

A Study of Professional Attitude in Upper Primary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Teachers are the key persons who provide education to the students, but the success of an education system depends on a teacher's professional qualifications, personal characteristics and attitude regarding the profession. The present study was conducted to examine the professional attitude of teachers at upper primary level of education. The study sample comprised of 200 teachers taken from Government Upper Primary Schools of Bhopal division. Teacher Attitude Inventory (TAI) having six subscales was administered to collect the data from sample teachers. Certain statistical techniques like percentage and t-test were used to analyze the data. The results showed that majority of the teachers were having moderate level of favourable attitude towards teaching profession and its allied aspects. Findings also showed that the female teachers and the more experienced teachers had more favourable professional attitude than the male teachers and less experienced teachers.

Keywords: *Professional Attitude, Upper Primary School Teachers*

The whole process of education is shaped and modeled by human personality called the teacher whose role is acknowledged as pivotal in the educational system of all societies. Teaching has always been considered to have paramount place in education in general and in human resource development in particular. Its quality determines the quality of future of any nation. It can be attested to the fact that the right teacher who truly cares about his profession can definitely have a productive effect on his disciples. The quality of teaching can depend heavily not only on the quality of teachers but also on their mental attitudes towards the teaching profession. This is because attitudes have been found to influence behavior in general. The teacher intellectual attitudes, emotional reactions, various habits and personality that includes all these affects the students in terms of academic success, personality, interest, etc. (Bloom, 1976., Jeans, 1995., Brooks and Sikes, 1997).

The role of attitude in human life has been clarified and recognized by psychologists since 19th century. Today, it is agreed that attitude not only determines the conclusion we shall

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derive from the facts but also influences the very facts we are willing to accept. Thurstone (1946) has defined attitude as the degree or positive or negative effect associated with some psychological object. By a psychological object, he meant any symbol, phrase, slogan, person, institution, ideal or ideas towards which people can differ with respect to positive or negative effect. For example, a particular job may be a psychological object. According to Anastasi (1968), attitude is a tendency to react favourably or unfavourably towards a designated class of stimuli such as a national or racial group a custom or an institution. Triandis (1971) defined attitudes to be one's thoughts or ideas regarding one's feelings that influence behaviors related to a particular issue.

Attitude towards a profession is important both by way of professionals pride as well as determining the level of commitment towards the profession. The attitude towards professions also has an impact on an individual's performance. An individual's favorable behavior leads to the good motivation, efficiency and satisfaction. The same is true for teaching profession also. Teaching profession involves the interactions with the largest number of individuals. The attitude of a teacher is manifested in terms of favorable or unfavorable behavior to stimuli. A positive attitude would help to create a favourable and enriching atmosphere for both the teacher and students while a negative attitude would render the task of teaching and consequently learning on the part of students, both unpleasant and tedious.

The Government of India has ensured 'free and compulsory education under "The Right to Education Act" that came into force on 1st April 2010, legalizing the right to free and compulsory schooling for all children between the ages of 6 to 14. In the light of this, 98% habitations have a primary school (class I-V) within one kilometer and 92% have an upper primary school (class VI-VIII) within three kilometer walking distance, which has facilitated a gradual increase in the enrollment of children in these schools. The pupil-teacher ratio also increased from 35.6 to 44.5 which show that Government is committed to universalizing elementary education in the state.

Until now the teachers on their part had a single major professional responsibility to impart knowledge to the young. Now they are expected to be a knowledge specialist, a counselor, a coordinator of instruction. School administrators and the public are holding responsible for incompatible and unrealistic tasks beyond their expertise, knowledge, and professional preparation. The change has week ended the teachers' effectiveness, enthusiasm and attitude towards their profession. Although a plethora of research in teaching attitudes has been conducted nationally and internationally over the past (Soibamcha, 2016.,Al Harthy, et al., 2013., Ahmad and Hussain 2012., Shah and Thoker 2013., Abu Dabat, Z. 2010), and most of those studies were aimed to investigate the teachers' attitude at secondary level while only few work has been done in the case of upper primary level teachers.

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In these contexts, the investigator has tried to explore the attitude towards teaching profession of upper primary school teachers with regard to their gender and teaching experience in the present study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are a number of studies which have shown that teachers' attitudes and performances have a crucial role to play in their teaching and the educational achievements of their students.

Dhull and Jain (2017), conducted study to find out the difference in teaching attitude of 120 senior secondary school teachers in relation to job satisfaction. It was found that female teachers, highly job satisfied teachers possess more favourable attitude towards teaching than their counterparts.

Rani (2016), conducted studies on the attitude towards teaching profession of 100 prospective teachers of B.Ed. program drawn from four districts of Haryana State. The results showed that no significant difference was found between their mean scores with respect to their gender and residential background, while significant difference was with respect to their marital status and with respect to their type of institution.

Khurshid, et.al. (2014), stated that insufficient funding for schools, lack of interest from parents and public community and insufficient salaries are the factors which are responsible for negative attitudes towards the teaching profession.

Kaur and Kaur (2012), investigated the attitude of elementary school teachers towards inclusive education in a sample of 195 elementary school teachers teaching in various private and government schools of Patiala district of Punjab. The results revealed significant differences in attitude of teachers towards inclusive education with regard to gender, location, type of school, years of teaching experience, educational qualifications, teacher training, having a family member/ friend with disability and level of confidence in teaching students with disability.

Lal and Shergill (2012), revealed that female degree college teachers have more favorable attitude towards education as compared to their male counterparts. Male and female teachers are not different from each other on job satisfaction variable.

Akbulut and Karaku (2011), studied the attitude of 239 secondary school science and mathematics (physics, chemistry, biology and mathematics) teacher candidates by using "Teaching Professional Attitude Scale" developed by Ozgur (1994). It was found that teacher candidates' attitudes towards teaching profession were positive.

Belagali (2011), studied teachers attitude towards teaching profession of secondary schools in relation to gender and locality and showed that female and urban secondary school teachers

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have higher attitude towards teaching profession as compared to male teachers and rural secondary school teachers.

Trivedi (2011), focused on the assessment of secondary school teacher's attitude towards the teaching profession. The results of the study showed that the females, the Arts subject stream teachers and English medium teachers possess more favorable professional attitudes than their counterparts.

Ghosh and Bairgya (2010), measured attitude of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation to some demographic variables. It was found that there was no significant difference in the attitude of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession in relation to academic stream and educational qualification but there existed significant difference in relation to sex, caste and teaching experience.

Cetinkaya (2009), studied 195 Turkish teacher candidates attitudes towards teaching profession. It was found that Turkish teacher candidates attitude scores towards teaching profession were higher and female teacher candidates attitudes were more positive.

Ghanti and Jagadesh (2009), revealed that teachers working in government and private secondary schools did not differ significantly in their attitude towards teaching profession. Similarly, male and female teachers' also did not differed significantly in their attitude towards teaching profession.

Research carried out on teachers' attitude shows that there is lack of agreement in the findings of different studies. The contradictory findings of these studies safely conclude that there is enough scope and need to probe this area further. Following are the objectives of the present study.

Objectives

1. To study the professional attitude in the samples of upper primary school teachers.
2. To describe the sample of teachers on the basis of teaching experiences with regard to their professional attitude at upper primary level of education.
3. To study and compare the professional attitude of teachers on the basis of gender at upper primary level of education.

The study empirically tested the following hypothesis.

Hypotheses

1. Upper primary teachers do not differ significantly in their professional attitude.
2. Upper primary teachers do not differ significantly in their professional attitude on the basis of their teaching experiences.
3. Upper primary male and female teachers do not differ significantly on their professional attitude.

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Important term

Professional attitude: Professional attitude for the present study refers to the scores obtained on Teacher Attitude Inventory (TAI) prepared by S. P. Ahluwalia.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was designed to study the professional attitude of teachers at upper primary level of education. As such the descriptive method of research was employed to carry out this piece of research.

Sample

The five districts of Bhopal Division were involved in the collection of data. A total population of 200 Government Upper Primary School teachers served as the sample for the present study which was collected by using stratified random sampling technique.

Instrument employed

Teacher attitude inventory (TAI) developed by S.P. Ahluwalia was used for the collection of data.

Statistical treatment

The collected data was subjected to percentage statistics and analysed by calculating Mean , SD , t-values.

Analysis and Discussion

The analysis and discussion of the results have been carried out along the following lines:

Table 1 Overall Percentage of Upper Primary Teachers Attitudes on Teacher Attitude Inventory - TAI (N=200)

| MEAN SCORES ON TAI | N | PERCENTAGE | LEVEL OF ATTITUDE |
|--------------------|-----|------------|-------------------|
| 168-185 | 14 | 7.0 | Very High |
| 132-168 | 30 | 15 | High |
| 100-132 | 112 | 56 | Moderate |
| 80-100 | 26 | 13 | Low |
| Below 80 | 18 | 9 | Very Low |

Descriptive Analyses

Table 1 shows the level of professional attitude of teachers at upper primary Level. The statistical data reveals that out of total number of 200 teachers, 56% fall in moderate level, whereas 13% and 9% teachers had low and very low level of professional attitude. It is further observed that 15% and 7% of teachers had a high and very high level of attitudes towards teaching profession.

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Table 2. Overall percentage of male and female teachers of upper primary Teachers on Attitude Inventory - TAI (N=200)

| MEAN SCORES ON TAI | Gender | | | | Level of Attitude |
|--------------------|---------------|---------|-----------|---------|-------------------|
| | Female (112) | | Male (88) | | |
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | |
| 168-185 | 9 | 8.03 | 7 | 7.9 | Very High |
| 132-168 | 20 | 17.85 | 13 | 14.77 | High |
| 100-132 | 64 | 57.14 | 47 | 53.40 | Moderate |
| 800-100 | 12 | 10.71 | 12 | 13.63 | Low |
| Below 80 | 7 | 6.25 | 9 | 10.22 | Very Low |

Table 2 depicts the levels of professional attitude of male and female teachers of upper primary level. A look at the table reveals that 8.03% of the female teachers were found to be having very high level of favourable attitude, whereas only 7.0% male teachers fall in this category. 17.85% female teachers fall in high favourable category which is higher than male teachers who constituted 14.77% in this category. In the moderate level category, 57.14% and 53.40% were that of female and male teachers respectively. The data further reveals that 10.71% female and 13.63% male teachers fall in low category whereas 6.25% female and 10.22% male teacher fall in very low category.

Table 3. Comparison of Mean, SD and t-value of male and (N=88) female teachers (N=112) on Teacher Attitude Inventory.

| Dimension | Gender | Mean | SD | T-Value | Significance |
|------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|-----------------|
| Attitude towards Teaching Profession | Male | 26.13 | 4.125 | 2.29 | Significant |
| | Female | 27.49 | 4.197 | | |
| Attitude towards Classroom Teaching | Male | 27.23 | 5.247 | 1.80 | Not-Significant |
| | Female | 25.99 | 4.442 | | |
| Attitude towards Child Centered Practice | Male | 31.59 | 4.971 | 2.12 | Significant |
| | Female | 30.10 | 4.933 | | |
| Attitude towards Educational Process | Male | 20.96 | 3.485 | 1.94 | Not-Significant |
| | Female | 21.94 | 3.586 | | |
| Attitude towards Pupils | Male | 14.54 | 3.625 | 2.56 | Significant |
| | Female | 13.24 | 3.488 | | |
| Attitude towards Teacher | Male | 28.21 | 5.049 | 2.36 | Significant |
| | Female | 29.94 | 5.241 | | |
| Overall score | Male | 148.85 | 20.821 | 2.05 | Significant |
| | Female | 154.84 | 19.935 | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 and Figure 1 gives an account of Means, Standard Deviations and t-values of male and female teachers on the six dimensions and composite score of Teacher Attitude Inventory. A perusal of Table 3, row (i) reveals that there is a significant difference ($t=2.29$, $p < 0.05$) between male (Mean = 26.13) and female (Mean =27.49) teachers on Attitude towards Teaching Profession area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The mean difference

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favoured female teachers which imply that female teachers consider teaching as one of the greatest stimulants to mental doings and a best means of self expression and professional growth as compared to male teachers.

A look at row (ii) of the same table reveals that male and female teachers do not differ significantly on Attitude towards Classroom Teaching area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The calculated t-value came out to be 1.80 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean score of male teachers was found to be higher(27.23) than female teachers(25.99) which shows that male teachers believe that if students are having difficulty, an effective approach is for the teacher to give them more practice during the class.

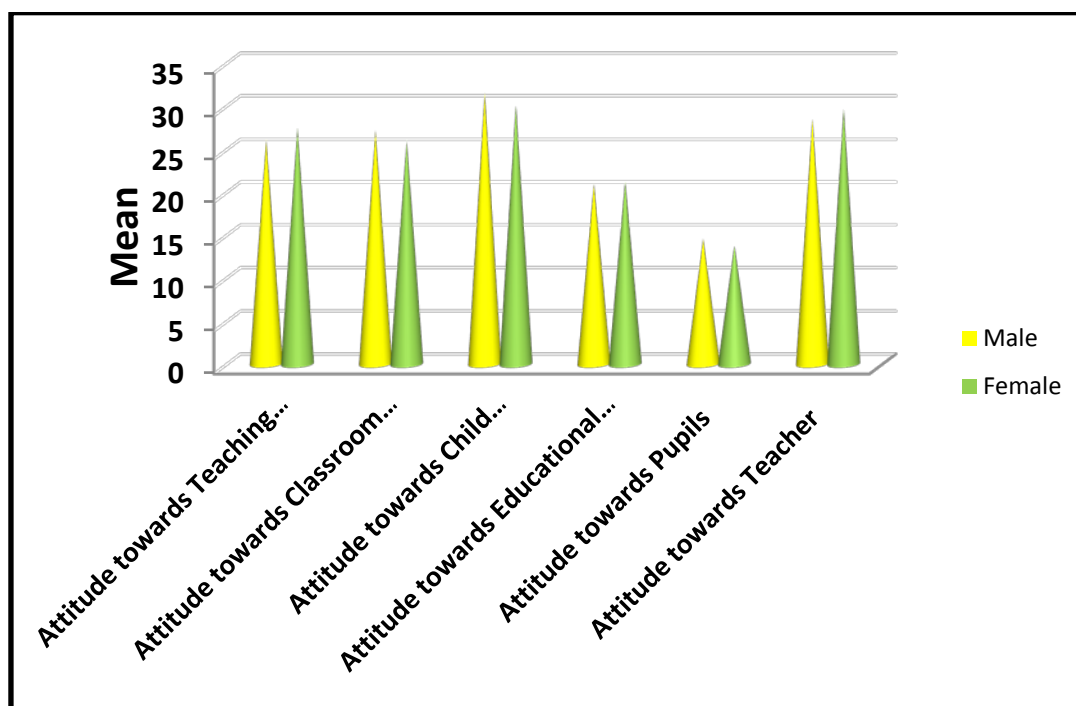


Figure 1 Comparison of Mean Scores of Male And Female Teachers on Teacher Attitude Inventory.

Row (iii) of Table 3 further reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female teachers on Attitude towards Child Centred Practices area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value came out to be 2.12 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured male teachers which implies that these teachers strongly feel that curriculum should be personalized to meet each students' need more than female teachers.

Row (iv) of table 3 , makes it clear that there is a mean difference between male (20.96) and female (21.24) teachers on Attitude towards Educational Process area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value came out to be 1.94 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured female teachers which implies that they are more conducive than male teachers towards instructional approach to optimize student learning.

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A perusal of row (v), Table 5 shows that there is a significant mean difference between male and female Teachers on Attitude towards Pupils area of Teacher Attitude Inventory, as reflected by obtained t-value (2.56) which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference showed that male teachers were in more favour than female teachers on this aspect that students should be allowed to share in decision-making and controlling of much of their learning.

Row (vi) of Table 5 further indicate that there is a significant mean difference between male and female teachers on Attitude towards Teachers area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value came out to be 2.36 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured female teachers which implies that they believe that it is the teacher who helps in development of character and personality of the students.

Overall Score in last row i.e. (vii) of Table 5 reveals that there is a significant mean difference between male and female teachers on Overall areas of Teacher Attitude Inventory. As reflected by t-value (2.05) which is significant at 0.05 level of significance, the mean difference favoured a female teacher which implies that these teachers exhibit better professional attitude in overall areas than the male teachers.

Keeping in view the above results, it is worthwhile to mention that both male and female teachers differ significantly on attitude towards Teaching Profession, Attitude towards Child Centered Practices, Attitude towards Pupils, Attitude towards Teachers and Overall Professional attitudes. It may be generalized that Gender of the teacher is a significant factor that determines the attitude of teachers towards teaching profession and its allied aspects. These findings are in agreement with the findings of the study of Belagali (2011) who found that female teachers have higher attitude towards teaching profession as compared to male teachers and rural secondary school teachers. Singh and Bhaker (1996) found that male teachers were inferior in attitude towards teaching than female teachers Saxena (1995) found that female teachers had relatively favourable attitude in comparison to male teachers. On the basis of above analysis, the hypothesis number two which reads as, 'male and female teachers do not differ significantly on their professional attitude stands rejected.

Table 4. Comparison of Mean, SD and t-value of Teachers based on their Teaching experience [+10 (N=79) , -10 (N=121)] on Teacher Attitude Inventory.

| Dimension | Teaching experience | Mean | SD | t-Value | Significance |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|-------|---------|-----------------|
| Attitude towards Teaching Profession | +10 years | 33.85 | 10.12 | 0.71 | Not Significant |
| | -10 years | 34.84 | 9.12 | | |
| Attitude towards Classroom Teaching | +10 years | 36.98 | 10.52 | 1.96 | Significant |
| | -10 years | 34.15 | 9.56 | | |
| Attitude towards Child Centered Practice | +10 years | 34.98 | 9.95 | 2.06 | Significant |
| | -10 years | 31.89 | 10.93 | | |
| Attitude towards | +10 years | 37.89 | 11.08 | 1.35 | Not Significant |

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| Dimension | Teaching experience | Mean | SD | t-Value | Significance |
|--------------------------|---------------------|--------|-------|---------|--------------|
| Educational Process | -10 years | 39.98 | 9.98 | | |
| Attitude towards Pupils | +10 years | 41.94 | 12.34 | 2.19 | Significant |
| | -10 years | 38.44 | 10.12 | | |
| Attitude towards Teacher | +10 years | 36.94 | 10.34 | 1.96 | Significant |
| | -10 years | 34.14 | 9.12 | | |
| Overall score | +10 years | 149.44 | 18.31 | 1.97 | Significant |
| | -10 years | 143.95 | 20.47 | | |

Significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 gives an account of scores of Mean, Standard Deviations and t-values of teachers with different teaching experiences (i.e. above and below 10 years) on the following six areas and composite score of Teacher Attitude Inventory.

A perusal of Table 4, row (i) reveals that there is no significant mean difference between teachers of different teaching experiences on Attitude towards Teaching Profession area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value is 0.71 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured teachers having less than 10 years of teaching experience which show that these teachers consider teaching profession as the best means to serve students more than their counterparts.

A look at row (ii) of the same table reveal that teachers with different years of teaching experiences differ significantly on Attitude towards Classroom Teaching area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The calculated t-value came out to be 1.96 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured more experienced teachers than less experienced teachers which implies that more experienced teachers always encourage critical and innovative thinking among students, and underline the practical side of classroom teaching.

Row (iii) of Table 4 further reveals that there is a significant mean difference between teachers with different teaching experiences on Attitude towards Child Centered Practices area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value came out to be 2.06 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured more experienced teachers which reveals that these teachers give due consideration to the individuality of the students more than that of less experienced teachers.

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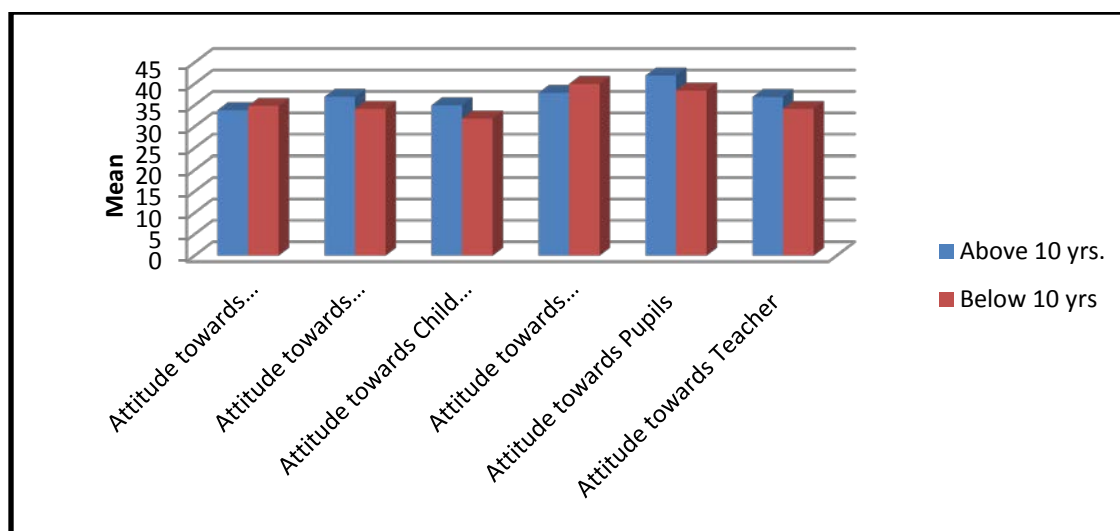


Figure 2 Comparisons of Mean Scores of Teachers Pertaining To Their Teaching Experience on Teacher Attitude Inventory.

A look at the Table 4, row (iv) makes it clear that there is no significant mean difference between teachers with different teaching experiences on Attitude towards Educational Process area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value came out to be 1.35 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean scores of less experienced teachers (39.98) is comparatively more than that of high experienced teachers (37.89) which reveals that they provide more informative feedback to the students and also given them freedom to learn according to their own desires.

A perusal of row (v) of the same table shows that there is significant mean difference between teachers with different teaching experiences on Attitude towards Pupils area of Teacher Attitude Inventory, as reflected by obtained t-value (2.19) at 0.05 level of significance. The mean score obtained in difference favoured more experienced teachers who in comparison to less experienced teachers reported that students are generally sincere and can be ordered by means of self discipline.

Row (vi) of table 4 further indicate that there is a significant mean difference between teachers with different experiences on Attitude towards Teachers area of Teacher Attitude Inventory. The obtained t-value came out to be 1.96 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The mean difference favoured more experienced teachers who believed that teacher is the leader of the nation and is respected by all.

Last row (vii) of the same table reveals that there is a significant mean difference between teachers with different teaching experience on Overall areas of Teacher Attitude Inventory. As reflected by t-value (1.97) obtained at 0.05 level of significance, the mean difference favoured more experienced teachers in comparison to less experienced teachers which reveal that more experienced teachers exhibit better Professional Attitude in overall areas than the less experienced Teachers.

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Keeping in view the above results, it is worthwhile to mention that teachers with different teaching experiences differ significantly on Attitude towards Classroom Teaching, Attitude towards Child Centred Practices and Attitude towards Pupils, Attitude towards Teacher and Overall Professional Attitude . It may be generalized that teaching experiences of the teacher is a significant factor that determines the attitude of teachers towards teaching profession and its allied aspects. Significant differences in professional attitudes of teachers have also been reported earlier by Ghosh and Bairgya (2010). These findings were also supported by other studies (Patil 1984., Pandey and Maikhuri, 1999., Al Harthy, Jamaluddin and Abedalaziz, 2013) which showed that highly experienced effective teachers' attitude was more positive towards teaching profession than less experienced teachers.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' attitude towards their world of work i.e. teaching is important for pupil growth. The findings of the present study, show that majority of the teachers have moderate level of favourable attitude towards teaching and its allied aspects. The study also revealed that the female teachers possessed more favourable Professional Attitude than the male teachers. This lack of essential zeal and holding of unfavourable attitude towards the teaching profession not only kills the 'professional self' of a teacher but also dampens the spirit of the school life. Teachers performing their duty only for the sake of salary and not liking or respecting the job in which they are engaged bring forth a catastrophic situation, which tends to harm the school system as a whole.

A subsidiary aim of the research was also to examine the influence of teaching experience on attitudinal dimensions. The results also show that there is a significant difference between the teachers of different teaching experiences on their professional attitudes towards teaching. The more experienced teachers showed more favourable professional attitudes than less experienced teachers as it is psychologically proved that with the advancement of age and experience one gets all sorts of maturity like- mental, emotional etc. one gains more capability in decision making rather than physical activities. As one advances in experience with the passage of time one observes many ups and downs in one's professional life and gains more capability in decision making rather than physical activities. Thus it was also concluded that teaching experience play a great role in the development of favourable attitude towards the teaching profession.

Implications of the study

Teaching is an art and the quality of teaching depends on the love, dedication, devotion and attitudes of the teacher towards the profession. In-service training programmes should be organised to change or boost the attitude of teachers. Special in-service orientation programmes should be organised for teachers to orient them with different dimensions of professional attitude and to increase their understanding of practical aspect of teaching and pedagogical approaches. Teachers should be trained to make them understand that students have certain needs that must be met before learning can take place. Marks et al. (2000), pointed out that traditional structure of organization should be changed by empowering

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teachers in decision making process and developing an ambience where responsibilities and values are shared. The Findings of the study are pertinent for schools in hiring teachers, planning professional development initiatives, and evaluating methods to improve student learning.

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