

A Comparative Study of the Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession

ABSTRACT: Securing the right type of prospective teachers for training is very crucial. Unless such prospective teachers are found our secondary schools cannot deliver as per our expectations. Therefore, for the professional preparation of prospective teachers, the study of attitudes held by them is very important. This study was conducted to study the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession. A sample of 360 prospective teachers i.e. 200 Muslim and 160 Non-Muslim prospective teachers was taken through purposive sampling technique. Teacher Attitude Inventory (TAI) developed by S.P. Ahluwalia (2007) was used to collect the data. Mean, SD (Standard Deviation), and t-test were used for the analysis of the data. Research findings revealed not significant differences in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers; Muslim and Non-Muslim male prospective teachers; Muslim and Non-Muslim female prospective teachers; Muslim and Non-Muslim Science prospective teachers; Muslim and Non-Muslim Social Science prospective teachers; Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in public B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) institutions; whereas a significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession. Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions had a more favourable attitude towards teaching profession as compared to Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions.

KEY WORDS: Prospective teachers, Muslim and Non-Muslim teachers, teaching profession, favourable and unfavourable attitudes, and public and private B.Ed. institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Education means to open up hidden talent of a child. It is an activity as well as a process which helps students in attaining needed information and knowledge, ability, attitude, and perception (Mirunalini & Anandan, 2012). The quality of a nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of the citizens depends upon the quality of education system, and the quality of education depends upon the combined efforts of planners, educationists, and administration; however, the most significant factor is the quality of the teachers. It means excellent and efficient teachers can change the fate of the nation.

In fact, it is in the schools, colleges, and universities that the development of the attitudes and dispositions necessary for the progressive life in a society takes place. Education is imparted by teachers' schools, colleges, and universities. If the teacher is capable, energetic, mentally healthy, and having positive attitude, it is well and good for the whole education system. A teacher helps a child in bringing out the hidden capabilities. He unfolds what is within, hidden, and untapped. He makes explicit what is implicit in the students. So, teachers' importance in teaching-learning process is very much. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) report stated as follows:

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How to cite this article? Parvez, Mohammad & Mohd Shakir. (2014). "A Comparative Study of the Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession" in *EDUCARE: International Journal for Educational Studies*, Vol.7(1) August, pp.67-74. Bandung, Indonesia: Minda Masagi Press and UMP Purwokerto, ISSN 1979-7877. Available online also at: <http://educare-ijes.com/a-comparative-study-of-the-attitudes/>

Chronicle of the article: Accepted (April 15, 2014); Revised (June 1, 2014); and Published (August 17, 2014).

We are convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher, his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training, and the place that he occupies in the community. [...] It is very right that, "No people can rise above the level of its teachers" (GoI, 1953:155; and GoI, 1986:31-32).

The teacher is the real and dynamic force of any institution. The school without him is a sole less body. Without good, devoted, and competent teachers, even the best system is bound to fail. A good teacher can certainly give best result out of the worst system (Parvez, 2010:58-59). He is a powerful and abiding influence in the formation of character; the influence of a great teacher indirectly extends over many generations. The pivot upon which an educational system moves is the personality of the teacher.

Teaching is often called a calling, not a profession or a trade or simply a job. This means that a teacher should regard himself as one specially called to do this work, not so much for the pecuniary benefits which he may derive from it as for the love of it (Mohiyuddin, 1943). The strength of the schools depends upon the attitudes of the teachers. For qualitative improvement in secondary education of our country, the selection of right type of prospective teachers is a must. This require not only improving the knowledge and teaching competence of prospective teachers, but also to inculcate in them healthy professional attitudes and desirable teacher like qualities.

Therefore, securing the right type of prospective teachers for training is very crucial. Unless such prospective teachers are found our secondary schools cannot deliver as per our expectations. Therefore, for the professional preparation of prospective teachers, the study of attitudes held by them is very important. A positive favourable attitude makes the work not only easier but also more satisfying and professionally rewarding. A negative or unfavourable attitude makes the teaching task harder, more tedious, and unpleasant. Thus, effective, productive, and constructive learning on the part of the pupils can be achieved by employing teachers with favourable attitudes towards teaching profession.

PROSPECTIVE TEACHER

Prospective teachers are those who are undergoing training or studying in B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) programme to become teachers; and they are known by different names like "would be teachers", "pupil-teachers", "student-teachers", "future-teachers", "B.Ed. trainees", etc. And when their training period is over, they join the coveted profession of teaching and become full-fledged teachers.

About the Attitude. The most important factor in the teaching-learning process is the teacher. A good education system can flourish if two conditions are satisfied. Firstly is the constant updating and refinement in knowledge and skills of existing/serving teachers; and secondly is equipping upcoming/prospective teachers with positive attitude towards their profession of teaching.

Attitudes towards profession are usually related with enjoying the profession, complete dedication to their profession, and being aware that profession is socially useful and believing that they need to improve the profession. C.V. Good defined "attitude" as the predisposition or tendency to react specifically towards an object, situation, or value; usually accompanied by feelings and emotions (Good, 1973:49).

According to L.L. Thurstone, "attitude" is the degree of positive or negative effect associated with some psychological object. By psychological object, L.L. Thurstone means any symbol, phrase, slogan, person, institution, ideal or idea towards which people can differ with respect to positive or negative effect (Thurstone, 1946). G.W. Allport defined "attitude" as a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all objects and situations with which it is related (Allport, 1935).

In the words of E. Katz, an attitude is a tendency or disposition to evaluate an object or the symbol of that object in a certain way. An attitude is an important concept to understand human behavior (Katz, 1959). As behaviour is composed of many attributes and one of these important attributes is attitude. Ones behaviour

to a great extent depends upon one's attitude towards the things, idea, person, object in his environment (Mangal, 2009). In this way, attitudes are to a great extent responsible for a particular behaviour of a person.

In simple words, attitudes are "pre-dispositions" to behave in a certain way. Attitude is defined as preference along a dimension of favourableness and unfavourableness to a particular group, institution, concept, or object. A person with a favourable attitude toward something is likely rate favourable and an unfavourable attitude presumes a tendency to reject something (Sax, 1974). An individual's attitude towards his occupation may affect the end-product.

It has been observed that someone who does not enjoy his occupation is not be able to succeed in that occupation. A good teacher with positive attitude, behavior, and personality traits can motivate, inspire, and make students lost in his teaching. A teacher with a positive attitude towards teaching is considered better and becomes popular figure among students. Positive attitudes not only promote learning, but also create the climate which stimulates effective teaching-learning (*cf* Pehlivan, 2010; and Parvez & Shakir, 2013). Therefore, it is important to study the attitudes of the prospective teachers who are going to serve this noble profession of teaching.

About the Review of Related Literature. A. Guneyli & C. Aslan (2009) found a significant difference in favour of female prospective teachers in relation to the gender. No significant difference between attitude scores was observed in relation to the effects of class and socio-economic level.

N. Baloglu & E. Karadag (n.y.) showed that there was a noticeable statistical meaningful relationship between student teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession and some of their preferred coping strategies with stress. M.I. Arif *et al.* (2012) found that the ratio of four personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) was nearly same, but the ratio of openness personality trait was greater which means that the openness personality trait of prospective teachers was more dominant as compared to remaining four big personality traits.

There was a significant difference between male and female prospective teachers on their big five personality traits. Female prospective teachers got greater score on their big five personality trait instrument as compared to male prospective teachers. U. Kareem *et al.* (2012) reported that students enrolled in regular programmes showed high levels of professionalism as compared to distance education students.

Similarly, B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) students enrolled in regular programmes showed the highest levels of professional attitude. S. Sharma & P. Dhaiya (2012) found that: (1) No significant difference between attitude of male and female B.Ed. students towards teaching profession; (2) Arts and Science B.Ed. students do not differ significantly in attitudes towards teaching; and (3) Female B.Ed. students were found to have most favourable towards teaching profession.

S.I.A. Shah & A.A. Thoker (2013) reported that there was significant difference between teaching attitude of government and private secondary school teachers, and government secondary school teachers have higher teaching attitude towards their teaching profession as compared to private secondary school teachers.

RESEARCH GAP, OBJECTIVES, HYPOTHESES, AND METHODS

A careful perusal of above mentioned studies related to attitudes of prospective teachers towards teaching profession suggest that a lot of research has been conducted to investigate the attitudes of prospective teachers towards teaching profession, despite best efforts investigators could not find even a single study comparing the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession. It means there is a research gap. This motivated the investigators to carry out the present research study. This study is a humble attempt to fill in the research gap in this specific area.

The following were the objectives of the study: (1) to compare the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (2) to compare the attitudes of Muslim male and Non-Muslim male prospective teachers

towards teaching profession; (3) to compare the attitudes of Muslim female and Non-Muslim female prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (4) to compare the attitudes of Muslim Science and Non-Muslim Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (5) to compare the attitudes of Muslim Social Science and Non-Muslim Social Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (6) to compare the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in public B.Ed. or Bachelor Education institutions towards teaching profession; and (7) to compare the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession.

In tune with the objectives of the present study, following hypotheses were formulated in null form: (1) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession*"; (2) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim male prospective teachers towards teaching profession*"; (3) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim female prospective teachers towards teaching profession*"; (4) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession*"; (5) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Social Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession*"; (6) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in public B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession*"; and (7) "*There is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession*".

This study falls under the category of descriptive research. Survey method was adopted to carry out the present research work. Thus, in the present research study, "Descriptive Survey Design" was employed.

In the present study, all the Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers of Aligarh District in India constitute the target population. In the present study, sample consisted of 360 prospective teachers: 200 Muslims and 160

Non-Muslim prospective teachers selected through purposive sampling technique.

For data collection "Teacher Attitude Inventory" (TAI) developed by S.P. Ahluwalia (2007) was used to measure the attitudes of prospective teachers. The Inventory consists of 90 statements. Responses were made on a five point scale and the response categories were assigned weights from 0 to 4. The tool was reliable and valid.

The investigators visited the selected institutions personally and administered the "Teacher Attitude Inventory" (TAI). The data were analyzed with the appropriate statistical measures to justify the objectives of the present study. The investigators employed Mean, SD (Standard Deviation), and t-test for the analysis of the data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The analysis of data was done in order to make inferences and generalizations about the population. Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 16 was used for the analysis of data. Hypotheses wise analysis is as follows:

In order to test Ho1, t-test was applied, as showed in table 1.

A close examination of table 1 shows that the t-value 1.108 is statistically not significant at .05 level. This means there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that "*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession*" is accepted.

In order to test Ho2, t-test was applied, as showed in table 2.

A glance at table 2 shows that the t-value 1.646 is statistically not significant at .05 level. This means there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim male prospective teachers towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that "*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim male prospective teachers towards teaching profession*" is accepted.

In order to test Ho3, t-test was applied, as showed in table 3.

Table 1:
Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Prospective Teachers	200	262.92	24.28	358	1.108 *
Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers	160	259.68	31.30		

* Not significant at .05 level

Table 2:
Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Male Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Male Prospective Teachers	108	258.22	27.13	176	1.646*
Non-Muslim Male Prospective Teachers	70	251.81	22.37		

* Not significant at .05 level

Table 3:
Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Female Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Female Prospective Teachers	92	264.26	23.51	180	0.285*
Non-Muslim Female Prospective Teachers	90	263.17	28.12		

* Not significant at .05 level

Table 4:
Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Science Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Science Prospective Teachers	117	265.69	25.46	199	1.071*
Non-Muslim Science Prospective Teachers	84	262.08	20.64		

* Not significant at .05 level

Table 5:
Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Social Science Prospective Teachers towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Social Science Prospective Teachers	83	260.96	23.82	157	1.449*
Non-Muslim Social Science Prospective Teachers	76	254.97	28.28		

* Not significant at .05 level

Table 6:
Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers Studying in Public B.Ed. Institutions towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Prospective Teachers Studying in Public B.Ed. Institutions	95	257.73	23.48	138	1.603*
Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers Studying in Public B.Ed. Institutions	45	251.00	22.53		

*Not significant at .05 level

Table 7:
 Showing the Comparison of Attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers
 Studying in Private B.Ed. Institutions towards Teaching Profession

Basis	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Muslim Prospective Teachers Studying in Private B.Ed. Institutions	105	271.96	25.11	218	3.799 **
Non-Muslim Prospective Teachers Studying in Private B.Ed. Institutions	115	257.66	27.06		

** Significant at .01 level

Table 3 clearly shows that the t-value 0.285 is statistically not significant at .05 level. This means there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim female prospective teachers towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim female prospective teachers towards teaching profession*” is accepted.

In order to test Ho4, t-test was applied, as showed in table 4.

An inspection of table 4 clearly reveals that the t-value 1.071 is statistically not significant at .05 level. This means there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession*” is accepted.

In order to test Ho5, t-test was applied, as showed in table 5.

An examination of table 5 clearly shows that the t-value 1.449 is statistically not significant at .05 level. This means there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Social Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim Social Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession*” is accepted.

In order to test Ho6, t-test was applied, as showed in table 6.

Table 6 clearly shows that the t-value 1.603 is statistically not significant at .05 level. This means there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in

public B.Ed. (Bachelor Education) institutions towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in public B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession*” is accepted.

In order to test Ho7, t-test was applied, as showed in table 7.

Table 7 clearly shows that the t-value 3.799 is statistically significant at .01 level. This means there is a significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. (Bachelor Education) institutions towards teaching profession. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “*there is no significant difference in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession*” is rejected.

Higher mean score of Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions than the Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions indicate that Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions had a more favourable attitude towards teaching profession as compared to Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed institutions.

So, the findings of the study are as follows: (1) No significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (2) No significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim male and Non-Muslim male prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (3) No significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim female and Non-Muslim

female prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (4) No significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim Science and Non-Muslim Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (5) No significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim Social Science and Non-Muslim Social Science prospective teachers towards teaching profession; (6) No significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in public B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession; and (7) A significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession. More specifically Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions had a more favourable attitude towards teaching profession as compared to Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions.

CONCLUSION

Teachers are called nation builders, their role is most important for social, economic, and political transformation of an equitable and just society. A good principal, magnificent building, sound infrastructure, and good curriculum are useless, if the teachers in any institution are not with positive attitude towards teaching profession. Teaching is a very respectable and pious profession, but even then not all the teachers who are in this profession like it.

Many prospective teachers join this profession not by their choice, but simply by chance, some join this B.Ed. (Bachelor Education) programme just to spend one year, some join it if they do not get admission in their chosen course. This is the reason why they do not develop positive attitude towards teaching, because of the simple reason that teaching is not their first choice, rather this is their last choice.

Therefore, through this paper, it is suggested that they must develop positive attitude towards teaching profession if they really want to excel in this field. Attitudes towards profession are usually related with enjoying the profession, complete dedication to this

coveted profession, and giving it more than hundred percent. Prospective teachers must develop proper and positive attitudes towards their profession, so that they can bring about a positive change in the life of their students.

This study will help in the selection of those students for teaching profession who held favourable attitude towards teaching. This research study would bring about a substantial change in the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective-teachers community towards teaching in particular and prospective teachers in general.

Findings of the study have some implications for practice and for further research. One important implication of this study is the finding that a significant difference was found between the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession. More specifically, Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions had a more favourable attitude towards teaching profession as compared to Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions.

Therefore, Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions need to develop positive attitudes towards teaching profession. This study may be helpful as an introduction to the complex task of finding the "best" prospective teachers. The fact that a teacher has to have both knowledge and certification to be a teacher, along with certain personality characteristics, make the search for qualified teachers for Indian teacher training institutions more easier. Perhaps more studies should be carried on to examine more carefully what are the factors that might have caused the difference between the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers studying in private B.Ed. institutions towards teaching profession.

The investigators believe that present research study comparing the attitudes of Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers and its correlations will be much helpful in identifying those factors that govern the behaviour of the Muslim and Non-Muslim prospective teachers. It will also be useful in developing the predictive measures to be

employed in selection of candidates for teacher training programme.

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