

Attitudes of B.Ed. Students in Aizawl City Towards the Teaching Profession: An Exploration of Influential Factors in Teacher Education Programs

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Abstract

This study explored the attitudes of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) students in Aizawl city toward the teaching profession, focusing on demographic factors like gender, academic qualification, and teacher education institution, as well as the influence of teacher education program. A mixed-methods research design with a sequential explanatory approach was used, involving a sample of 225 B.Ed. students. Quantitative data were collected using the Attitude Scale Towards Teaching Profession (2015) by H. Malsawmi and Mary L. Renthlei, followed by qualitative data for deeper insights. The results revealed that 45.8% of students had a moderate attitude, while 27.1% showed a low attitude toward the profession. No significant differences in attitude were observed based on gender ($t = -0.705$, $p > .05$) or academic qualification ($t = -0.474$, $p > .05$). However, a significant difference was found among teacher education institutions ($F = 4.140$, $p < .05$), with post-hoc analysis showing that students from the Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) had significantly more positive attitude compared to those from Mizoram University (MZU) ($p = .024$). Qualitative data highlighted that teacher educators, peers and learning environment, curriculum, practical training, and extracurricular activities influenced students' attitudes.

Keywords: *Attitude, Teaching Profession, Teacher Education Programs*

Introduction

Education serves as a foundation for societal progress, empowering individuals to make informed decisions and tackle complex global challenges. John Dewey's assertion that

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“Education is life itself” emphasize its continuous and integral role in human growth (Talebi, 2015), while Malala Yousafzai’s belief that “One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world” highlight education’s transformative power to break cycles of poverty and advance equality and innovation (Yousafzai, 2013).

Teachers are central to achieving these educational outcomes, as they shape students’ intellectual and moral development, which is essential for national progress. The Kothari Commission (1966) stressed that teachers’ professional development is vital to educational quality, noting that teachers with positive attitudes create supportive, engaging learning environments. Teacher education programs are therefore crucial in cultivating dedication and enthusiasm in pre-service teachers, providing mentorship and practical experience to prepare them to inspire and guide future generations.

Attitude, as Britt (1958) describes, is a “mental set of response,” while Fishbein (1967) defines it as a “mental disposition of individuals to act in favour of or against a specific object.” Allport (1999) explains attitude as a “prepared mental and neural state” formed through experiences, influencing how individuals respond to various objects and situations. Allport highlights three key features of attitudes: they are internal and personal, shaped by experiences, and guide responses to situations.

Tamimi (2021) identifies several factors influencing attitude formation. Personal experiences, especially those involving emotional elements, play a crucial role. Attitudes can also be shaped by the influence of important individuals, driven by a desire to belong or avoid conflict. Emotional factors, such as frustration, psychological conditions, and pleasure, act as markers for attitude formation. Positive attitudes often stem from favourable experiences, while negative attitudes may result from unfavourable or limited interactions.

Teachers significantly impact students’ personality development and success through their attitudes and behaviours in communication. Positive teacher behaviour, such as asking questions, understanding students’ thoughts, and showing interest and appreciation, increases student motivation and success. Teachers also serve as role models for students, with their attitudes leading to either success or failure. Studies emphasized the importance of positive teacher behaviours, such as giving feedback, complimenting, and being interested in students, in improving the learning experience.

Rationale

Education plays a vital role in developing human potential, encompassing knowledge, behaviour, and values. Teachers hold a critical responsibility in shaping students’ character, particularly their mental and social development, making them key contributors to a nation’s progress. A teacher’s attitude towards their profession significantly impacts their effectiveness,

influencing student learning outcomes and the overall quality of education (Devi & Bakshi, 2022).

B.Ed. students' attitudes are especially important as they determine their motivation, commitment, and teaching quality. Positive attitudes foster effective learning environments, while negative attitudes can hinder both teaching and learning (Ulug et al., 2021). Unfortunately, not all B.Ed. students enter the teaching profession with a passion for it, as some may lack interest or join by chance. Teacher education programs play a crucial role in shaping these attitudes by identifying influencing factors and addressing negative perceptions.

Existing research has explored B.Ed. students' attitudes towards the teaching profession, but there is limited understanding of the factors within teacher education programs that influence these attitudes and how they evolve over time. This study aimed to fill the research gap by investigating these aspects to help educators and institutions design targeted strategies to cultivate positive attitudes among future teachers.

Review of Related Literature

Musa and Bichi (2015) explored attitudes of prospective teachers at Northwest University, Kano, uncovering positive attitudes. A significant gender difference was observed in their attitudes towards the profession. Whereas, Pancholi and Bharwad (2015) assessed attitudes of B.Ed. trainees in Ahmedabad, observing that a majority lacked favorable attitudes. Şener (2015) examined attitudes among teacher trainees at Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, showing that most trainees held positive views. Significant gender difference was found between the gender whereas, no significant difference was found based on their academic qualification. Furthermore, Lalramniengi (2022) also studied B.Ed. students' attitudes in Aizawl, finding overall positivity, though 25% of students held negative views.

The literature on the impact of teacher education and preparation programs highlights several key findings regarding the changes in attitudes, confidence, and competence among pre-service teachers. Pigge and Marso (1986) explored the relationships between student characteristics and changes in anxiety, attitudes, concerns, and confidence during teacher preparation with a sample of 581 students at various stages of their training. They found that while anxiety and confidence improved positively, attitudes toward teaching remained unchanged overall. On the other hand, investigating the effectiveness of B.Ed. programs in India, Dwivedi and Singh (2012) discovered that participation significantly enhanced teaching attitudes among prospective teachers, regardless of gender or socio-economic status. Their findings indicated that teacher education positively influences attitudes toward teaching. Cortés (2016) also examined the role of pedagogical practicums on pre-service teachers' attitudes, revealing that practical experiences allowed teachers to reflect on their roles, leading to the development of positive attitudes and satisfaction with their teaching practice.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the level of attitude of B.Ed. students in Aizawl city towards teaching profession.
2. To examine the attitudes of B.Ed. students towards the teaching profession based on their demographic characteristics.
3. To explore the factors within the teacher education program that influence B.Ed. students' attitudes towards the teaching profession.

Methodology

The study employed a mixed-method research design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The researcher utilized a sequential explanatory study, analyzing quantitative data first and then explaining it further using qualitative data.

Population

The population of the study includes all Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) students (N=541) who are enrolled in the academic session of 2021-2023 in Aizawl city.

Sampling

This study employed multi-stage sampling in which the quantitative phase utilized simple random sampling. The sample consist of B.Ed. students (n=225) from Mizoram University (MZU), Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE) and District Institute of Education and Training (DIET).

Table No 1
Sample of the study

Teacher Education Institution	Male	Female	Total
District Institute of Education and Training (DIET)	19	22	41
Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE)	43	78	121
Mizoram University (MZU)	27	36	63
Total	89	136	225

In the qualitative phase, the researcher used purposive sampling in which students (n=15) were chosen based on their scores from the quantitative phase. Specifically, those exhibiting a wide spectrum of attitudes towards the teaching profession and who had experienced changes in their attitudes during their teacher education program were selected for interviews. These students were selected from each of the three institutions involved in the study.

Tools

The quantitative data utilised Attitude Scale towards Teaching Profession (2015) which was developed by H. Malsawmi and Mary L. Renthlei. The researcher created semi-structured interview for the qualitative data.

Data analysis techniques

Descriptive statistical methods like frequency and percentage, inferential statistics like t-test and ANOVA were utilised for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data.

Findings and Discussions

The data collected were analysed and discussed in accordance with objectives as follows-

Objective No. 1: To find out the level of attitude of B.Ed. students in Aizawl city towards teaching profession.

Results of analysis of the attitude of B.Ed. students in Aizawl city towards teaching profession are presented in the following table:

Table No 2

B.Ed. Students' Attitudes Towards Teaching Profession

Status	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Very Low Attitude	29	12.9
Low Attitude	61	27.1
Moderate Attitude	103	45.8
High Attitude	29	12.9
Very High Attitude	3	1.3
Total	225	100

Table 2 illustrates that 45.8% of B.Ed. students hold a moderate attitude toward the teaching profession, while 27.1% have a low attitude. 12.9% exhibit a very low attitude, and an equal proportion, 12.9% display a high attitude. A mere 1.3% of B.Ed. students demonstrate a very high attitude toward teaching. It can be seen that the majority of B.Ed. students exhibit a moderate attitude towards the teaching profession. In contrast to these findings, Akbaba (2013) and Mehmood et al. (2013) found that pre-service teachers generally have positive attitudes towards the teaching profession. Whereas, Pancholi and Bharwad (2015) observed that many student-teachers lacked a positive or favorable attitude towards the teaching profession.

Objective 2: To examine the attitudes of B.Ed. students towards the teaching profession based on their demographic characteristics.

Table 3
Demographic Differences in B.Ed. Students' Attitudes Towards the Teaching Profession

Variables		N	Mean	SD	df	
Gender	Male	89	62.97	9.045	223	$t = -.705$
	Female	136	63.85	9.346		
Academic Qualification	Graduate	103	63.18	8.743	223	$t = -.474$
	Post-Graduate	122	63.77	9.628		
Teacher Educational Institution	IASE	121	65.13	7.744	222	$F = 4.140^*$
	MZU	63	60.54	11.068		
	DIET	41	63.24	9.173		

Note: * $p < .05$

The Table 3 examined the attitudes of B.Ed. students towards the teaching profession based on gender, academic qualification, and teacher educational institution. No significant differences were found between male ($M = 62.97$, $SD = 9.05$) and female students ($M = 63.85$, $SD = 9.35$), $t(223) = -0.705$, $p > .05$, or between graduates ($M = 63.18$, $SD = 8.74$) and post-graduates ($M = 63.77$, $SD = 9.63$), $t(223) = -0.474$, $p > .05$. However, a significant difference was observed among institutions, $F(2, 222) = 4.140$, $p < .05$. Thus, post-hoc comparisons were performed using Dunnett's T3 test, as shown in the table 4.

Table 4
Post-hoc Analysis of Inter-Institutional Differences

Educational Institutions	Mean Difference	Sig.
IASE - MZU	0.395	.024*
IASE - DIET	0.215	0.448
DIET - MZU	0.18	0.708

Note: * $p < .05$

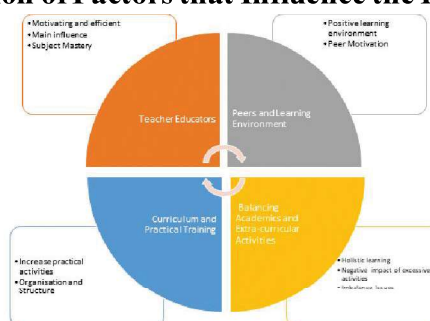
Table 4 shows a significant difference in attitudes between IASE and MZU ($p < .05$), with IASE students scoring higher. No significant differences were found between IASE and DIET or DIET and MZU. This finding is consistent with the research by Ozdemir and Gungor (2017), which highlighted that attitude among B.Ed. students varied based on the faculty of their teacher education institution.

Objective 3: To explore the factors within the teacher education program that influence B.Ed. students' attitudes towards the teaching profession.

An interview was conducted to identify factors within the teacher education program influencing B.Ed. students' attitudes towards the teaching profession. Responses were coded and organized into themes, which revealed the following key factors: teacher educators, peers and learning environment, curriculum and practical training, and balancing academics with extracurricular activities.

Figure 1

Thematic Representation of Factors that Influence the B.Ed. Students' Attitude



Teacher Educators

Teacher educators are professionals responsible for instructing and guiding student teachers during their educational training.

B.Ed. students emphasized the significant role of teacher educators in shaping their attitudes towards the teaching profession. They highlighted that teacher educators in their institution played a crucial role in influencing their perceptions positively. Specifically, students noted that effective teacher educators who were motivating and proficient in their subjects made it easier for them to develop a positive attitude towards teaching. One student said that "Zirtirtu hmel hmuh nuam leh thiam tak hi chuan zirlai zir min ti phur.." (Watching enthusiastic and well-read teachers makes us students excited).

The students also emphasized the importance of teacher educators being well-prepared and knowledgeable in their fields, which they felt contributed to a better learning experience. One of the students stated "Zirtirtu hi chuan a subject rawn lak hi rawn in buatsaih tha thin se.." (A teacher should be well versed and thoroughly prepared for the subject they are teaching). Furthermore, students expressed a desire for teacher educators to be inclusive, engaging, and approachable, believing these qualities fostered a supportive learning environment. Another student stated "Zirtirtu an hlauhawm lutuk hian kan in rintawkna te hi a bo vek zel.." (A strict and stern teacher makes us inferior, and makes us doubt ourselves).

The B.Ed students indicated that teacher educators were the primary influencers of their attitudes towards teaching, expressing the pivotal role these educators play in shaping future educators' outlooks and motivations.

Peers and Learning Environment

Peers in an academic context refer to classmates and fellow students within a learning environment, while the learning environment encompasses the physical, social, and academic atmosphere where education takes place.

The B.Ed. students emphasized that their peers and the overall learning environment played crucial roles in shaping their attitudes towards the teaching profession. Students reported that the friends and classmates they interacted with during their teacher education program had a significant impact on fostering a positive attitude towards teaching. One student said "Ka thiante hian min ti phur.." (My friends motivate me). They found motivation and encouragement from their peers, which contributed to their enthusiasm for becoming educators.

The B.Ed. students also highlighted that institutional program provided valuable exposure and opportunities that inspired and motivated them to pursue teaching careers. One student stated "Kan function leh CCA hman thin te hian min ti phur zual thin.." (Our Co-Curricular Activities and other college functions make me excited). These programs exposed them to different aspects of teaching and helped them envision themselves as effective educators.

Furthermore, upon entering the B.Ed. program, students realized the importance of teachers being open and approachable, which they believed was essential for creating a supportive and conducive learning environment. Another student stated "Kan zirtirtu te hi biak pawh nuam hi ni se, zirlaite min ti phur a, inpawhna a awm that phah thin.." (If our teachers are approachable in all ways, it makes us more motivated and builds a good relationship).

The students' experiences showed the influential role of peers and the learning environment in shaping their attitudes towards the teaching profession.

Curriculum and Practical Training

Curriculum refers to the structured content and subjects taught in an educational program, while practical training involves hands-on experience and application of theoretical knowledge.

According to the interviews held with B.Ed. students, both the curriculum and practical training played significant roles in shaping their attitudes towards the teaching profession. Some students expressed satisfaction with the curriculum, mentioning that it was engaging and sparked their interest in teaching. They found the syllabus to be sufficient in providing the

necessary knowledge and skills. One student stated “Kan curriculum hi chu a tha tawka ka ti..” (I feel like our curriculum is good enough).

However, other students felt that the curriculum lacked practical components and suggested incorporating more hands-on training to enhance their learning experience and develop a positive attitude towards teaching. One student said “Practical tihna atan hian hei ai hun rei hi awm thei se kan phur zual phah ka ring..” (If there were more time for us to do our practical work, i think it will be much more exciting). They believed that practical programs would better prepare them for real-world teaching challenges.

Students emphasized the importance of a systematic and organized teacher education program. They observed that when the program lacked structure and coherence, it led to confusion and demotivation among student teachers. Another student said “Kal phung mumal lo leh Chiang lo lutuk hian min ti hnual thin..” (The lack of proper guidelines makes me dreary).

These insights highlight the critical role of a well-designed curriculum and effective practical training in influencing future educators’ perceptions and attitudes towards their profession.

Balancing Academic and Extra-Curricular Activities

Balancing academic and extra-curricular activities involves managing both formal learning and supplementary activities outside the classroom.

The B.Ed. students emphasized that this balance played a crucial role in shaping their attitudes towards the teaching profession. Some students found that participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities provided valuable benefits, making their learning more comprehensive and enriching their educational experience. One student said “CCA leh thildang program hrang hrang hian kan zirna chauh lo kawng engkimah hma min sawn tir..” (The co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that are organised are beneficial and make learning more holistic). They felt these activities enhanced their skills and perspective as future educators.

However, other students expressed concerns that an excessive focus on such activities could lead to a negative attitude. They believed that too much emphasis on extra-curriculars could detract from academic studies and teacher preparation, affecting their overall educational goals. One student said “Thildang zirlai ni lo buatsaih tam lutuk hian min ti ning..” (Too much co-curricular and extra-curricular activities often contribute to developing a negative attitude).

Students noted instances where the organization of these activities was not well-balanced with academic requirements. Another student said “Kan CCA leh thildang program vel leh kan zirlai hi a in balance lo ka ti, ninawm lamah a kal thin..” (The co-curricular and extra-

curricular activities organised in the program is not balancing with the academic which often contribute to developing a negative attitude). The B.Ed. students felt this imbalance contributed to feelings of frustration and disengagement among student teachers.

These perspectives showed the importance of a well-calibrated approach to balancing academic rigor with extra-curricular opportunities to foster positive attitudes and effective teacher preparation.

Educational Implications

The study on the attitude of B.Ed. students in Aizawl City towards the teaching profession reveals critical educational implications for teacher education programs. Findings indicate that students' attitude are shaped by key factors such as the influence of teacher educators, peer interactions, the learning environment, curriculum structure, practical training, and the balance between academics and extracurricular activities. To foster positive attitude among pre-service teachers, teacher education programs must prioritize effective mentorship, inclusive and engaging teaching approaches, well-structured curricula with ample practical components, and a balanced integration of extracurricular activities. These improvements can cultivate motivation, professional commitment, and a favourable attitude towards the teaching profession, ultimately enhancing the quality of future educators.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the B.Ed. students in Aizawl city held a moderate attitude towards the teaching profession. There was no significant difference in their attitude towards teaching profession based on their gender and academic qualification. Significant difference was found among the teacher education institutions and the B.Ed. students attitudinal change was influenced by teacher educators, peers and the learning environment, curriculum and practical training, and balancing academics with extracurricular activities within the teacher education program. Therefore, optimizing these factors in teacher education programs is crucial for fostering positive attitudinal changes among the future educators.

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