

A Study On The Attitude Of Teachers Towards Quality Improvement In Secondary Education

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Abstract

Education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society and promoting national development. Providing universal access to quality education is the key to India's continued ascent and leadership on the global stage in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, national integration and cultural preservation. Secondary Education, with its terminal and transitional nature, is more crucial and of immense use in a country like India. It is the need of the hour to improve quality in secondary education. A quality education is one that focuses on the all-round development of the child – the social, emotional, mental, physical and cognitive development of each student regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status or geographic location. The present study is an attempt to explore the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education. The researchers used a well prepared and standardized questionnaire as the tool for collection of data from a sample of 300 teachers (140 Male and 160 Female) selected from 40 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh using Stratified Random Sampling technique. 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 institution have no influence on the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education. The study suggests that the teachers working in secondary schools should work with commitment and dedication to provide quality education; and thereby improving student performance in secondary schools.

Key words: Secondary Education, Attitude, Quality improvement, Teacher commitment.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Education is an effective means of social reconstruction. It is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, beliefs, habits and values. It has relevance to the needs and aspirations of the people living in a fast changing society. Education in India is mainly classified into two levels - primary and secondary. Primary schools aim to teach the basic structure of the ways and means of a civilized society keeping the form of government in mind. It teaches the history and affairs of the society in a nutshell to the students. It tries to facilitate proper mental nourishment for children during the stage of their growth and development. On the other hand, secondary education strives to provide a more detailed outlook on the affairs of society and the changes taking place in different disciplines at the same time.

II. SECONDARY EDUCATION IN INDIA

In the entire educational pyramid, the secondary stage of education is said to be very crucial for various reasons. It facilitates occupational and social mobility. It provides opportunities for several middle level jobs, pre-job training courses and self-employment. In fact, it is the secondary education on which the social, economic, technical and cultural efficiency of the nation depends. It plays an important role in training the youth of the country; and is directed more towards the career of a young child who is now aware of the various fields available for him/her in a three-tier system, i.e., commerce, science and arts. This classification of career into three paths was introduced long ago, keeping in mind the needs of the then society. Keeping the changes taking place in the society today, we need to bring about drastic changes in the system of education at different levels.

Secondary Education, with its terminal and transitional nature, is more crucial and of immense use in a country like India with a large number of villages and rural population. After a long debate with various sections of people across the country, the Government of India has taken an initiative to revamp the existing

system; and to provide universal access to quality education on the foundational pillars of access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability in education with the introduction of National Education Policy (NEP) - 2020 in the country. The policy suggests 5+3+3+4 pattern in School Education in our country. It suggests measures to improve quality in education restructuring the existing system by introducing five years of foundation stage (Nursery, Lower Kindergarten, Upper Kindergarten, classes 1 and 2) followed by three years of preparatory stage (classes 3, 4 and 5), three years of middle stage (classes 6, 7 and 8) and four years of secondary stage (Lower Secondary comprising classes 9 and 10; and Upper Secondary comprising classes 11 and 12). After completion of school education, the students may directly go for graduation or join any professional course depending on their interest. The National Education Policy-2020 envisions an education system rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high-quality education to all; and thereby making India a global knowledge superpower.

III. QUALITY CONCERNS IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Education has now become a global concern. The aims of education reflect the current needs and aspirations of a society as well as its lasting values and broad human ideals. A quality education is one that focuses on the all-round development of the child – the social, emotional, mental, physical and cognitive development of each student regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status or geographic location. It prepares the child for life, not just for testing. In the words of Jean Piaget, “the goal of education is not to increase the amount of knowledge; but to create the possibilities for a child to invent and discover, to create men who are capable of doing new things”.

Quality in education includes a concern for quality of life in all its dimensions. For the parents and students, quality education means, “raising the levels of academic performance usually measured in terms of test scores or grades in various subjects which form part of school curriculum. With reference to education, quality is a relative term and hard to define; and even more difficult to measure. That is why educationists, scholars, educational policy makers and administrators do not come to same conclusion while discussing what makes good quality education or a qualitative education.

IV. ROLE OF A TEACHER IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

A teacher is one who teaches especially young ones, builds up, instructs, trains and guides them for healthy growth and stable adult life. His job goes beyond teaching into molding young lives, guiding youth, motivating students and general character training **Majasan (1995)**. A teacher can be viewed as one whose profession includes teaching, instructing, imparting knowledge and innovations; and guiding learners to pass through the learning process. A teacher is a classroom practitioner, the one who translates educational philosophy and objectives into knowledge and skills. Teachers are the most important resources in a school. They are the key figures for any educational change or reform needed in schools. The provision of a high quality education system depends on high quality teachers **(Jyoti & Sharma, 2009)**.

Teachers play a significant role in any system of education. 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 fact remains that the whole system would fail without the teaching personnel who are committed to the profession. The successful running of any educational system depends mainly on factors like the teacher, the pupil, the curriculum, the teaching equipment etc. Of these, the teacher is the pivot on whom the entire educational structure rests. The reputation of an institution and its influence on the community is invariably determined by the kind of teachers working therein. 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 has the rare privilege of shaping the most precious material of the land – the boys and the girls during their crucial period of development. Recognizing the importance of the teacher, the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) remarked: “We are, however, convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher’s personal qualities, educational qualifications, professional training and the place that he/she occupies in the school as well as in the community. Priority of consideration must, therefore, be given to the various problems connected with the improvement of their status” **(Report of the Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53, p.163)**.

V. THE NEED FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

Education is fundamental for achieving full human potential, developing an equitable and just society and promoting national development. Providing universal access to quality education is the key to India's continued ascent and leadership on the global stage in terms of economic growth, social justice and equality, scientific advancement, national integration and cultural preservation. In this context, it is felt that the education system of the country should aim at developing in the young minds the necessary skills such as critical thinking, creative thinking, logical thinking, reasoning and problem-solving.

In the entire educational pyramid, secondary education forms the central link between primary and higher education. It is considered as the minimum level of attainment for people to survive in the modern technological world. Hence, it is the need of the hour to bring about quality improvement in secondary education. It provides opportunities for several middle level jobs, pre-job training courses and self-employment. In fact, it is the secondary education on which the social, economic, technical and cultural efficiency of the nation depends. Hence, the researchers thought it relevant to conduct a study on the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education. The present investigation is an attempt in this direction.

VI. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the present study is to find out the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education.

The study also aims at finding out the differences, if any existing in the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education with regard to certain demographic variables, viz., gender, age, teaching experience and location of the institution.

VII. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present investigation:

- (i) There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education.
- (ii) There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards quality improvement in secondary education.
- (iii) There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers with an experience of less than 10 years and those with 10 years and above towards quality improvement in secondary education.
- (iv) There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in rural and urban areas towards quality improvement in secondary education.

VIII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is limited to find out the influence of four demographic variables, viz., gender, age, teaching experience and location of the institution on the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in secondary education. Further, the study is confined to 300 secondary school teachers (50 Headmasters and 250 School Assistants) working in 50 secondary schools located in Visakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh.

IX. METHODOLOGY

- (a) **Method of Research:** The descriptive survey method is one of the most commonly used methods to find out solutions to educational problems. The investigators followed the Descriptive 'Survey Method' for the present investigation due to the obvious advantages found in the survey method of research.
- (b) **Sample:** The sample of the study consisting of 300 teachers (50 Headmasters and 250 School Assistants) has been selected from 50 secondary schools located in the rural as well as urban areas from Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh using Stratified Random Sampling technique.
- (c) **Research Tool:** The researchers used a well prepared questionnaire consisting of 44 items as the tool of research for the present investigation. The tool was initially administered to 40 teachers (10 Headmasters and 30 School Assistants) 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 44 items selected for the tool, the discriminating power of 40 items has been found positive and is negative in respect of 4 items. The items whose discriminating power is negative have been removed; and the final tool consists of 40 items, which are foolproof in all respects. The final tool has been administered to 300 teachers (50 Headmasters and 250 School Assistants) working in 50 Secondary Schools in Visakhapatnam district.

(d) Analysis and 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 attitude of teachers towards Quality improvement in Secondary Education

S. No.	Variable		N	Mean	S.D.	t-ratio	Result
1	Gender	Male	140	130.93	34.84	0.02*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Female	160	131.00	35.70		
2	Age	Below 40 years	210	130.31	33.97	0.67*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		40 yrs. & above	90	132.94	29.94		
3	Teaching Experience	Less than 10 yrs	220	130.77	35.19	0.55*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		10 yrs. & above	80	133.00	29.39		
4	Location of the institution	Rural	180	130.83	30.37	0.12*	*Not Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels
		Urban	120	131.33	36.28		

X. 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 attitude of male and female teachers towards quality improvement in Secondary Education.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards quality improvement in Secondary Education.
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers with an experience of below 10 years and those with an experience of 10 years and above towards quality improvement in Secondary Education.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in rural and urban schools towards quality improvement in Secondary Education.

XI. CONCLUSIONS

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that gender, age, teaching experience and location of the institution have no influence on the attitude of teachers towards quality improvement in Secondary Education.

XII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- (i) The study would help the teachers understand the need for quality improvement in Secondary Education.
- (ii) The present study helps the teachers to realize their responsibility in providing quality education to their students in Secondary Schools.
- (iii) The study would help the secondary school students to improve their performance with the enhancement of quality in Secondary Education.
- (iv) The study would help the government and policy makers to take necessary steps for quality improvement in Secondary Education.
- (v) The study would help the Academic Organizations like SCERTs, IASEs and the State Departments of Education to take necessary steps to provide orientation to the teachers with a view to enhance quality in Secondary schools.
- (vi) The study would help the administration to take necessary steps for quality improvement in Secondary Education.

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