



A STUDY ON STUDENT TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS TEACHING IN MEIKTILA EDUCATION DEGREE COLLEGE

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Abstract

Education means a practice, formal or informal which helps to develop the potentialities of human being including their knowledge, capabilities, behavioral patterns and values. Education Degree Colleges become the important function to show the development of education system. Student teachers are the key to effective teacher education system. The purpose of the study was to explore attitude of student teachers toward teaching. There are three dimensions in this study. They are personal characteristics, experience and proportion in teaching and contextual factors. Two hundred student teachers (first year and second year) in Meiktila Education Degree College were surveyed by means of a questionnaire to determine those factors. The finding of this study was that there was statistically significance difference between the attitudes of student teachers towards teaching in terms of gender. According to table 2, there was no significance difference between student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of subject combination. According to table 3, there was no significance difference between student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of region. This study can support to develop positive attitudes of student teachers towards teaching. Knowing student teachers' attitude towards teaching can help to develop teacher education system.

Keywords

Student Teacher, Teaching, Attitude, Education, etc.

Full Article

Introduction:

Education means a practice, formal or informal which helps to develop the potentialities of human being including their knowledge, capabilities, behavioral patterns and values. Education is conceived as a powerful agency, which is instrumental in bringing about the desired changes in the social and cultural life of a nation. It is also a major tool for national socio-economic development and for individual socio-economic empowerment and poverty education. The educational system is vital, because it produces the personnel that are required to function in various facets of national life and development process.

One of the aims of education is to bring about desirable changes in the learner in respect of knowledge, skills and attitudes, in such away, that one may effectively perform the changing roles in a changing society. Education has been regarded as a matter of national importance, and an indispensable agency on difficult task of building a nation. The whole process of education is shaped and molded by the human personality called the teacher who plays a pivotal role in any system of education (Maliki, 2013).

Student teachers from Education Degree College are important role in education system of Myanmar. Therefore, the main aim of this research is to study student teachers' attitude towards teaching in Meiktila Education Degree College.



Significance of the Study:

The success of any educational system depends upon the quality of teachers and in turn the quality of teachers depends to a large extent on the quality of teacher education and quality of teacher education mainly depends upon the teacher training institutions. Education is a nation building activity and teachers are the pillars of the education system. The role of teacher and education are basic foundation to construct the society. The teacher, the educational system and the society have independent and mutual relationship.

Education Degree Colleges become the important function to show the development of education system. The worth and potentialities of a country get evaluated in and through the work of the teacher who has been trained in the profession by teacher educators. If teacher educators are producers, student teachers are products for our education system. They should develop necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude to perform their duties effectively.

Investigation of student teachers' attitude towards teaching is so important because student teachers in Education Degree Colleges are the roots of teacher education system. Therefore, the present study aimed to study on student teachers' attitude towards teaching in Meiktila Education Degree College.

Objectives:

The specific objectives of this proposed study are as follows.

- ✓ To investigate the attitudes of student teachers towards teaching.
- ✓ To compare the degree of influence of each factor among gender, subject combination and region.
- ✓ To give suggestions and recommendations based on the findings.

Research Questions:

- i. Is there any significant difference between the perceptions of student teachers towards teaching in terms of gender?
- ii. Is there any significant difference between the perceptions of student teachers towards teaching in terms of subject combination?
- iii. Is there any significant difference between the perceptions of student teachers towards teaching in terms of region?

Scope of the Study:

This study is intended to investigate the perceptions of student teachers towards teaching. It was geographically restricted in Meiktila Education Degree College. This study was confined to 200 student teachers (first year and second year) from the selected college. Perception of student teachers was taken to comprise of only three dimensions, namely personal characteristics, experience and preparation in teaching and contextual factors.

Review of Related Literature:

Personal Characteristics:

The personal characteristics of a teacher include gender, age, experience, personality, and beliefs. In today's world, we hear a lot about gender and gender differences. So, we thought that how male and female teachers differ in the classroom.

Male teachers seem more dominant and authoritarian. Their classrooms are more organized and teacher-controlled (Dunkin, 1987, Weiner, 1995, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). Males also are more likely to use more aggressive discipline toward boys (Rodrigurz, 2002, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). They also refer fewer of their learners with



behavioral problems for special learners with behavioral problems for special education help which may be good or bad.

Female teachers more often maintain “warmer” classrooms and are more tolerant of misbehavior. Furthermore, in classrooms with female teachers, students are more likely to initiate a question or statement, give more incorrect answers, and take risks by guessing answers. Female teachers also seem to praise more frequently and are more likely to provide the correct answer when students can't or don't. According to Dunkin, female teachers' classrooms are warmer and more nurturing while male teachers' classrooms are better organized and more task oriented. According to Coulter (1987), female teachers' classroom are more “tender-minded and pupil supportive and less authoritative than males.”

Several studies focus on how teachers' age and years of teaching experience influence in teaching. They suggest that teachers with less than three years experience are less effective. However, they improve steadily until at around five years they peak (Darling- Hammand, 2000, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). Younger and less experienced public-school teachers have higher levels of satisfaction than older and more experienced teachers (Perie of Baker, 1997, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). Beginning teachers have a tendency to accept innovations and change more easily. They are more controlling and authoritarian, probably as the result of several factors. Experienced teachers are better able to attend to everything going on in the classroom and use what they observe to adjust their teaching (Ainley & Luntley, 2004, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). They connect new material to be learned to what learners already know, encourage more open discussion, and more flexible (O' Connor, Fish, & Yasik, 2004, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009).

According to Coulter, education majors place more value on and have a stronger commitment to people and personal relationships than noneducation students do. According to Morris and McIntyre, teachers are more people-oriented than persons in most other occupational groups. Both the Coulter and the Morris and McIntyre studies note that teachers correspondingly place less value than others on economic success. When human service professionals, teachers seem to be more interested in establishing and maintaining helping relationships than in their level of income (Powell, 1992, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009).

Teacher tend to believe the following higher-ability students are easier to teach and manage, students of similar ability should be grouped together for instruction, different curricula should be provided for good and weak students (Block & Hazelip, 1995, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009), attractive children are more capable and sociable girls' behavior is preferable to boys', majority students can do better than minority students (Biehler & Snowman, 2005, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009), math is a male subject (Li, 1999, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). Teachers in poorer communities believe their school climate is less positive and stimulating and that their students are of lesser ability (Solomon, 1996, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009).

Experience and Preparation in Teaching:

The factors influencing how we will teach are our educational experiences. Those experiences include the way we were taught, our preferred ways of learning, our preferred ways of teaching, our proficiency in our chosen teaching or academic field, and the kind and amount of teaching preparation we are receiving.

A number of investigators have identified two dominant styles of teaching: direct and indirect. Direct teaching, also referred to as expository teaching, occurs when teachers dominate by presenting information to students, giving students directions, and using criticism. Direct



teaching is associated with a teacher-centered or teacher-controlled classroom in which the teacher decides what, when, and how to teach. Although direct teaching may sound cold and impersonal, it needs to be. Teachers were direct but also creative, stimulating and humorous.

Teachers with an indirect style seem to be aware of and to make the most of student diversity; they also tend to be more democratic and flexible.

Professional education for teaching includes study of both the parent disciplines of education—such as psychology, philosophy, and sociology—and their offspring, the applied fields of educational psychology and sociology, child and adolescent development, and pedagogy. The extent and quality of the professional preparation will influence both the quality and the style of our teaching.

Contextual Factors:

Student variability is a fact of life in all schools and classrooms. A teacher must recognize that diversity—whether economic, cultural, gender, motivational, or other—and take it into account.

Teaching a large number of students, perhaps 40 or more, as is normal in many classrooms throughout the world. Class size to some extent, dictates how teachers will teach. Teachers may choose to teach the class as a whole and that they may use direct or expository teaching. Conversely, having fewer learners and teaching in a less complex environment would seem to permit more teacher-student interaction. Therefore, smaller classes would more likely be characterized by individual and small-group instruction. Class size affects the behavior of learner students in large classes are less likely to pay attention and to engage in off-task behavior.

Teachers are limited when there are insufficient resources. A visit to so called developing countries reveals that teachers without adequate educational materials, even textbooks, are severely limited in how or what they can teach. Thus, teacher in a poorer school often lecture out of necessity. By contrast, teachers in a wealthy school may choose to lecture but can employ other instructional alternatives.

Teachers must never forget that how they use instructional time is extremely important. An hour of instruction can be either beneficial or wasteful. If they can keep their students involved and engaged, they will learn. Therefore, student teachers know to accept the above concepts.

Effective Teacher: Personal Attributes and Characteristics:

Although teachers' personal attributes are expressed through behavior, they are primarily personality traits that all individuals possess and exhibit to varying degree. Some personal attributes like enthusiasm or warmth, are difficult to acquire or to enhance because they are so firmly rooted in our personalities.

There are three broad headings for effective teachers: motivating personality, orientation toward success, and professional demeanor. Motivating personality includes the attributes enthusiasm, variety, and warmth and humor. These attributes help get and keep students involved and interested in learning. Orientation toward success means teachers believe in their own and their students' abilities to be successful. Attributes like expecting success and being encouraging and supportive of students convey this orientation. Professional demeanor means that the teacher is focused on helping students learn. Effective teacher is professionally knowledgeable and businesses like: students see them as credible and worthy of trust. Therefore, student teachers must have personal attributes and characteristics.

Method:

In this paper "A study on student teachers' attitudes towards teaching in Meiktila Education Degree College", survey method which is one of the descriptive methods was used. Descriptive

research involves collecting data in order to test hypotheses or answer questions concerning the current status of the subjects of the study (Gay, 1987).

Subjects:

In this descriptive study, participants included 200 students who are student teachers in Meiktila Education Degree College. The number of participants who consented to participate was N= 100 (50%) were male and N = 100 (50%) were female.

Instrumentation:

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Firstly, student teachers were asked a 7-item questionnaire that measures student teachers' personal characteristics. Secondly, student teachers were asked to indicate the influence of experience and preparation in teaching part. Third included contextual factors in teaching. The questionnaire was presented to the expert teachers. Their critical comments and suggestions were very helpful.

Procedure:

First of all, the researcher explored the relevant literature concerning with the research. Secondly, in order to get the required data, the researcher constructed an instrument under the guidance of the supervisor. For the validation of the instruments, the questionnaire for student teacher's attitude towards teaching was distributed by five experts from Meiktila Education Degree College. The instrument was modified before the pilot test according to the advice and guidance of five with experts after that, a pilot test was conducted. For internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used.

Analysis of the data:

The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and t-test. The responded rates of student teachers' attitude towards teaching were analyzed by descriptive statistic. In addition to this, t-test was used to compare student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of gender, subject combination and region.

Findings:

Findings for Student Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching in Terms of Gender:

Female teachers' classroom is warmer and more nurturing, while male teachers' classrooms are better organized and more task oriented (Dunkin, 1987, cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins & Metcalf, 2009). The independent samples t-test was used to find whether student teachers' attitude towards teaching differ according to gender. The results are given in Table 1.

No.	Dimensions	Gender	N	M	SD	MD	t	df	p
1.	Personal Characteristics	Male	100	3.80	.653	-.344	-4.276	198	.000***
		Female	100	4.14	.471				
2.	Experience and Preparation in Teaching	Male	100	4.18	.631	-.221	-2.959	198	.004**
		Female	100	4.41	.402				
3.	Contextual Factors	Male	100	4.19	.619	-.204	-2.730	198	.007**
		Female	100	4.40	.421				
4.	Overall	Male	100	4.06	.558	-.257	-3.961	198	.000***
		Female	100	4.31	.330				

Note: *** $p < .001$ and ** $p < .01$

Table 1 t-Values for Attitudes of Student Teachers towards Teaching in Terms of Gender

According to Table 1, it indicated that the mean score of female student teachers' responses (mean = 4.31) was more positive than males (mean = 4.06). Overall finding indicated that there was significant difference between the attitudes of student teachers towards teaching in terms of gender.

The Comparison of Mean Scores in Terms of Gender

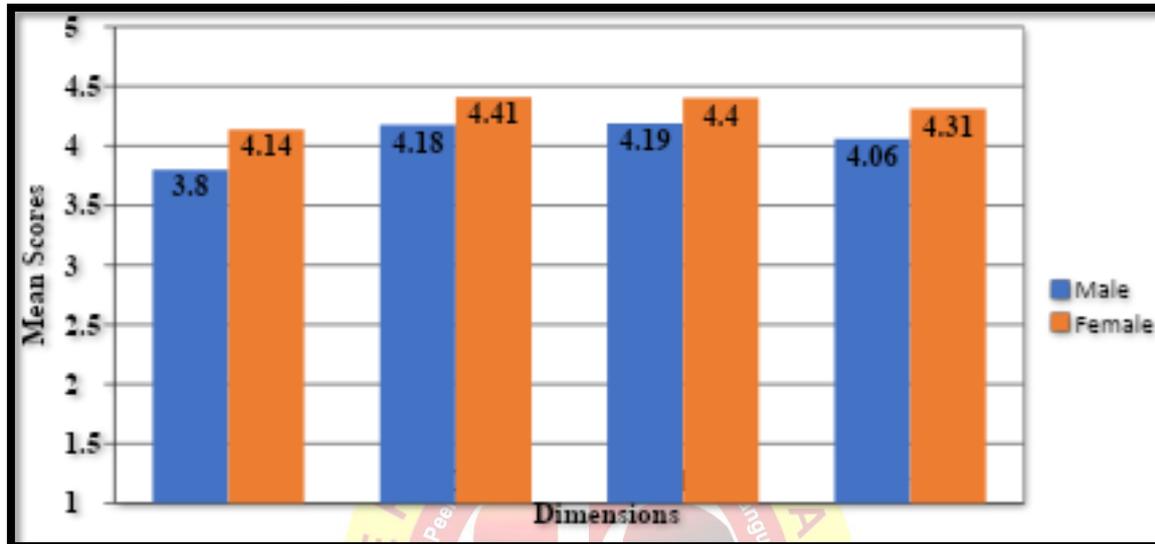


Figure 1: The Comparison of Mean Scores for Student Teachers towards Teaching in Terms of Gender

According to Figure 1, it can be interpreted that female student teachers' attitude have more positive than male student teachers' attitude towards teaching.

Findings for Student Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching in Terms of Subject Combination:

In order to determine whether there was a significant difference between student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of subject combination, the independent sample t-test was used. The results are given in Table 2.

Table 2: t-Values for Attitudes of Student Teachers towards Teaching in Terms of Subject Combination

No.	Dimensions	Subject combination	N	M	SD	MD	t	df	p
1.	Personal Characteristics	Science	100	4.02	.471	.110	1.31	198	.191
		Art	100	3.91	.689				
2.	Experience and Preparation in Teaching	Science	100	4.32	.396	.059	.767	198	.444
		Art	100	4.27	.653				
3.	Contextual Factors	Science	100	4.35	.414	.121	1.603	198	.111
		Art	100	4.23	.634				
4.	Overall	Science	100	4.23	.328	.097	1.443	198	.151
		Art	100	4.14	.584				

According to Table 2, there was no significant difference between student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of subject combination. The mean scores of art and science were no statistically significant difference in all dimensions (See Figure 2).

The Comparison of Mean Scores in Terms of Subject Combination

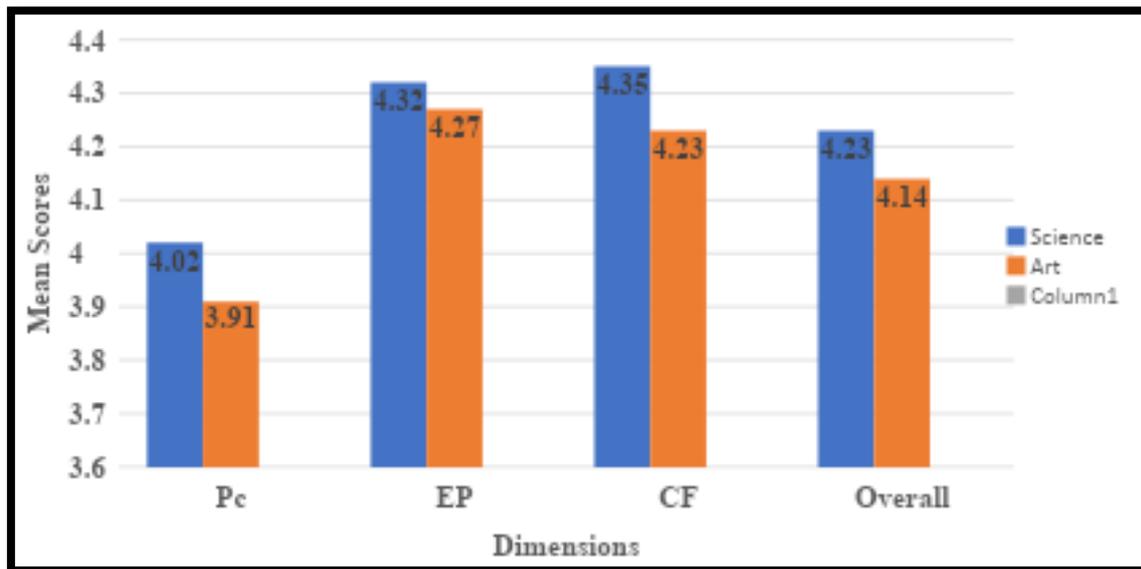


Figure 2: The Comparison of Mean Scores for Student Teachers towards Teaching in Terms of Subject Combination

Finding for Student Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching in Terms of Region:

In order to determine whether there was a significant difference between student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of region, the independent samples t-test was used. The results are given in Table 3.

Table 3: t-Values for Attitudes of Student Teachers towards Teaching in Terms of Region

No.	Dimensions	Region	N	M	SD	MD	t	df	p
1.	Personal Characteristics	Urban	100	4.00	.526	.037	.341	198	.735
		Rural	100	3.96	.605				
2.	Experience and Preparation in Teaching	Urban	100	4.40	.344	.126	1.614	198	.112
		Rural	100	4.28	.564				
3.	Contextual Factors	Urban	100	4.40	.328	.127	1.689	198	.097
		Rural	100	4.28	.563				
4.	Overall	Urban	100	4.27	.257	.097	1.565	198	.122
		Rural	100	4.17	.501				

According to Table 3, there was no significant difference between student teachers' attitude towards teaching in terms of region. The mean scores of urban and rural were no statistically significant different in all dimensions (See Figure 3).

The Comparison of Mean Scores in Terms of Region

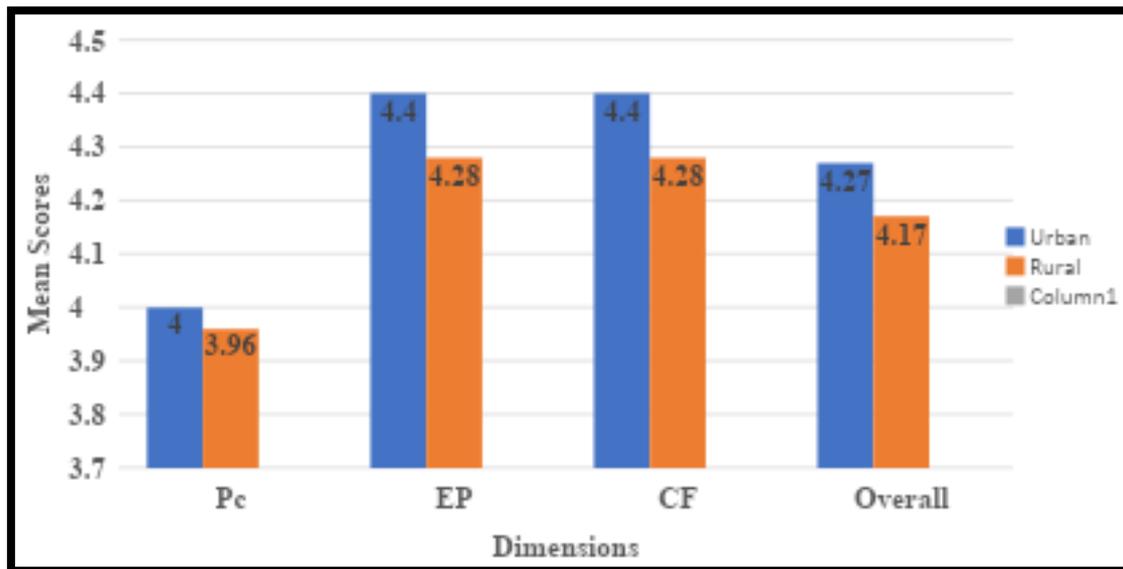


Figure 3: The Comparison of Mean Scores for Student Teachers towards Teaching in Terms of Region

Discussion, Recommendations and Conclusion:

Discussion:

Teaching is one of the noble professions of the world. The effective teaching requires that the teacher should have full command on the subject; keeps her updated with new emerging technologies; should know that the knowledge is not fixed; but it has to be actively constructed through personal and social experiences and to enable the students to learn how to learn. The teacher should care about the wellbeing of the students and should be result oriented.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to study student teachers' attitude towards teaching in Meiktila Education Degree College. The participants of this study are student teachers (first year and second year) in Meiktila Education Degree College. This study proposed three main research questions and used descriptive design.

In this study, the participants were student teachers. In the study of student teachers' teaching in terms of gender, there was a statistically significant difference. Female student teachers performed more positive attitude than male student teachers toward teaching. The mean score of female student teacher (mean = 4.31) is higher than male student teacher (mean = 4.06). However, there was no significant difference between the attitudes of student teachers toward teaching in terms of subject combination. And, there was no significant difference between the attitudes of student teachers toward teaching in terms of region.

Recommendations for Further Research:

Positive attitude of student teachers leads toward success in teaching. This study was concerned with student teachers' attitude towards teaching. More research is needed on student teachers' attitude towards teaching. On the basis of this study, some recommendations are provided for future research. This study focused only on student teachers' attitude towards teaching in Meiktila Education Degree College. Further research should make from other college. The other study should conduct with teachers of High Schools, University and Institutes. This research consisted of only three dimensions and two variables. Further research should many other dimensions and other variables such as matriculation scores, age, and religion. This study was conducted with small sample size. Further study should conduct with large sample size. Further research should

conduct to study the relationship between student teachers' attitude toward teaching and teaching development.

Conclusion:

The educational system is extremely important because the welfare of any society depends on it. A society is no stronger than its capacity to transmit its skills, attitudes, and knowledge to new generation, and this responsibility belongs to education. The teacher is a facilitator and guide, not a director, establish many opportunities for students to learn with the teacher and more-skilled peers (Vygotsky's Theory, cited in Santrock, 2006). Good teachers understand what students everywhere can confirm: teaching is not just talking, and learning is not just listening. Effective teachers are able to figure out not only what they want to teach, but also how to do so in a way that students can understand and use the new information and skills.

This study may be a support to develop positive attitudes of student teachers towards teaching. Knowing student teachers' attitude towards teaching can help in teaching. Therefore, student teachers should be created positive teaching and learning environment to promote the educational system.

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