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A Study on The Perceptions of Secondary School Teachers Towards Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT:

Teaching is said to be a nation building activity and the teacher is the architect of the future. He is the pivot around which the entire system of education revolves. The best system of education may fail to achieve the desired ends in the absence of sincere, competent and professionally talented teachers. The teacher has the rare privilege of shaping the most precious material of the land – the boys and the girls during their crucial period of development. A teacher's positive identification with her/his profession may have strong implications for student learning. To understand the factors that contribute for the positive identification of a teacher with the teaching profession, it is essential to improve the quality of education in general and that of secondary education in particular. In order to understand the present scenario of teaching at secondary level, the researchers felt it essential to conduct a study on the perceptions of teachers working in secondary schools towards teaching profession. The present study is an attempt to know the influence of certain demographic variables – gender, age, teaching experience and location of the school on the perceptions of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession. The investigators followed descriptive survey method for the study. A well-developed and standardized questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 500 teachers working in the Secondary Schools of Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh. The sample was selected using Stratified Random sampling method. Mean score values, standard deviations and independent t-tests were used for analysis of data. The findings of the study revealed that the demographic variables – Gender, Age, teaching experience and location of the school have no influence on the perceptions of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession.

KEY WORDS: Perceptions, Teaching Profession, Quality education, Secondary school teachers

INTRODUCTION:

Education is the process of facilitating learning. It helps in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs and habits necessary for the human living. It helps to develop good qualities among people and tries to draw out the best in them. It is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It is one of the most powerful instruments of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of national goals. It helps to increase the productivity, achieve national and emotional integration and accelerate the process of modernization.

Teaching is said to be the noblest of all professions. The teacher plays a very significant role in the process of facilitating learning. No system of education can ever rise higher than the quality of its teachers. However excellent the things such as the courses of study, curricula, textbooks and other facilities are in an educational system, the whole system would fail without the teaching personnel who are committed to the profession. Referring to the importance of a teacher in the educational structure, the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) rightly remarked: "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" (**Report of the Indian Education Commission, 1964-66, p.84**). The teacher is expected to perform the roles of a planned organizer of curricula, an innovator of educational ideas, practices and systems, a resource person in the propagation of ever expanding knowledge and a motivator to learners in several ways. The teacher has the rare privilege of shaping the most precious material of the land – the boys and the girls during their crucial period of development. Effective teaching requires a feeling of satisfaction and positive identification of the teacher with the profession.

THE TEACHING PROFESSION:

Teaching is a process that facilitates learning. The choice of learning activities, whereby the goals of education are realized in a learning situation, is the responsibility of the professional practitioners associated with teaching. Although the work of teachers typically takes place in a classroom setting, the direct interaction between the teacher and the student is the core component in the teaching-learning process. Therefore, it becomes imperative for teachers to provide students with learning opportunities to meet curriculum outcomes that help them lead a happy and peaceful life in the society. The fundamental job of teaching is no longer to provide information or facts to students; but to develop in them the necessary abilities to think critically, solve problems logically and make judgments creatively.

Teaching involves a lot of responsibility on the part of the teachers; and teachers play a very significant role in discharging their duties. They keep working to boost the confidence of their students and help them walk in the right direction. There are many teachers who dedicate themselves for the noble cause of teaching and work throughout their lives in empowering their students with the necessary knowledge and skills that help them grow successfully in their lives.

The quality of education ultimately depends on the occupational commitment of teachers towards teaching profession. The commitment of a teacher can best be determined by his/her way of teaching, punctuality, giving illustrations, creating interest in the students, proper motivation, encouragement, kindness and being helpful all the way. These qualities can be acquired by the teachers only when they have a positive identification with the teaching profession. Since the teacher is a role model for his/her students, the commitment of a teacher towards teaching profession becomes very vital in the field of education. The teachers with a positive attitude towards teaching profession alone can contribute something for improvement of quality in education.

NEED FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION:

The attitude of teachers towards teaching profession constitutes an important condition of successful teaching and learning. Positive attitude towards teaching contributes for the professional growth of teachers. The perceptions of teachers towards teaching profession play a significant role in making an assessment of the kind of education that is provided to the students in schools. In order to understand the present scenario of teaching at secondary level with reference to teachers' perceptions towards the profession, it is felt very essential to conduct a study on the perceptions of teachers working in secondary schools towards teaching profession.

An investigation of this type would certainly help the Government, Local Body and private organizations to provide in the schools pleasant working environment and proper working conditions in order to attract talented and dedicated teachers into the profession and retain them in the schools to work with a feeling of positive attitude towards teaching profession. The present investigation is an attempt in this direction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The main objective of the present study is to find out the perceptions of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession.

The study also aims at finding out the influence of certain demographic variables – gender, age, teaching experience and location of the school on the perceptions of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present investigation:

- (i) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female secondary school teachers towards teaching profession.
- (ii) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of secondary school teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards teaching profession.
- (iii) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of secondary school teachers with an experience of below 10 years and those with an experience of 10 years and above towards teaching profession.
- (iv) There is no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers working in rural and urban secondary schools towards teaching profession.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The study is limited to find out the influence of gender, age, teaching experience and location of the school on the perceptions of secondary school teachers towards teaching profession in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

METHODOLOGY:

- (a) **Sample:** The sample of the study consists of 500 teachers (100 Male and 400 Female) selected from 75 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh using Stratified Random Sampling technique.

- (b) **.Research Tool:** The researchers used a well prepared questionnaire consisting of 35 items as the tool of research for the present investigation. The tool was initially administered to 50 teachers (10 Male and 40 Female) under Pilot study. The measures of reliability, validity and objectivity of the tool have been calculated. Further, the researchers conducted item analysis for the items included in the tool. Out of 35 items selected for the tool, the discriminating power of 30 items has been found positive and is found negative in respect of 5 items. The items whose discriminating power is negative have been removed; and the final tool consists of 30 items which are pool proof in all respects. The final tool has been administered to 500 teachers (100 Male and 400 Female) working in the Secondary Schools of Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh.

STATISTICAL INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

The data collected has been analyzed using different statistical techniques such as Mean score values, Standard Deviations and t-ratios; and are presented in the following table.

Table showing t-values of different variables relating to the perceptions of teachers working in secondary schools towards teaching profession

S. No.	Variable		N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio	Result
1	Gender	Male Female	100 400	106.90 107.10	26.14 26.84	0.07*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
2	Age	Below 40 years 40 years & above	380 120	110.76 111.67	29.39 29.47	0.29*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
3	Teaching Experience	Less than 10 yrs. 10 yrs. & above	200 300	112.90 109.44	30.83 27.21	1.29*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
4	Location of the school	Rural Urban	280 220	110.29 112.59	28.61 30.29	0.86*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of data, the researchers have arrived at the following findings and drawn the conclusions.

1. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers working in secondary schools towards teaching profession.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of secondary school teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards teaching profession.
3. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of secondary school teachers with an experience of less than 10 years and those with 10 years and above towards teaching profession.
4. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of teachers working in rural and urban secondary schools towards teaching profession.

CONCLUSIONS:

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that gender, age, teaching experience and location of the school have no influence on the perceptions of teachers working in secondary schools towards teaching profession.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

- (i) The study would help the teachers develop a positive attitude towards teaching profession.
- (ii) The study would help the teachers grow professionally in their work life.
- (iii) The study would certainly help the teachers improve their teaching competencies.
- (iv) The study would help the administration to provide favorable working conditions in schools to attract talented teachers into the profession.
- (v) The study would help the managements of schools to provide pleasant and healthy working environment in schools.
- (v) The study would help to enhance the participatory skills of students in the teaching-learning process.

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