TEACHER EDUCATORS’ PERCEPTION & ATTITUDE OF THEIR PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT
Teacher education is an integral component of the educational system. It is intimately connected with society and is conditioned by the ethos, culture and character of a nation. The general standard of our education in comparison to that of the developed countries is conspicuously very low, in spite of various commissions and the new education policies framed to improve the quality of education, the standard has been gradually falling. This article validated two tools namely Student Teachers Perception Scale (STPS) and Student Teacher Attitude Scale (STAS). The main objectives of the study were, (i) to study the perceptions of the student teachers of TTIs about different aspects of their training and (ii) to study the attitude of the student teachers about teaching profession. The sample for the study was 600 collected from 29 TTIs and one Government DIET in Namakkal district of Tamil Nadu State of India. The male and female student teachers differ significantly with regard to their perception ('t'-2.345) and with regard to their attitudes ('t'-2.352). But for the locality wise it differed viz., perception ‘t’-1.049 and attitude ‘t’-0.849. The same was identified the Tamil and English language students. ('t'-0.219 and 0.225 respectively). The present system of examination has failed in accessing the teaching skills and out-dated curriculum; that must be re-structured it.

Key words: Perception, Attitude, Profession and DIET

INTRODUCTION:
Education is a nation building activity and teachers are the pillars of the educational system. Of all the different factors which influence the quality of education and its contribution to national development, the quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant. Nothing is more important than securing a sufficient supply of high quality recruits to the teaching profession, providing them with the best possible professional
preparation and creating satisfactory conditions of work in which they can fully effective. The teacher occupies a pivotal position in the system of education.

Teacher education is an integral component of the educational system. It is intimately connected with society and is conditioned by the ethos, culture and character of a nation. The constitutional goals, the directive principles of the state policy, the socio-economic problems and the growth of knowledge, the emerging expectations and the changes operating in education, etc. call for an appropriate response from a futuristic education system and provide the perspective within which teacher education programmes need to be viewed. (Parkey, 2007)

It is a matter of great concern that the spirit of professionalism either in technical or non-technical fields of work is gradually disappearing in this country. It is more evident in teaching profession. As a result quality of education has been greatly affected since the dawn of independence. The general standard of our education in comparison to that of the developed countries is conspicuously very low, in spite of various commissions and the new education policies framed to improve the quality of education, the standard has been gradually falling. The poor professionalism among teachers is a very evident reason for it.

Professionalism

According to Fox (2009) Professionalism is a combination of serious commitment to the task at hand, competence and a measure of self-directedness with a high concern for exclusive self-interest. Nachimuthu (2007) explains it, as involves dedication, sense of belonging, honest academic conduct, awareness about social needs and values, good knowledge of subject(s) and genuine interest towards the students and institution. The professionalism is considered as a composite of the qualities or characteristics of a teacher.
Several Commissions like Macaulay Minutes (1835), Wood’s Despatch (1854), Hunter Commission (1882), Indian University Act (Lotd Curzon Act) 1904, Sadler Commission(1918), Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Commission(1948), Mudaliar Commission(1952), Kothari Commission(1964-1966), National Policy on Education (1986), and its refinement of 1992, etc., and a good number of social reformers like Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru, Raja Ram Mohan Roy have unanimously endorsed their strong concern about the need for extending educational opportunities to all sections of the Community. The role of the teacher is not merely limited to the four walls but it extends to outer world as well.

Professionalism is considered as a composite of the qualities or characteristics of a teacher such as; (i) Skills / Competencies in classroom instruction; (ii) Knowledge and practical mastery of pedagogical techniques; (iii) Evidence of improvement and growth made in curricular transaction; (iv) Participation in extra instructional activities and (v) Practice of ethics of teachers. (Kale, 2006)

Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are; (i) to study the perceptions of the student teachers of TTIs about different aspects of their training and (ii) to study the attitude of the student teachers about teaching profession. The variables are perception and attitude of student teachers towards teaching profession. A person’s perception, may be defined as to cognize or perceive other physical and psychological characteristics, their intentions, feelings, activities, emotions, motives and attitudes. It refers to the process whereby sensory stimulation is translated into organized experience. Attitude is a personal disposition common to individual but possessed to different degrees which implies to react to object situations or positions in ways that can be called favourable or unfavourable. The final form of Student Teachers Perception Scale (STPS) consists of 75 statements as a three point scale and the Student Teacher Attitude Scale (STAS)
consists of 45 statements as a five point scale which is validated and found out the reliability of 0.76. The STPS was given to the experts from Periyar University, Salem district of Tamil Nadu and the same was validated by DIETs (District Institute of Educational Training) of two districts of Tamil Nadu, thus reliability was calculated the split-half method by the students’ teachers of DIET and it was 0.82.

Methodology

The STPS having three alternatives in each question viz., to the maximum extent, to the moderate extent and to the least extent. Where as the STAS consist of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and strongly disagree of 5 alternatives. The sample consists of 29 TTIs and 1 DIET situated in Namakkal district of Tamilnadu State of India. 20 student teachers have been selected at random sample in each TTIs to make as 600.

STPS have scored on a three-point scale by giving weight 3,2 and 1 in the case of positive statements and 1,2 and 3 as negative one to the three alternatives. Like wise, in STAS have been scored on a five-point scale by giving weights 5,4,3,2 and 1 in the case of positive and 1,2,3,4 and 5 in the case of negative statements respectively. The influence of sex on the perceptions and attitudes of student teachers is as presented in table-1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>‘t’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>160.72</td>
<td>16.28</td>
<td>2.435*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>165.67</td>
<td>18.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>176.57</td>
<td>16.91</td>
<td>2.352*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>181.32</td>
<td>17.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Significant at 0.05 level)

An observation of the table reveals that women student teachers have secured a better mean score on perceptions when compared to their counterparts. The observed difference between the means is found to be statistically significant since the obtained ‘t’ value of 2.345 is found to be significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis that men and women student teachers do not differ significantly with regard to their perception is rejected. Likewise, the attitude score obtained by men and women student teachers also reveal that women teachers have scores a better mean when compared to men students and ‘t’ value obtained to test the significance of difference is found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level. Hence, it can be assumed that women students have a better attitude towards teaching profession. So, that they differ in attitudes about their profession.
With respect to the locality on perception and attitudes of student teachers, of urban areas have secured a mean score of 190.96 and the Standard deviation (SD) is 19.26. Similarly the rural student teachers have 193.39 and 19.28 respectively. The calculated ‘t’ value (1.049) is not significantly at 0.05 level of significance and there is no significant difference in their perception in relation to their locality. The Table 2 explained the locality on perception and attitudes of student teachers.

Table-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>‘t’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>190.96</td>
<td>19.26</td>
<td>1.049 @</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>193.39</td>
<td>19.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>212.70</td>
<td>18.68</td>
<td>0.849 @</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>210.71</td>
<td>20.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(@ = No Significant)

The calculated ‘t’ value of 0.849 is statistically not significant at 0.05 level in their attitudes and that indicates there is a significant difference in their attitude towards teaching profession. The means and S.Ds of perception scores and attitude scores along with ‘t’ values of the two language groups are presented in table-3.
Table-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>‘t’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>From Tamil</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>192.10</td>
<td>18.72</td>
<td>0.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From English</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>192.76</td>
<td>21.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>From Tamil</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>212.50</td>
<td>19.09</td>
<td>0.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From English</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>211.87</td>
<td>19.70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(@ = No Significant)

Results of the study

From the results of the above study, it is clear that, the table that the two groups of sample representing Tamil and English languages in their higher secondary level have scored mostly the same means (192.10 and 192.76). The ‘t’ value of 0.219 is far below the table value at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, that the methodology of their higher secondary in language course of the student teachers would not indicate any significant difference in their perceptions. Like wise, the attitude scores ‘t’ value is 0.225 and this value is not statistically significant at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant difference between the Tamil and English medium.
students in higher secondary course, those studying in TTIs and DIETs in their attitude towards teaching profession.

Conclusion

The level of professionalization of the teacher education programme(s) in any institution would depend upon the shared and collective efforts of the faculty for their professionalism and their success at making the Teacher education policies quality oriented. Therefore, whosoever chooses teaching as a career, must assume the obligation to conduct him in accordance with the principles of professionalism. Without that neither his task is complete nor teaching will ever be pragmatic. (Vijayakumari, 2010)

On the basis of the student teacher’ perception it has been found that they are unhappy that their institution is far away from the teaching practice schools and majority of them perceived that the present system of examination has failed in assessing the teaching skills and majority of them opine that the present day teacher education of D.T.Ed curriculum is out-dated and that it should be restructured and reorganized keeping the present day needs and aspirations of the young trainees. The technical and non-teaching staff is also insufficient in all the TTIs. A comparative assessment of the different Districts and States may provide real insights into the problems in the field of teacher education.

References


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