications, and subject stream. Sheergugri, Gupta & Raj (2022) found moderate levels of favourable attitudes among upper secondary school teachers in south Kashmir, with female and experienced teachers showing more favourable attitudes. Deupa (2023) reported mixed attitudes towards the teaching profession among teachers in Nepal. Al Harthy et al. (2013) observed more positive attitudes towards the profession among highly experienced effective teachers. Sivakumar (2018) noted average favourable attitudes among teachers in Coimbatore district, with significant influences from gender, school locality, main subject, and experience. Eleje et al. (2022) reported more positive attitudes among female secondary school teachers and those in urban areas compared to their counterparts. These studies collectively provide a comprehensive overview of how attitudes towards the teaching profession can vary across different regions, demographic factors, and educational contexts. Therefore, it needs to be investigated for the proposed study area.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Method

The research employed a survey model and followed a quantitative research design. The primary goal of the selected research method is to seek answers to the validity of the research question through a field survey.

Sampling

The present research focused on 425 secondary teachers teaching in 59 secondary schools in the Imphal West district of Manipur. A random sample of 256 teachers from 425 available teachers was selected as the representative of the whole population of teachers. Table 1 provides demographic information about the composition of secondary school teachers in the sample

Table 1: Demographic Information of the selected Samples (N=256)

Background Variables	Dimension	Count	Percentage
Gender	Male	90	0.35%
	Female	166	0.65%
Teaching Experience	Experienced (≥ 10 years)	131	0.51%
	Less experienced (< 10 years)	125	0.49%
Subject Stream	Science	111	0.43%
	Non-science	145	0.57%
Qualification	Post-graduate	198	0.77%
	Graduate	58	0.23%

Data Collection Tool

The study utilized the standardized attitude scale towards the teaching profession (ASTTP) developed by Kulsum (2008). The scale comprises 55 items measuring 5 aspects of the teaching profession viz. Academic (10 items), Administrative (6 items), Social & Psychological (28 items), Co-curricular (5 items) and Economic (6 items) aspects. The reliability of the tool was measured using Cronbach's alpha. Calculated Cronbach's alpha value was (0.825).

Statistical methods for analysis

To select the appropriate statistical analysis methods, an initial assessment was made to ascertain if the data exhibited a normal distribution. This involved calculating the mean (170.4), median (170.), mode (170), Kurtosis coefficient (-0.168) and the Skewness coefficient (-0.027). The mean, median and mode values are almost coinciding, and the coefficients also fall within the range of -1 to +1. In Figure 1, the histogram with the overlaid normal curve depicts the attitude data, showing a bell-shaped and symmetric distribution around the mean. The box plot also illustrates symmetric characteristics, with the median line positioned near the center of the box and symmetric whiskers extending from the box. This indicates that data may have come from a normal distribution. As the data demonstrated a normal distribution, the use of both descriptive and parametric t-tests in the analysis is allowed.

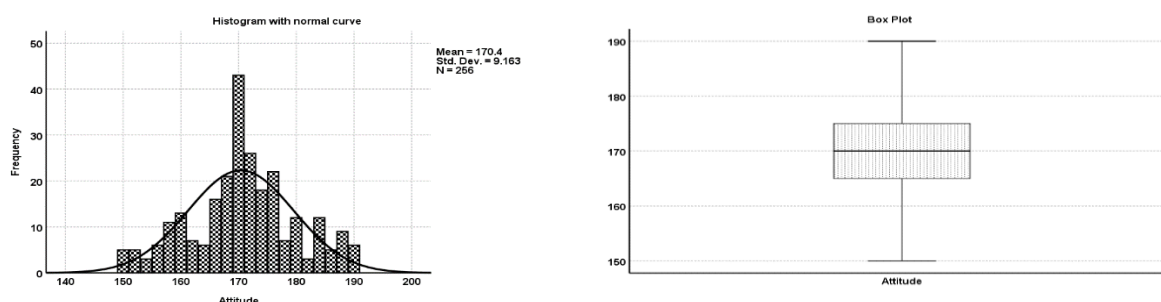


Figure 1: A visual check for normality of Attitude data

RESULTS:

Level of attitude towards the teaching profession

Based on the mean score ($\mu=170.4$) and standard deviation ($\sigma=9.163$) of the attitude data of the total sample of 256 teachers, teachers were branded into three different groups of attitude levels - Low attitude, medium attitude, and high attitude. The percentage of teachers in each group is shown in Table 2.

The study of the distribution of teachers has revealed that most of them, specifically 66.00%, fall within the medium attitude group, with only a small percentage, 16.0%, categorized in the high attitude group. In all demographic groups, 64.0% to 72.4% of secondary teachers demonstrated a medium level of attitude towards the teaching profession. Consequently, hypothesis H01 suggesting that "Secondary school teachers have a high level of attitude towards the teaching profession" is rejected

Table 2: Distribution of teachers in different groups across demographic variables.

Demographic Variable	N	Attitude Score Groups		
		Low (Score $\leq \mu - \sigma$)	Medium ($\mu - \sigma < \text{Score} \leq (\mu + \sigma)$)	High ($(\mu + \sigma) > \text{Score}$)
Gender				
Male	090	17.8%	66.7%	15.5%
Female	166	18.0%	65.7%	16.3%
Experience				
Experienced	131	18.3%	67.9%	13.8%
Less Experienced	125	17.6%	64.0%	18.4%
Subject Stream				
Science	111	18.9%	66.7 %	14.4%
Nonscience	145	17.2%	65.6%	17.2%
Qualification				
Postgraduate	198	21.2%	64.2%	14.6%
Graduate	058	06.9%	72.4%	20.7%
Overall Attitude	256	18.0%	66.0%	16.0%

Differences in Attitude concerning demographic variables

To ascertain the differences enunciated in the null hypotheses H_{02} to H_{05} , the parametric independent t-tests were performed on the attitude data concerning the demographic variables of gender, experience, subject stream and qualification. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 indicates that the p-values of attitude towards the teaching profession in all groups formed by demographic variables under consideration exceed 0.05 except those formed by the qualification variable. This observation implies that the mean scores of attitude for male teachers ($\mu_m=169.99$, $\sigma_m=9.343$), experienced teachers ($\mu_e=170.45$, $\sigma_e=9.098$), teachers of science subject ($\mu_s=169.58$, $\sigma_s=9.202$) are not remarkably different from the corresponding mean scores for female teachers ($\mu_f=170.62$, $\sigma_f=9.084$), less experienced teachers ($\mu_{le}=170.34$, $\sigma_{le}=9.267$), teachers of nonscience subjects ($\mu_{ns}=171.03$, $\sigma_{ns}=9.114$). On the other hand, the mean attitude score of postgraduate teachers ($\mu_{pg}=169.64$, $\sigma_{pg}=9.434$) is significantly different from that of graduate teachers ($\mu_{ug}=173.00$, $\sigma_{ug}=9.7689$).

Therefore, the null hypotheses H_{02} to H_{04} suggesting no statistically noteworthy difference in teachers' attitudes towards the teaching profession in corresponding groups formed demographic variables of gender, experience, and subject stream are accepted. However, the null hypothesis H_{05} is rejected ($p<0.05$). This indicates that there is a notable difference in the attitudes towards the teaching profession between postgraduate teachers and their graduate counterparts.

Table 3: Differences in the Attitudes of groups of Teachers formed by Demographic variables using independent t-tests

Demographic Variable	N	Mean (μ)	Std. Dev. (σ)	SE Mean	t(254)	p-value	Remark
Gender							
Male	090	169.99	9.343	0.985	-0.526	0.599	NS*
Female	166	170.62	9.084	0.705			
Teaching Experience							
Experienced	131	170.45	9.098	0.795	0.93	0.926	NS*
Less Experienced	125	170.34	9.267	0.829			
Subject Stream							
Science	111	169.58	9.202	0.873	-1.254	0.210	NS*
Non-Science	145	171.03	9.114	0.757			
Qualification							
Postgraduate	198	169.64	9.434	0.670	2.483	0.014	S*
Graduate	058	173.00	7.689	1.010			

NS* = Not significant at 0.05 level of confidence; S* = Significant at 0.05 level of confidence

The confidence interval is an interval that is expected to contain the parameter being estimated. The reliability of the t-tests is visualised in the plots of 95% confidence intervals of mean attitude scores in each group shown in Figure 2. Since the confidence intervals do overlap in groups formed by the demographic variables of gender, experience, and the subject stream, then it's likely that the true means of these individual groups are not

significantly different. The confidence intervals of the group formed by qualification do not overlap, prompting a possibility that the mean scores of attitude towards the teaching profession are significantly different.

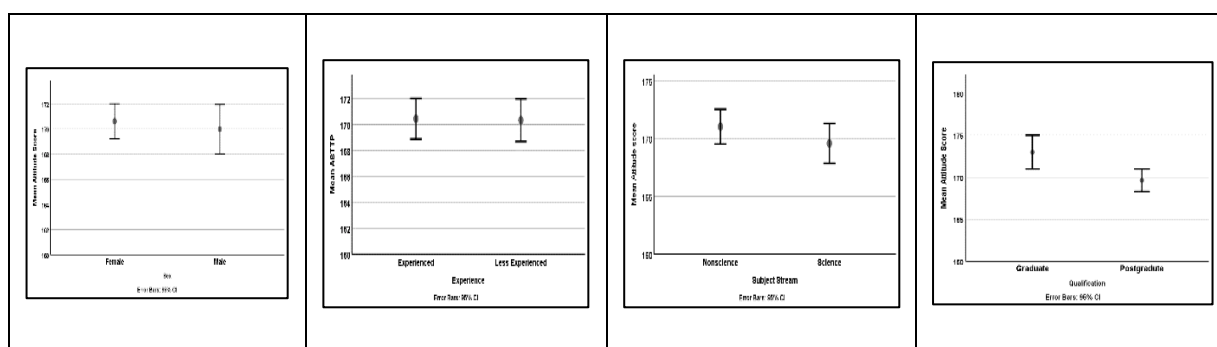


Figure 2: Plots of confidence intervals of mean attitude scores of Groups formed by Demographic variables.

DISCUSSION:

The analysis revealed that 66.00% of teachers demonstrated moderate attitudes towards the teaching profession, with only 16.00% classified as having high attitudes towards the teaching profession. Our finding is supported by the findings of (Banerjee, Srijita & Behera, S.K., 2014), (Norjit Meitei, N. & Suresh Singh, R.K., 2018) and (Sheergugri, S.A., Gupta, D.S., & Raj, D.M., 2022). Their studies also found a moderate level of teachers' attitude towards the teaching profession.

The present analysis also investigated the effects of demographic variables on the teaching attitudes of secondary school teachers towards the teaching profession. Similar studies have investigated the impact of demographic variables on teachers' attitudes. A comparison of our results with results from research of others' is presented below:

Gender:

Our study identified that gender did not affect the variable of teaching attitude among secondary school teachers. Our result is supported by the findings of (Khamari and Tiwari, 2015) and (Reddy & Sudhakar, 2017). However, our findings contradict those of (Trivedi, 2011), (Norjit and Suresh, 2018), (Lone 2019) and (Eleje, L. et. al., 2022). These studies have shown that gender plays a significant factor in differentiating the attitudes of teachers

Experience

The analysis results of our study of the influence of experience variables on the attitude towards the teaching profession are supported by the research findings of (Norjit Meitei, N. & Suresh Singh, R.K., 2018). On the other hand, our findings contradict those of (Shitaljit, 2015), (Al Harthy, et. al. 2013), (Sivakumar, 2018). These studies have shown a significant difference in teachers' professional attitudes concerning teachers' experience.

Subject Stream

With regards to the subject stream of teachers, our finding complies with the outcomes of the studies (Norjit Meitei, N. & Suresh Singh, R.K., 2018), (Sudhakar & Reddy, 2017), (Chakraborty & Mondal, 2014), (Sivakumar, 2018). However, Trivedi (2011) reported significant differences in teaching attitudes among teachers from different subject streams.

Qualification

Our finding that the qualification affects the attitudes of secondary school teachers towards the teaching profession agrees with the findings of (Banerjee, 2016) and (Chakraborty & Mondal 2014). However, our finding contradicts that of (Sudhakar & Reddy. 2017).

CONCLUSION:

Our study delved into a significant area of research, namely attitudes towards the teaching profession. Findings revealed that only 16.0% of secondary school teachers exhibited a high attitude towards their profession, while 66.0% fell within the moderate attitude bracket. Attitude directly correlates with the quality of education and student achievement. Therefore, further enhancement on attitudes towards teaching profession among the teachers is crucial as only 16.0% of them fall in the high attitude bracket. Educational authorities and stakeholders should consider restructuring educational environments to enhance the profession across theoretical, social, and cultural dimensions. The following steps are suggested for fostering greater interest in the teaching profession and elevating standards:

1. Emphasizing motivation and professional training of secondary school teachers. Well-trained and motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate commitment and improve student learning outcomes.
2. Enhancing teachers' service conditions to ensure they do not feel undervalued or neglected compared to professionals in other sectors.
3. Implementing merit-based criteria for teacher appointments to ensure that individuals with the right attitudes are selected.

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