



## Attitude of Primary Teachers Towards Children: A Cross-Sectional Study on Domjur Block, West Bengal

### KEYWORDS

Children, Students, Primary Teachers, Attitude, Attitude of Primary Teacher.

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**ABSTRACT** *The purpose of the present investigation was to find out strata-wise (sex and habitat, sex and training status) comparison of the variable Teachers' Attitude Towards Children. Many studies showed that the better teacher-student relationship can reveal higher achievement in school level and for that attitude of teachers towards their children/students play a crucial role. The analysis of the present study showed that in case of the combination sex and habitat there exists no significant difference in all possible combinations but in case of sex and training, training plays a significant role in case of female primary teachers but surprisingly untrained male primary teachers have more significant attitude towards children/students than untrained female primary teachers. It might suggest that for successful execution of school education system and development of healthy teacher-student relationship and building a better attitude, especially in primary education system, genuine rapport between teacher and students goes a long way.*

### Introduction:

What a child learns from its mother, the same lingers with him till the end of his/her life. From this fact we can infer here that a primary teacher should have a mother-like attitude towards his/her students particularly at primary level. The student should not develop any fear psychosis about his mentor. He should be free and feel at home always in the company of a teacher in his/ her primary stage. Attitude of the teachers towards children will serve as an indicator of the acceptance of the children, to share their difficulties. Even Bertrand Russell advocates this motherly attitude in the teaching as a mentor, while he deals with the children in his famous book "On Education". In this way, the very edifice of cognitive knowledge is formed among the children with love, care and positive attitude of the teachers towards the students/children. This attitude, in turn, is transferred to children. Thereafter a child can develop a lifelong loving relationship with the system of education.

Every educational process has an aim to uplift the academic level of their students and try to develop the human resource of the country. For achieving this noble mission, it is essential to create a healthy relationship between students/ children and their teachers. So in this context, it is important to improve the attitude of teachers towards children, especially in primary classrooms. Both the teachers as well as the students have to realize their own part in carrying on the burden of responsibility.

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Primary classrooms are the backbone of every educational system. The primary teachers have to be aware in this connection is that the time and effort used in teaching may not help students compulsorily acquire the offered knowledge. Proper conditions should be first created for that. A teacher's responsibility within the educational system includes expertise in his teaching approaches as well as his/ her educational style.

Teachers' abilities to form positive relationships with students are impacted by their personality type, experiences, and the quality of their own personal relationships (Baker, 2006). Teachers form these characteristics in the schooling process focused on the students. The responsibility for teaching and learning success rests equally divided on the shoulders of teacher and student.

### Emergence of the Problem:

For significant academic and social implications for students, it is important for teachers to examine ways to enhance the quality of teacher-student relationships. Findings of researches indicate that all children do not have equal access to the opportunity to develop close relationships with their teachers. Some factors like gender and ability level cannot be altered, but is well within our locus of control to provide self development for teachers, educate them about their personal biases and show them how to improve the quality of their relationships with all students (Jerome et al., 2009).

Adults often assume that children like school due to the opportunities it offers for peer interaction. Researches also indicate that certain teacher traits serve as strong indicators of students' like or dislike for school (Montalov, Mansfield, and Miller, 2007). The emphasis in most schools on improving teacher-student relationships has focused on addressing difficulties between individual teachers and children. Attention should also be paid to assisting teachers in the development of authoritative, rather than authoritarian classroom management styles (Buyse et al., 2009). Wu, Hughes and Kwok (2009) advocate that teachers may find it challenging to establish positive relationships with children who display an overtly confident demeanor. Jones (2008) suggests that school leaders should even use the term "relationship building" in lieu of "classroom management", to shift the thinking away from the idea of managing students and toward the notion of collaborating with them. It is important for educational leaders to recognize that student-teacher relationships are only one component of the broader issue of student engagement.

When students have a positive teacher-student relationship, they adjust to school more easily, view school as a positive experience, exhibit fewer behavior difficulties, display better social skills, and demonstrate higher academic achievement (Buyse et al., 2009). They are also more active participants in class, express a greater interest in college, and maintain higher grade point averages (Hallinan, 2008). The first impres-

sion most children will receive about a particular academic subject is from their teachers. For this reason, the attitude of the teacher goes a long way toward promoting her students' success in the classroom. If the teacher is genuinely involved in the subject matter, the students will fall in line.

Judging from all research findings and related reviews on this area, the researchers are now convinced that a primary teacher plays a significant role in setting up the mind and psyche of a student and determines his/ her future achievement. A primary teacher plays the job of sparking and if the sparking is done in an effective way, not only an individual student is benefitted in future, but the whole nation at large will immensely reap harvest in the years to come. Teachers' attitude towards students is thus intimately connected with the well being of the students. It is, therefore, worthwhile to survey the attitude of the teachers towards the students of primary schools. As a firsthand effort, the authors want to confine their studies on a small sample drawn from a nearby Domjur block mostly inhabited by original WB people (residing there from the colonial period) and situated in the District of Howrah. The topic of the problem may, therefore, be stated as "Attitude of Primary Teachers towards children: A cross-sectional study on Domjur Block, West Bengal".

**Statement of Problem:**

Teacher's attitude towards students develops due to some internal factors like job satisfaction, leadership qualities, gender, level of aspiration, interest in education, mastery of subject etc. and external factors like school environment, parental qualities, teacher training of the teacher, appreciation by colleagues etc. In primary education, the female teachers outnumber male counterparts. There might be an effect of gender on attitude of teachers towards children.

Again needs and problems of the children are not always known to the teacher in a desirable extent. Through initial teacher-training a teacher might be able to identify the needs and problems of the children. Thus Teacher Training might have an impact on attitude of teachers towards children.

The proximity and love between teachers and students in primary schools are at variance in urban and rural area. These factors might control and shape the attitude of teachers towards the primary children.

The present problem comprises a variable attitude of teachers towards the children over which the effect of some categorical variables is sought. The categorical variables selected for the present study are 'gender', 'habitat' and 'Teacher Training'. Attitude towards the children has been considered as dependent variable and the categorical variables are considered as independent variables. The investigators like to identify the effect, if any, of the categorical variables on the dependent variable of the present study.

**Definition of the term:**

**Attitude of Teachers towards the children:**

An attitude is a framework that affects how a person thinks and acts about the world. Because people's belief systems impact how they behave, internal values may reveal themselves in a person's actions. If a teacher has a negative attitude towards education, his job or his students, it may influence his performance as an educator.

**Delimitations of the study**

1. The study considered only one dependent variable: Teachers attitude towards children. Other categorical variables are: Sex, habitat and teacher training.
2. The study was confined to primary teachers of govt. aided primary schools of Domjur Block, Howrah, West Bengal.
3. Only primary teachers are considered here.
4. No. of primary teachers comprised 238 of which 128

male primary teachers and 110 female primary teachers.

**Objective of the study:**

1. To find the mean score of the primary teachers in 'teachers attitude towards children scale'.
2. To compare the mean scores of the teachers sex-wise.
3. To compare the mean scores of the teachers' habitat-wise.
4. To compare the mean scores of the teachers' training-wise.
5. To determine the impact of different strata and their interactions on the total contribution (sex-wise & habitat-wise and sex-wise & training-wise).

**Hypotheses of the study:**

- H<sub>1</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of male primary teachers and that of female primary teachers.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of urban primary teachers and that of rural primary teachers.
- H<sub>3</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of male urban primary teachers and that of male rural primary teachers.
- H<sub>4</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of female urban primary teachers and that of female rural primary teachers.
- H<sub>5</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of male urban primary teachers and that of female urban primary teachers.
- H<sub>6</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of male rural primary teachers and that of female rural primary teachers.
- H<sub>7</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of trained primary teachers and that of untrained primary teachers.
- H<sub>8</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of trained male primary teachers and that of trained female primary teachers.
- H<sub>9</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of non-trained male primary teachers and that of untrained female primary teachers.
- H<sub>10</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of trained male primary teachers and that of untrained male primary teachers.
- H<sub>11</sub>: There exists no significant difference between mean attitude towards children scores of trained female primary teachers and that of untrained female primary teachers.

**Methodology of the study :**

**A. Participants:**

The sample in the present study consisted of 238 primary teachers randomly drawn from the sample frame. The researchers made a sample frame where they listed all the primary teachers of Domjur circle, Howrah and the gender, habitat and training of the teachers were taken in to consideration.

**Table .1**

	Urban	Rural	Total
Male P.T	31	97	128
Female P.T	66	44	110
Total	97	141	238

**Table. 2**

	Trained	Non-Trained	Total
Male P.T	52	76	128
Female P.T	82	28*	110
Total	134	104	238

\*Sample represents almost normal distribution

**B. Tools used:**

For collection of desired data for the study, one psychological test was used .

Teachers’ attitude towards children scale by G.S.Nayak and S.P.Anand (1992): The teacher attitude towards children. This scale consist of 40 items, individually judged / measured on a 5-points were qualified by giving score ranging from 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree for negative statements and reverse for positive statements. As the test was culture free and culture fair the test was simply translated in to Bengali.

**C. Statistical Analysis:**

In the present study, central tendencies (mean S. D ) , t-test and ANOVA were used for the analysis of data.

**Presentation of data:**

**Table-3 Summary of descriptive statistics (strata-wise)**

	MT	FT	UT	RT	TT	UTT	UMT	RMT	UFT	RFT	TMT	UTMT	TFT	UTFT
N	128	110	97	141	134	104	31	97	66	44	52	76	82	28
M	110.3	108.1	109.2	109.3	111.2	106.7	111.2	110.0	108.3	107.7	112.5	108.8	110.5	101.0
SD	14.8	15.5	13.9	16.0	15.6	14.2	13.6	15.5	14.4	17.2	15.5	14.2	15.7	12.7

When, P.T = Primary Teachers; ATC = Attitude towards Children; LOS = Level of significance

MT=Male Teacher; FT= Female Teachers UT= Urban Teachers; RT=Rural Teachers; TT=Teacher Training; UTT=Untrained Teacher; UMT=Urban Male Teacher; RMT=Rural Male Teacher; UFT= Urban Female Teacher, RFT=Rural Female Teachers; TMT=Trained Male Teacher; TFT=Trained Female Teachers; UTMT=Untrained Male Teachers; TMT= Trained Female Teachers; UTFT=Untrained Female Teachers

**Analysis and interpretation of the data**

**Table- 4 Summary of results of ANOVA for attitude towards children scores with respect to sex and habitat factor**

Source	SS	df	MS	F – ratio	p - value	LOS at 0.05
Sex	332	1	332	1.44	0.232	NS
Habitat	36	1	36	0.16	0.693	NS
Sex X Habitat	4	1	4	0.02	0.893	NS
Error Variance	54048	234	231			

It is clear from Table -4 that sex and habitat each individually and interaction effect of both sex and habitat have no significant impact on the variability of ATC. So difference of mean scores between male and female teachers at different levels of habitat are not significant and t –tests are no longer necessary.

It is transparent from table 4 that there is no significant difference of mean scores of primary teachers (ATC) between all possible pairs. So, null hypotheses from 1 to 6 are retained.

**Table: 5 Summary of result of ANOVA for attitude towards Children scores with respect to sex and training factor**

Source	SS	df	MS	F -ratio	p - value	LOS
Sex	1192	1	1192	5.38	0.021*	S0.05
Training	2139	1	2139	9.66	0.002**	S0.01
Sex X Training	412	1	412	1.86	0.174	NS
Error variance	51814	234	221			

It is evident from table 5 that sex and training each individually has significant impact on the variability of ATC, but their interaction has no significant impact of ATC

**Table- 6 The t – values between different strata of ATC (Sex – wise & Training – wise)**

Sl No.	Strata	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	p-value	LOS
7	Trained P.T	134	111.2	15.6	2.31	0.022	S at 0.05
	Untrained P.T	104	106.7	14.2			
8	Trained Male P.T	52	112.5	15.5	0.73	0.468	NS at 0.05
	Trained Female P.T	82	110.5	15.7			
9	Untrained Male P.T	76	108.8	14.2	2.54	0.013	S at 0.05
	Untrained Female P.T	28	101.0	12.7			
10	Trained Male P.T	52	112.5	15.5	1.39	0.168	NS at 0.05
	Untrained Male P.T	76	108.8	14.2			
11	Trained Female P.T	82	110.5	15.7	2.86	0.005	S at 0.01
	Untrained Female P.T	28	101.0	12.7			

It is evident from table 6 that there is a significant difference of mean scores of ATC between the pairs trained P.T. – untrained P.T., and untrained male P.T. – untrained female P.T. and trained female P.T. - non trained female P.T.. So, the null hypotheses 7, 9 and 11 are rejected. Other null hypotheses 8 and 10 are retained. Untrained Male and female teachers before training differ significantly but not significantly after training.

#### Results of Testing of Null Hypothesis:

Null Hypotheses 1 to 6, 8 & 10 are retained. Remaining null hypotheses 7, 9 & 11 are rejected.

#### Findings of the study :

1. No significant difference exists between primary teachers sex-wise, habitat-wise or in different combinations of sex and habitat in the context of ATC.
2. No significant interaction effect is observed between sex and habitat. Difference between Male and Female teachers is independent of habitat and vice versa.
3. Training has no impact on the male teacher but it has predominant impact on female teachers. Training elevates the Attitude of the female teachers.
4. For trained P.T. sex does not play any significant role.
5. Training plays a significant role to P.T. In case of untrained P.T., males have significantly higher ATC than untrained females.
6. Sex and training have individually a significant impact on the variability of ATC. But there interaction effect sex and training i.e. sex-wise difference of means does not depend on training and vice versa on ACT.

#### Discussion:

In order to do more justice to the investigation, the sample size should have to be increased sex-wise, stage-wise. The cluster sample with more cautiously prepared standardized test could unearth the objective reality. The present study was confined only to primary school level, i.e., primary teachers. For better validation, investigation in different stage of teachers and for different streams of education should have been undertaken. For several constraints the above ideal condition could not be achieved by the investigators.

It would seem that teacher-student relationships also depend on what teaching methods are utilized in elementary classrooms. Teacher-student conflict was higher when certain instructional practices were observed, including activities that were more teacher-directed, rote- learning experiences, and skills taught in isolation. Teachers who have an effective skill base for developmentally appropriate instructional practices may be able to decrease the probability of teacher-student conflict (Mantzicopoulos, 2005).

In the present study effects of sex, habitat and training are considered. The analysis of above three strata shows that the all possible combinations of sex and habitat have no significant impact in the context of ATC. But in case of sex and training, for trained primary teachers sex does not play any significant role but for female primary teachers training plays a prominent role. In case of training, female primary teachers have a significant development of ATC through teacher training. Trained female teachers attitude towards students is significant and better in comparison to others. So, major responsibilities of teaching at primary level might be delegated to female teachers.

#### Suggestions for further studies:

1. Large and diverse sample covering all the regions of West Bengal should have proportional representation in the study.
2. The study may be repeated for different levels/stage of teachers' viz. secondary, college, university teachers and for teachers of different Educational Streams.
3. Teacher's qualification, family bond/structure, age & experience should also come in the purview of the study.

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