

Influence of Gender, Locality, Age and Reading Habit on the Attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science Students towards Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the influence of gender, locality of institution, age, and reading habit on the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession. Survey method was adopted, and data were collected from 313 second-year B.Ed. Biological Science student-teachers selected through simple random sampling from colleges of education in four districts of Tamil Nadu. The Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale was used to measure six dimensions: interest and motivation, perception of teaching as a career, commitment and professional dedication, professional ethics and values, societal perception of teaching, and emotional and psychological readiness. Statistical techniques such as the t-test and chi-square test were employed for analysis. The findings revealed significant differences in attitude with respect to gender and locality, with male and urban students exhibiting more favourable attitudes. Significant associations were also observed between attitude and age, as well as reading habit, indicating that maturity and academic engagement play a vital role in shaping professional orientation. The study concluded that professional attitude among prospective teachers is influenced by demographic, contextual, developmental, and academic factors, emphasizing the need for teacher education programmes to foster supportive environments and promote reflective academic practices to develop committed and ethically grounded teachers.

Keywords: B.Ed. Biological Science Students; Teaching Profession; Professional Attitude; Demographic Variables; Reading Habit.

INTRODUCTION

Attitude towards the teaching profession plays a pivotal role in determining the commitment, effectiveness, and long-term retention of future teachers. Attitude is not merely a static psychological descriptor but reflects an individual's predisposition toward a profession, influencing their professional behaviour, classroom performance, and educational outcomes (Bhargava, 2014). For prospective teachers, a favourable attitude towards teaching is crucial because it facilitates engagement with pedagogical methods, ethical practice, and lifelong professional growth. Pre-service teachers' perceptions of teaching influence their motivational orientation and readiness to meet the multifaceted demands of the profession. Research has identified that attitudes towards teaching are shaped by multiple personal and contextual factors. For instance, gender differences have been explored in several educational studies, revealing that male and female teacher trainees may differ in their professional outlooks due to socio-cultural expectations and career motivation (Bhargava, 2014; Tyagi & Jain, 2025). Despite extensive research in this domain, studies yield mixed findings regarding the influence of demographic and behavioural variables on teacher trainees' attitudes. At this backdrop, a detailed investigation into the influence of gender, locality, age, and reading habit on the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession becomes important for teacher education programmes. This study aims to fill gaps in the literature by systematically examining these relationships within a specific cohort of pre-service teachers.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out if there exists significant difference in the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession with respect to gender.
- To find out if there exists significant difference in the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession with respect to the locality of institution.

- To find out if there exists significant association between attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession and their age.

To find out if there exists significant association between attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession and their reading habit.

3. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards teaching profession with respect to gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards teaching profession with respect to the locality of institution.

H₀₃: There is no significant association between the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession and their age

H₀₄: There is no significant association between the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession and their reading habit.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Method Used for the Study

Considering the nature of the variables, the objectives of the study, and the need for systematic empirical analysis, survey method was adopted for the present investigation.

4.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised Second Year B.Ed. students studying in Colleges of Education located in four districts of Tamil Nadu, namely Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, and Kanyakumari. Second Year B.Ed. students were considered suitable for the study as they had undergone both theoretical coursework and school-based teaching practice, thereby possessing adequate exposure to the teaching profession.

4.3 Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 313 Second Year B.Ed. Biological Science student-teachers were selected from Colleges of Education situated in the above-mentioned districts. The simple random sampling technique was employed to select the sample, ensuring that each member of the population had an equal probability of being included in the study

4.4 Tools Used for the Study

The following tools were used for data collection:

- Personal Data Sheet – to collect background information such as gender, locality, age, and reading habit.
- Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale – developed and validated by Thanga Selvam and Rajadhurai (2024).

Although several standardized tools on attitude towards teaching exist, most were designed for in-service teachers or were context-specific. Only limited tools were found suitable for pre-service B.Ed. Biological Science students. Therefore, the investigator undertook a systematic review of established instruments and developed a contextually appropriate and comprehensive scale.

4.5 Pilot Study and Item Analysis

A pilot study was conducted on a random sample of 60 Second Year B.Ed. Biological Science student-teachers who were not included in the final sample. Item analysis was carried out using Corrected Item–Total Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted statistics. Based on item analysis 29 items were deleted. The Cronbach's Alpha increased from 0.927 to 0.952. The final scale consisted of 60 items, indicating excellent internal consistency.

4.6 Validity of the Tool

The scale was reviewed by experts in education, psychology, and teacher education. Their suggestions regarding language, relevance, and suitability were incorporated, establishing face validity. Concurrent validity was established by administering the developed scale along with the standardized Attitude towards Teaching Profession Scale by Ahluwalia (2005) to 60 B.Ed. students. The Pearson correlation coefficient between the two sets of scores was $r = 0.87$, indicating strong and significant concurrent validity.

4.7 Reliability of the Tool

Reliability was established using Test–Retest Method. The scale was administered to 60 student-teachers and re-administered after 15 days. The correlation coefficient between the two administrations was $r = 0.895$, indicating high stability over time.

Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.952 confirmed excellent internal consistency. Thus, the tool was found to be both valid and reliable for use in the present study.

5. RESULTS

Table 1 *Difference in the Attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science Students towards Teaching Profession and its Dimensions with respect to Gender and Locality of Institution*

Attitude towards Teaching Profession and its Dimensions	Male (59)	Female (254)	t' value	p Value	Rural (98)	Urban (215)	t' value	p Value
Interest and Motivation	61.05	58.71	3.349	0.000*	57.59	60.15	3.203	0.002*
Perception of Teaching as a Career	54.64	52.23	3.346	0.000*	51.36	53.63	2.846	0.005*
Commitment and Professional Dedication	42.51	39.20	2.096	0.002*	37.69	42.38	4.117	0.000*
Professional Ethics and Values	65.05	59.51	2.978	0.000*	35.50	38.45	2.998	0.009*
Societal Perception of Teaching	62.64	56.23	2.967	0.000*	23.96	25.56	2.436	0.011*
Emotional and Psychological Readiness	59.51	49.27	3.096	0.000*	36.87	38.50	2.685	0.009*
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	69.51	50.87	3.696	0.000*	242.97	280.04	5.306	0.000*

(* indicates that the p value is significant at 0.05 level)

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated t values and p values for all the dimensions and the overall attitude towards the teaching profession are significant at the 0.05 level for both gender and locality, hence the null hypothesis Ho1 and Ho2 is rejected. Therefore it is concluded that there is significant difference in the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards teaching profession and all its dimensions with respect to gender and locality of the institution. By comparing the mean scores it is found that male B.Ed. students exhibit a more favourable attitude towards the teaching profession when compared to female students. Urban B.Ed. students have more favourable attitude towards teaching profession than the rural college B.Ed. students.

Table 2 *Association among the Attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science Students towards Teaching Profession and its Dimensions with their Age and Reading Habits*

Attitude towards Teaching Profession and its Dimensions	Age		Reading Habits	
	χ^2 value	P Value	χ^2 value	P Value
Interest and Motivation	8.043	0.018*	14.954	0.019*
Perception of Teaching as a Career	9.010	0.041*	20.976	0.007*

(*)

Commitment and Professional Dedication	10.165	0.038*	27.410	0.001*
Professional Ethics and Values	8.173	0.016*	13.297	0.014*
Societal Perception of Teaching	11.348	0.023*	18.348	0.009*
Emotional and Psychological Readiness	9.649	0.047*	29.664	0.000*
Attitude towards Teaching Profession	11.976	0.013*	19.915	0.006*

indicates that the p value is significant at 0.05 level)

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated chi-square (χ^2) values and p values for all the dimensions and the overall attitude are significant at the 0.05 level with respect to both age and reading habits. Hence, the null hypothesis Ho3 and Ho4 is rejected. This indicates that there is significant association between the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession and their age and reading habits.

6. INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study revealed that the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession is significantly influenced by gender, locality of institution, age and reading habit, highlighting the multifaceted nature of professional attitude formation among prospective teachers.

With respect to gender, male student teachers showed significantly more favourable attitudes across all dimensions, including interest and motivation, career perception, professional commitment, ethical values, societal perception, and emotional readiness. This may reflect socio-psychological and contextual influences where male students perceive teaching as a stable and respectable career, strengthening professional orientation. The comparatively lower mean scores of female students should not be viewed as lack of ability, but rather as the possible influence of societal expectations, role pressures, and work-life balance concerns during training. The previous studies reported more favourable attitudes among female teachers (Sharma, 2025; Eleje et al., 2022), others observed no significant gender differences (Sadhukhan, 2024; Kumar & Sharma, 2022; Deb Roy et al., 2023). The present study, therefore, underscores the context-specific nature of gender influences on professional attitude among B.Ed. Biological Science students.

Regarding locality, urban student teachers demonstrated significantly higher attitude levels than rural students in all dimensions. Urban environments often provide better academic exposure, technological integration, professional interactions, and institutional support, which can enhance career perception, confidence, and ethical orientation. Rural students, despite potential and commitment, may face limited exposure and infrastructural constraints that affect motivation and psychological readiness. These findings are consistent with earlier studies that reported locality-based differences in teachers' attitudes (Eleje et al., 2022; Dwivedi, 2016), though they contrast with studies that found no significant influence of locality (Nautiyal & Dabral, 2023; Eswaran & Jayaraman, 2013), reinforcing the view that locality effects are shaped by contextual and institutional factors.

The significant association between age and attitude suggests that professional attitude strengthens with maturity, life experience, and role awareness. Older student teachers are likely to possess greater emotional stability, responsibility, and clarity of career goals, which enhance motivation, commitment, ethical values, and psychological readiness. This finding is strongly supported by Devi (2025) and Geetha and Asir (2021), who concluded that age and experience together contribute to stronger professional commitment and positive professional attitudes.

Finally, reading habit emerged as a strong academic and psychological contributor to professional attitude. Reading broadens knowledge, fosters reflective thinking, and exposes students to educational ideas, ethical issues, and classroom realities. This intellectual engagement strengthens career perception, professional dedication, ethical orientation, and emotional readiness. This interpretation aligns with the findings of Halam and Mahato (2025), who emphasized the role of intellectual engagement in shaping teachers' professional attitudes, and Naik (2022), who highlighted the influence of academic behaviours and background characteristics on the professional outlook of B.Ed. students.

7. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the attitude of B.Ed. Biological Science students towards the teaching profession is significantly shaped by gender, locality of institution, age, and reading habit, indicating that professional attitude is a dynamic construct

influenced by both personal and contextual factors. Male and urban student teachers were found to exhibit more favourable attitudes across all dimensions, suggesting that career perception, exposure, and institutional environment play a vital role in shaping professional orientation. The significant association with age confirms that maturity and life experience contribute to stronger commitment, ethical values, and emotional readiness for teaching. Further, reading habit emerged as a key academic behaviour that enhances reflective thinking, professional awareness, and psychological preparedness. Overall, the findings highlight that developing a positive attitude towards teaching requires more than pedagogical training alone. Teacher education programmes must create supportive, resource-rich, and intellectually stimulating environments while encouraging academic habits and reflective engagement. Such holistic preparation is essential for producing motivated, ethically grounded, and emotionally resilient teachers capable of meeting the evolving demands of the teaching profession.

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