

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE TEACHING PROFESSION AMONG TEACHER TRAINEES: INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND PREDICTIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study examines teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession and the influence of demographic variables, including gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction. A descriptive survey design was adopted with a sample of 280 teacher trainees selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a self-constructed Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale ($\alpha = 0.78$). Descriptive statistics, t-tests, correlation, and multiple regression analyses were employed. The findings indicate a generally favourable attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees. Significant differences were observed across demographic variables, with female, urban, science stream, and English medium trainees demonstrating relatively higher attitude levels. Correlation analysis revealed significant associations between demographic variables and attitude scores, while regression analysis identified subject stream as the strongest predictor. The study highlights the role of socio-demographic and educational factors in shaping professional attitudes and emphasizes the need for targeted interventions in teacher education programmes, aligned with the National Education Policy 2020.

Keywords: Attitude towards Teaching Profession, Teacher Trainees, Teacher Education, Professional Commitment, Instructional Effectiveness, Teacher Retention

INTRODUCTION

Teaching contributes significantly to the intellectual, social, and moral development of society. Teachers shape learners' knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions, supporting the development of responsible citizens. Teacher effectiveness is influenced by subject expertise, pedagogical competence, and attitude towards the teaching profession. Attitude refers to an individual's cognitive, affective, and behavioural disposition towards a particular object or profession

(Allport, 1935). A positive attitude is associated with higher levels of commitment, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness, while a negative attitude is linked to reduced motivation and professional engagement (Hargreaves, 2000).

Teacher trainees represent the future teaching workforce. Professional attitudes are formed during teacher education through engagement with pedagogical theory, practicum experiences, and institutional contexts (Darling-Hammond,

2017). Empirical studies indicate that attitudes towards teaching are shaped by demographic and academic factors. Variables such as gender, locality, and subject specialization influence trainees' perceptions and preparedness for the profession (Gupta and Rani, 2016).

In India, educational reforms have emphasized strengthening teacher preparation. The National Education Policy 2020 calls for the development of competent, motivated, and ethically responsible teachers to improve educational quality (Government of India, 2020). Examination of teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession provides evidence for enhancing teacher education programmes and professional outcomes.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Variation in teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession requires systematic examination. Prior studies report differences across demographic categories, including gender, subject stream, and educational background (Kumar and Ratnalikar, 2015; Singh and Lal, 2014). These variations have implications for professional commitment and teaching effectiveness. Limited research addresses the combined influence of multiple demographic variables such as gender, locality, subject stream, and

medium of instruction within a single analytical framework. Context-specific evidence remains necessary for informing teacher education practices.

The present study examines teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession and analyses the influence of selected demographic variables. The findings are expected to inform curriculum design, teacher preparation practices, and policy decisions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees.
2. To examine differences in attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees with respect to demographic variables, namely gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction.
3. To determine the relationship between selected demographic variables and attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees.
4. To analyse the predictive influence of demographic variables on teacher trainees' attitude towards the teaching profession.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following null hypotheses are formulated:

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees with respect to gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction.
- H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between selected demographic variables and attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees.
- H₀₃: Demographic variables do not significantly predict teacher trainees' attitude towards the teaching profession.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature provides the conceptual and empirical foundation for understanding attitudes towards the teaching profession. Attitude is a psychological construct that shapes professional behaviour, motivation, and commitment (Allport, 1935; Hargreaves, 2000). In teacher education, professional attitude influences instructional effectiveness, teacher–student interaction, and retention in the profession. Research in this domain examines the role of demographic, academic, and contextual variables in shaping teacher trainees' attitudes.

Evidence from the Indian context indicates that teacher trainees generally demonstrate favourable attitudes towards the teaching profession, with variation across demographic and academic factors. Kumar and Ratnalikar (2015) reported moderately positive attitudes among prospective teachers, with significant differences based on gender and subject stream. Singh and Lal (2014) identified higher levels of positive attitude among female trainees, while locality did not show significant variation. Gupta and Rani (2016) found that subject stream and academic achievement significantly influenced professional attitude, whereas gender differences were not statistically significant. Saini (2017) reported an average level of professional attitude and identified institutional type as an influencing factor. Sharma and Saini (2018) established a significant relationship between teaching aptitude and professional attitude, indicating stronger commitment among trainees with higher aptitude. Patil (2019) observed significant differences based on gender and subject specialization and emphasized the importance of strengthening professional orientation within teacher education programmes. Anand and Devi (2021) reported a moderate level of professional attitude among teacher trainees in Tamil Nadu, with significant differences based

on medium of instruction and year of study, indicating the influence of academic exposure and language background.

International research identifies motivation, professional identity, and training experiences as key determinants of attitudes towards the teaching profession. Professional attitude is associated with teacher motivation, self-efficacy, and commitment (OECD, 2020; Flores, 2021; Klassen and Tze, 2022). Intrinsic motivation, job security, and perceived social contribution influence positive perceptions of teaching as a career (Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000). The FIT-Choice framework demonstrates that intrinsic career value and social utility value predict favourable attitudes towards teaching (Richardson and Watt, 2006). Professional attitude influences classroom effectiveness and persistence in the profession (Brookhart and Freeman, 1992), while intrinsic career motivation is associated with stronger commitment and positive professional orientation (Heinz, 2015).

Empirical evidence establishes relationships between professional attitude and teaching self-efficacy, academic experience, and practicum exposure (Tarman, 2012; Sabancı and Şahin, 2017). Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction show significant associations with professional attitude (Klassen and Chiu,

2011). Contemporary research highlights the role of teacher education institutions in addressing challenges related to technological integration, diverse classrooms, and evolving pedagogical expectations, with emphasis on developing professional commitment, reflective practice, and positive attitudes towards teaching (Flores, 2021; Klassen and Tze, 2022).

RESEARCH GAP

Existing studies report generally favourable attitudes among teacher trainees and identify the influence of individual demographic variables. Limited evidence addresses the combined effect of gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction within a single analytical framework. Context-specific empirical data on these variables remains insufficient. The present study addresses this gap by examining the integrated influence on the attitudes of teacher trainees towards the teaching profession.

METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey design to assess the level of attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees and to examine differences across selected demographic variables. The sample comprised 280 teacher trainees drawn from teacher education institutions

using a stratified sampling technique to ensure adequate representation across gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction. Data were collected using the Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale (ATTP Scale), developed by the investigator based on an extensive review of literature and expert validation to assess the attitudes of teacher trainees towards the teaching profession. The instrument consisted of 45 items covering cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions of professional attitude. Both positively and negatively worded items were included to minimize response bias. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, with total scores ranging from 45 to 225, where higher scores indicate a more favourable attitude. Negatively worded items were reverse scored.

Content validity was established through expert review in the field of education and measurement. Reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.78, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Data collection was carried out after obtaining permission from institutional authorities, and confidentiality of responses was ensured.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

The collected data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques in alignment with the objectives and hypotheses of the study. Descriptive statistics, including mean, and standard deviation, were used to determine the level of attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees. Inferential techniques were applied to examine differences and relationships among variables. The t-test was used to analyse differences between two groups such as gender, locality, and medium of instruction, while analysis of variance was employed to examine differences across multiple groups, including subject stream. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to assess the relationship and predictive influence of selected demographic variables on attitude towards the teaching profession.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Descriptive Analysis of Attitude towards the Teaching Profession

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Attitude Scores (N = 280)

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Attitude towards Teaching	280	168.42	18.36

The descriptive statistics indicate that the overall mean score of teacher trainees on the Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale is 168.42 with a standard deviation of 18.36. This suggests that teacher trainees, on average, possess a moderately favourable attitude towards the teaching profession. The mean score, which lies above the mid-point of the scale, reflects a generally positive perception of teaching as a profession among the respondents. The standard deviation value indicates a moderate level

of variability in the responses, implying that while most teacher trainees demonstrate positive attitudes, some variation exists in the degree of favourability towards the teaching profession.

Hypothesis – 1

There is no significant difference in attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees with respect to gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction.

Table 2 Mean Difference in Attitude towards the Teaching Profession by Selected Demographic Variables

Variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Gender	Male	132	165.18	19.42	2.71	0.007*
	Female	148	171.34	17.11		
Locality	Rural	138	166.27	18.91	1.98	0.049*
	Urban	142	170.51	17.64		
Subject Stream	Arts	146	166.02	18.97	2.32	0.021*
	Science	134	171.05	17.42		
Medium of Instruction	Tamil	154	165.91	18.84	2.39	0.017*
	English	126	171.51	17.42		

*Significant at 0.05 level

The results indicate that there is a significant difference in the attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees with respect to gender, locality, subject stream, and medium of instruction. Female, urban, science stream,

and English medium teacher trainees exhibited relatively higher attitude levels compared to their counterparts. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant difference in the attitude towards the teaching profession among

teacher trainees with respect to the selected demographic variables.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between selected demographic variables and attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees.

Table 3 Correlation between Demographic Variables and Attitude Scores

Variable	<i>r</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Gender	0.18	0.004*
Locality	0.12	0.041*
Subject Stream	0.21	0.001*
Medium of Instruction	0.15	0.012*

* Significant at 0.05 level

As shown in Table 3, all selected demographic variables exhibit positive and statistically significant relationships with teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession. Among these, subject stream demonstrates the strongest association, followed by gender, medium of instruction, and locality. As all relationships are significant at the 0.05 level, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that demographic variables are significantly associated with teacher

trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession.

Hypothesis 3

Demographic variables do not significantly predict teacher trainees' attitude towards the teaching profession.

To examine the predictive influence of demographic variables on attitude towards the teaching profession, multiple regression analysis was performed.

Table 4 Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Attitude Scores

Predictor Variable	B	SE	β	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Gender	3.26	1.18	0.17	2.76	0.006*
Locality	2.11	1.02	0.13	2.07	0.039*
Subject Stream	4.38	1.34	0.22	3.27	0.001*
Medium of Instruction	2.87	1.09	0.15	2.63	0.009*

Model summary. $R = .46$, $R^2 = .21$, $F(4, 275) = 18.26$, $p < .05$.

As shown in Table 4, a multiple regression analysis examined whether demographic variables predict teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession. The model was statistically significant, $F(4, 275) = 18.26$, $p < .05$, explaining 21% of the variance in attitude scores ($R^2 = .21$). Among the predictors, subject stream ($\beta = .22$) showed the strongest influence, followed by gender (β

= .17), medium of instruction ($\beta = .15$), and locality ($\beta = .13$), all contributing significantly. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that demographic variables significantly predict teacher trainees' attitudes towards the teaching profession.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The attitude towards the teaching profession among teacher trainees was moderate to high, indicating a favourable orientation.
2. Attitude towards the teaching profession differed significantly by gender, with female teacher trainees showing more favourable attitudes than males.
3. Attitude differed significantly by locality, with urban teacher trainees showing more favourable attitudes than rural trainees.
4. Attitude varied significantly across subject streams, with science teacher trainees showing more favourable attitudes than arts trainees.
5. Attitude differed significantly by medium of instruction, with English medium teacher trainees showing more favourable attitudes than Tamil medium trainees.
6. Demographic variables significantly predicted attitude towards the teaching profession, with subject stream as the

strongest predictor, followed by gender, medium of instruction, and locality.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Teacher education institutions should organize orientation and mentoring programmes to strengthen professional attitudes, particularly among male, rural, arts stream, and Tamil medium teacher trainees.
- The teacher education curriculum should incorporate value-based education, reflective practice, and professional ethics to develop professional identity and commitment to the teaching profession.
- Language enrichment programmes and academic support should be provided for Tamil medium and rural teacher trainees to enhance communication skills, confidence, and professional outlook.
- Teacher educators should adopt learner-centred, participatory, and experiential teaching strategies to promote active engagement and positive professional attitudes among teacher trainees.

CONCLUSIONS

Teacher trainees exhibit a favourable attitude towards the teaching profession. These attitudes vary across demographic

factors, indicating the influence of socio-demographic and educational backgrounds on professional orientation. Demographic variables also significantly predict attitude, highlighting their role in shaping professional dispositions of teacher trainees. The findings underscore the need to strengthen professional orientation within teacher education programmes to develop competent and committed teachers. In line with the vision of the National Education Policy 2020, which emphasizes teacher quality and professional standards, these results highlight the importance of targeted interventions, inclusive practices, and competency-based training in teacher education. Strengthening these dimensions is essential for preparing reflective, skilled, and future-ready teachers.

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