

ATTITUDE SCALE FOR STUDENT TEACHERS TOWARDS TEACHING PROFESSION

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to develop the attitude scale for student teachers towards teaching profession. Moreover, it is intended to examine the attitude of student teachers towards teaching profession by gender and subject stream. The participants were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Descriptive research design and quantitative survey method were used. A total of 210 first year student teachers (105 males and 105 females) from Sagaing University of Education participated. In the section of data analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, item analysis, descriptive statistics, independent sample *t* test, one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc multiple comparison test were used. The newly constructed scale consists of 27 items with 18 positive and 9 negative items. Reliability coefficient of Cronbach's alpha (.819) was established using internal consistency method. Content validity and criterion related validity was also established. Concurrent validity was found to be (.505). Based on the results, attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers was satisfactory. In addition, attitude towards teaching profession of male student teachers was not significant difference from that of female student teachers. By subject stream, there was a significant difference in attitude towards teaching profession ($p < .001$). Attitude towards teaching profession of arts student teachers were highest, that of science student teachers were second and that of arts-science students were lowest. The present study contributed both for the developing of attitude scale for student teachers towards teaching profession and examining the attitude of student teachers. It is also hoped that the finding of this scale would enable the investigators to make suggestions towards improving the student teachers' perception towards their profession.

Keywords: Attitude, Attitude Scale, Teaching, Profession, Teaching Profession

Introduction

Teacher's professional competence as well as personal characteristics and attitude regarding the profession plays an important role in their success. For the professional development of teachers the studies of attitude help them very crucial. Positive and favorable attitudes not only make individuals to perform his work in a better manner but also make satisfying and rewarding to them. Unfavorable attitude on the other hand makes individual tired, boring and unacceptable individuals.

What type of attitude, favorable or unfavorable, positive or negative does one possesses towards an objects, idea or person is a thing of investigation. Its objective assessment needs a type of measurement that can help people to determine to some extent in a reliable and accurate way the nature of one's attitude towards a given object, idea or person.

From the psychological point of view, the teachers' attitude is one of the most influential factors in teaching profession. Evans (1965) stated that "Attitudes are playing a major role in human life as a motive for conduct in the various aspects of this life". This highlighted the importance of attitude in connection between individuals in a society where attitudes help the individual in social adjustment. Attitudes can be regarded as the most significant indicator of success in the profession towards that one's attitude is developed. Without adoring his or her profession, one may not perform it productively (Terzi & Tezci, 2010).

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Moreover, attitude scales attempt to determine what an individual believes, perceives or feels. Attitudes can be measured toward self, others, and a variety of other activities, institutions, and situations. An attitude scale is a crude measuring device, consisting of a number of statements to which the respondent must express his or her degree of agreement or disagreement. Depending on the respondent's endorsement of each statement, a particular score is rendered. The total score which is calculated by adding up the scores for each item, places the respondent on a continuum from least favorable to most favorable.

There are many standardized attitude scales towards teaching profession. Some of the items including these standardized attitude scales are inconsistent with the nature of Myanmar. Therefore, it needs to construct the standardized attitude scales for student teachers towards teaching profession. This study can support in examining and shaping the attitude of student teachers. In addition, through the findings of this study, pre-service teacher training programmers can know the differences of student teachers' attitude towards teaching profession and can support their student teachers to become strong positive perception on their teaching profession.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to develop an attitude scale towards teaching profession.

Scope of the Study

This study is intended to develop an attitude scale for student teachers towards teaching profession. A total of 210 first year student teachers were selected from Sagaing University of Education. This scope was limited within 2018-2019 Academic Year.

Definitions of Key Terms

- Attitude** : An individual's positive or negative emotional tendency towards people, objects, events, and ideas (Papanastasiou, 2002, cited in Tok, 2012).
- Attitude Scale** : An attitude scale is a special type of questionnaire designed to produce scores indicating the intensity and direction (for or against) of a person's feelings about an object or event (Sharma, 2016).
- Teaching** : Teaching is the imparting knowledge from one person to another and guiding of someone to behave in a particular manner (Nwachi, 1991, cited in Jekayinfa, 2002).
- Profession** : Profession is an occupation that claims the exclusive technical competence and which also adheres to the service ideals and allows ethics of professional conduct (Obdi, 1975, cited in Jekayinfa, 2002)
- Teaching Profession** : Teaching profession is concerned with job security and social prestige, molding the young minds, getting appreciation from others, solving problems of the students (Srinivasun & Ambedkar, 2015)

Review of Related Literature

Theories of Attitude

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1980), Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) posits that individual behaviour is driven by behavioural intentions where behavioural intentions are a function of an individual's attitude toward the behaviour and subjective norms surrounding performance of the behaviour.

Attitude towards the behaviour is defined as the individual's positive or negative feelings about performing behaviour. It is determined through an assessment of one's beliefs regarding the consequences arising from a behaviour and evaluation of the desirability of these consequences. Formally, overall attitude can be assessed as the sum of the individual consequence and desirability assessments for all expected consequences of the behaviour.

Subjective norm is defined as an individual's perception of whether people important to the individual think the behaviour should be performed. The contribution of the opinion of any given reference is weighted by the motivation that an individual has to comply with the wishes of that referent. Hence, overall subjective norm can be expressed as the sum of the individual perception and motivation assessments for all relevant referents.

Theory of Reasoned Action suggests that a person's behaviour is determined by his/ her intention to perform the behaviour and that this intention is, in turn, a function of his/her attitude toward the behaviour and his/ her subjective norm. The best predictor of behaviour is intention. Intention is the cognitive representation of a person's readiness to perform a given behavior, and it is considered to be the immediate antecedent of behaviour. This intention is determined by three things: their attitude toward the specific behavior, their subjective norms and their perceived behavioural control.

The Three-Component Model Attitude

Three component model states that beliefs, feelings and behaviour towards an object can influence attitudes towards it, and that these attitudes can influence attitude can reciprocally influence the beliefs, feelings and behaviours.

In other words, any particular attitude affects these three components and / or is affected by them. This example illustrates the three-component model of attitude structure, which states that beliefs, feelings and behaviours form three distinct types of psychological information that are closely tied to attitudes. This model predicts that:

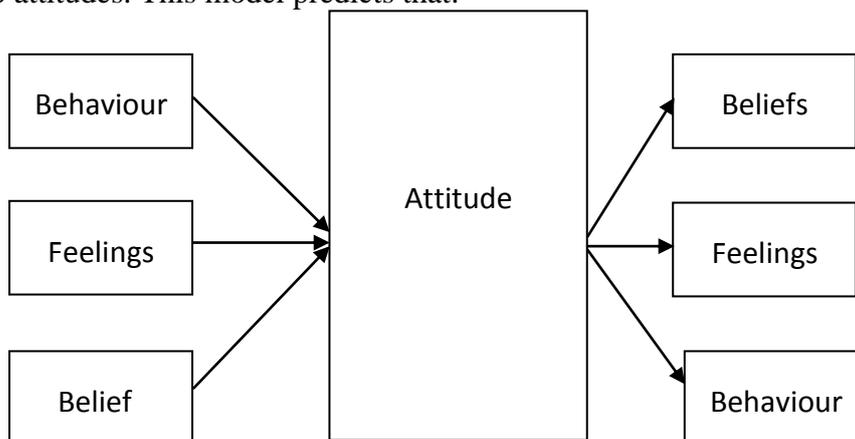


Figure 2.2 Three-component Model of Attitude

Source: from Ajzen (1991)

Professional Attitude

Professional attitude of a teacher is the demonstration of his/her likes or dislikes feelings, emotions or behavior towards teaching and learning practices in the realm of education. Research has proved that teachers with positive attitude perform better in teaching and learning. They are more cooperative and dedicated in the dispensation of their duties as teachers. Professional attitude of teachers plays a fundamental role in shaping the behaviors of teachers (Carr, 1990, cited in Ahmad et al., 2013).

According to Baxter (1989, cited in Ahmad et al., 2013) teachers with positive attitude have stable emotions and feelings. They demonstrate affection, patience, sincerity and care while interacting with teachers, parents or school staff. They do not work in isolation. Such teachers work in collaboration and they have high self-esteem. Students do not hesitate to meet them as they are accessible to everyone openly.

Positive professional attitude helps teachers develop the ability to establish shared environment where everyone is able to contribute. Be it a student, a teacher or parent. They have a decent and complete control on the teaching and learning environment and monitor it effectively (Bean, 1996, cited in Ahmad et al., 2013).

Teachers largely depend upon their personal characteristics and dispositions. Both seem to be highly interlinked, as the teaching profession requires certain dominant behaviors which show his intellect, desire to excel, extended professionalism and continuum, in service growth for a good teacher and teachings as a life concern (Baver et al., 1995, cited in Thilakan, 2012). This is a profession, which exalts service above the personal gains.

Professional Attitude Scale for Teachers

A quick and convenient measure of attitudes that could be used with large groups has led to the development of attitude scales. Attitude scales also provide everyone with one means of obtaining and assessment of the degree of affect that individuals may associate with some psychological object. A well-constructed attitude scale consists of a number of items or statements. An individual responds to these statements by indicating his/her agreement or disagreement with that statement. Although many limitations of attitude scale have surfaced, however, until more precise measures are developed, the attitudes scale or opinionnaire remains the best devices for the purpose of measuring attitudes and beliefs and therefore are widely used in the fields of Education and Psychology. They determine the direction and intensity of a person's feelings for or against some belief or practice. They are also used to survey the attitude of a large number of individuals.

Method and Procedure

Sample of the Study

In order to obtain the required data, the sample of student teachers to be tested was selected from Sagaing University of Education. The participants were 210 first year student teachers.

Research Method

The student teachers participated in this study were selected by using simple random sampling method. Descriptive research design and quantitative survey method were used in this study.

Instrumentation of Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession

In this study, the questionnaire on teaching attitude towards teaching developed by Mishra (1999), the questionnaire on attitude towards teaching developed by Musa and Bichi (2015) and the attitude scale towards teaching profession (ASTTP) developed by Kulsum (2008) were adapted and applied to measure the attitude of student teachers towards teaching profession. Out of these questionnaires, 100 items were used.

In this study, the attitude scale towards teaching profession is divided into five subscales as follows:

- (1) General Perceptions on Teaching Profession
- (2) Satisfaction on Teaching Profession
- (3) Value on Teaching Profession
- (4) Qualification of Teaching Profession
- (5) Motivation of Teaching Profession

All the items were translated into Myanmar version. Before conducting expert review, there were 100 items in the whole scale and 20 items in each subscale. Four-point Likert scale was used ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree) and vice versa for negative items. Expert review was conducted for face validity and content validity by experts from the fields of Educational Psychology.

Items were revised according to the valuable advices of the experts and then irrelevant and overlapped items were removed. Seventy five items were constructed for preliminary test (15 items in each subscale).

Preliminary Test Administration of Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession

In order to check whether the items were appropriate for student teachers, preliminary testing was conducted with 50 student teachers (first year) from Sagaing University of Education. The internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of the whole scale was .897. So, it was evident that Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession has high reliability to measure the student teachers' attitude towards teaching profession.

Data Collection Procedure

After pilot testing, the Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession developed by the researcher (75 items) and one already standardized Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession developed by Renthlei and Malsawni (2015) (22 items) were administered to 210 first year student teachers from Sagaing University of Education.

Data Analysis

In this study, confirmatory factor analysis, item analysis and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was employed to construct the new Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession. The descriptive statistics was used to investigate the attitude of student teachers towards teaching profession. The quantitative data were analyzed by the independent sample *t* test, One-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Test by using Tukey HSD.

Data Analysis and Findings

The Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession

In order to establish the five factors structure of Attitude towards Teaching Profession such as General Perceptions on Teaching Profession, Satisfaction on Teaching Profession, Value on Teaching Profession, Qualifications of Teaching Profession and Motivation of Teaching Profession, confirmatory factor analysis was used.

In this study, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .800. It was above the recommended value of 0.7 that is indicating that there were enough items for each factor. And Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ($p < .000$); this means that the variables are correlated highly enough to provide a reasonable basis for factor analysis. The five factors also have eigenvalues (a measure of explained variance) greater than 1.0, which is a common criterion for a factor to be useful.

Throughout this analysis process, items with initial value of less than 0.2 without loading were discarded. After doing several steps, 5 items out of 75 items were eliminated because they had no loadings with any other factor. By taking out 70 items, the communalities were all above 0.2; it indicated that the relation between each item and other items is satisfactory.

According to the result, it was verified that 14 items were grouped into factor 1 and it was defined General Perceptions on Teaching Profession. In the second factor, this factor was named as Satisfaction on Teaching Profession and it has 6 items. In the third factor, this factor was assigned as Value on Teaching Profession and it includes 17 items. In the fourth factor, this factor was marked as Qualifications of Teaching Profession and it consists of 24 items. In the fifth factor, this factor was named as Motivation of Teaching Profession and it has 9 items.

Item Analysing for the Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession

According to Item Analysis, 43 items were removed from the Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession. Finally 27 items were selected for the new Attitude Scale toward Teaching Profession. The item numbers for positive and negative statements are 18 and 9 respectively.

Establishment of Reliability and Validity

The reliability coefficient of the newly constructed Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession (Cronbach's alpha) is .819. It was above the recommended value of .7 that is indicating that the present scale is high reliable.

For the establishment of validity, expert review was conducted for face validity and content validity by experts in the field of Educational Psychology. Moreover, confirmatory factor analysis was used for construct validity. In addition, criterion related validity was also established. This was done by computing the correlation coefficient between the newly constructed scale and one already standardized Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession developed by Renthlei and Malsawmi (2015). This way, the scale was validated by means of concurrent validity by employing the product moment correlation. A coefficient of correlation between these two scales was found to be .505 which is regarded as acceptable concurrent evidence.

The following is the recently created attitude scale towards teaching profession constructed by the researcher:

Instructions: Below is a list of statements aimed to study the attitude of teachers towards teaching profession. Please put a tick mark (√) on any one of the five boxes given on the right side of each statement. If you strongly agree, put a tick mark below SA, if you agree, put a tick mark below A, if you disagree, put a tick mark under D and if you strongly disagree, put a tick mark under SD. Please respond to every item. There is no time limit but you have to respond as quickly as possible. Your frank and sincere answers will be very much appreciated.

	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Most people prefer teaching to other profession.				
2.	Teachers enter into teaching profession because it is available.				
3.	Teaching helps in strengthening the desire to learn.				
4.	Teachers find little satisfaction in their work.				
5.	I would enjoy being a teacher.				
6.	I hate teaching because there is nothing creative in it.				
7.	I had to choose a profession again, I would prefer becoming a teacher.				
8.	Teachers' welfare are always overlooked by government.				
9.	I think that teaching makes more pressure in comparison with other jobs.				
10.	Teacher promotion system is adequate.				
11.	Teaching is a respected profession like Medicine and Law.				
12.	I prefer to do any other job than to teach after my graduation.				
13.	Teaching profession is enjoyable.				
14.	Teachers have low social value.				
15.	I would like to work as a teacher even under difficult conditions.				
16.	Teaching will be a secure job.				
17.	Others told me that teaching is not a good career choice.				
18.	Trained teachers are more confident than untrained ones in solving students' problems.				
19.	Teaching skill is highly technical.				
20.	I have the qualities of a good teacher.				
21.	Teaching profession offers free time for teachers.				
22.	I think teaching is a suitable profession for me.				
23.	I thought it had a job guarantee.				
24.	No occupation is better than teaching.				
25.	I was not accepted to my first-choice career.				
26.	Teaching will offer a steady career path.				
27.	A teaching job will allow me to choose where I wish to live.				

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Attitude towards Teaching Profession

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	210	50	98	79.17	7.852

Table 1 showed that the mean score of student teachers' attitude towards teaching profession was 79.17 and standard deviation was 7.852. According to the results, it can be interpreted that the student teachers' attitude towards teaching profession was satisfactory because the sample mean score was greater than the theoretical mean score (67.5).

Independent sample *t* test was conducted to compare the differences in attitude towards teaching profession among male and female student teachers. The result of *t* test which showed the comparison of attitude towards teaching profession between male and female was shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Comparison of Attitude towards Teaching Profession by Gender

Variable	Gender	<i>N</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	Male	105	78.25	7.831	-1.704	208	.090
	Female	105	80.09	7.802			

According to Table 2, the result of *t* test indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female student teachers in attitude towards teaching profession.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Attitude towards Teaching Profession by Subject Stream

Variable	Subject Stream	<i>N</i>	Min	Max	Mean	<i>SD</i>
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	Science	70	50	94	77.80	7.136
	Arts-Science	70	53	94	77.27	7.327
	Arts	70	55	98	82.43	8.113

In Table 3, it was found that the mean and standard deviation of attitude of student teachers who took the combination of science were 77.80 and 7.163, those of student teachers who took the combination of arts-science were 77.27 and 7.327, and those of student teachers who took the combination of arts were 82.43 and 8.113 respectively for attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers.

To explore the differences in attitude towards teaching profession among subject stream (Science, Arts-Science and Arts) of student teachers, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. These results were shown in Table 4.

Table 4 ANOVA Results for Attitude towards Teaching Profession by Subject Stream

Attitude towards Teaching Profession	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	Mean Squares	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	1126.981	2	563.490	9.920***	.000
Within Groups	11758.186	207	56.803		
Total	12885.167	209			

****p*<0.001

Table 4 showed that there were significant differences in attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers among subject stream. It was significant at 0.001 levels. To get the specific information about differences in attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers among subject stream, Post-Hoc test was conducted by Tukey HSD method. The results of Post-Hoc test were shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Results of Tukey HSD Test for Attitude towards Teaching Profession of Student Teachers by Subject Stream

Variable	(I)Subject Stream	(J)Subject Stream	Mean Difference	<i>p</i>
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	Science	Arts-Science	.529	.910
		Arts	-4.629***	.001
	Arts-Science	Science	-.529	.910
		Arts	-5.157***	.000
	Arts	Science	4.629***	.001
		Arts-Science	5.157***	.000

****p* < 0.001

Based on the results of the Post Hoc Test by using Tukey HSD, it can be concluded that the attitude of student teachers who took the combination of science was no significant difference from that of student teachers who took the combination of arts-science. And there was significant difference between the attitude of student teachers who took the combination of arts and that of student teachers who took the combination of science, the attitude of student teachers who took the combination of arts and that of student teachers who took the combination of arts-science at 0.001 level.

Conclusion

There are many standardized attitude scales towards teaching profession. But, there has not been an attitude scale for student teachers towards teaching profession constructed in Sagaing University of Education. It is greatly hoped that the present study would be utilized to understand the student teachers' attitude and that measures would be taken to make improvements whatever necessary.

In this study, the researcher constructed the new attitude scale for student teachers towards teaching profession including 27 items. According to the data analysis and findings, attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers were satisfactory. In addition, attitude towards teaching profession of male student teachers was not significant difference from that of female student teachers. By subject stream, there was significant difference in attitude towards teaching profession. Attitude towards teaching profession of student teachers who took the combination of arts were highest, that of student teachers who took the combination of science were second and that of student teachers who took the combination of arts-science were lowest.

Although the results supported the objectives of the study, there were a few limitations of this study need to be recognized. Firstly, the sample size is not sufficient to represent the whole student teachers from all universities of education. Because the participants in this study were only 210 student teachers from Sagaing University of Education, their result may be inconsistent and a large sample may produce different result. This may be one of the limitations. Because of the time allocation, the researcher could not modify and revise the discard items.

In conclusion, it is expected that this study can help to examine the attitude of student teachers towards teaching profession and offer them some useful programs, which will illuminate them about what they should or should not do in their future classes. Determining some factors effecting trainees to choose the teaching as a profession, level of their positive or negative attitudes will highlight teacher education programs. Finally, it is necessary that teacher training programs need to provide student teachers with knowledge and experiences, and teacher trainers should aim to help trainees be independent individuals, demonstrate positive attitudes, and encourage them to be creative and take responsibility for their development.

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