

Beyond Sex and School Types: Unlocking the Dynamics of Primary School Teachers' Attitude in Education

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ABSTRACT

Study on the attitude of school teachers towards teaching profession has been gaining momentum among research scholars of late. Some of the variables considered in these studies are differences in the attitude between private and government teachers, male and female teachers, urban and rural teachers etc. In this research study, an attempt has been made to study the attitude of primary school teachers towards teaching profession based on gender and type of school ownership in Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block in Darjeeling District of West Bengal. The study reveals no statistically significant relationship between the variables of sex or school ownership and teachers' attitudes towards teaching. Thus indicating that neither sex nor school ownership, either independently or in combination, exert a substantial influence on teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession within the examined context.

Key words: Attitude, education, gender, school type

INTRODUCTION

Attitude refers to the evaluation or judgment that an individual holds about an object, person, situation, or event. Attitudes can be positive, negative, or neutral, and they can be based on a variety of factors such as beliefs, values, experiences, and emotions. Attitudes have been studied extensively in psychology and are believed to play a significant role in shaping behaviour and decision-making.

The concept of attitude has been defined and studied by several influential theorists in psychology. The earliest conceptualization of attitude can be traced back to William James, who defined attitude as "the direction of one's attention towards an object" (James, 1890, p. 12). However, it was Gordon Allport who popularized the study of attitudes in the mid-20th century and defined attitudes as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (Allport, 1935, p. 810).

Attitudes have been studied across various disciplines, including social psychology, organizational behaviour, marketing, and communication. Research on attitudes has explored their formation, change, and measurement, as well as their effects on behaviour and decision-making. Attitudes have been found to be influenced by a variety of factors such as social norms, persuasion, cognitive dissonance, and self-perception.

In conclusion, attitude is a fundamental concept in psychology that has been studied extensively. Attitudes play a crucial role in shaping behaviour and decision-making and have been found to be influenced by a variety of factors. The study of attitudes continues to be a thriving area of research in psychology and other related disciplines.

The attitude of teachers is an important aspect of the teaching and learning process. Teachers' attitudes towards their students, their subject matter, and their profession can have a significant impact on student motivation, engagement, and achievement. Research on the attitude of teachers has explored the factors that influence teachers' attitudes, as well as the effects of these attitudes on student outcomes.

Bhalla et al., (2002) investigated the attitude of teachers toward teaching in India. They found that most teachers viewed teaching as a noble profession and felt a sense of satisfaction in their work. However, they also identified challenges such as low salaries and a lack of resources. Trivedi (2012) studied the attitudes of teachers toward

teaching at different levels in India. The study found that primary school teachers have a more positive attitude toward their profession than secondary school teachers. This is likely due to factors such as job security and better pay.

Latchanna and Dagneu (2009) explored the attitudes of teachers toward active learning methods in Ethiopia. They found that most teachers had a positive attitude toward these methods, but some were hesitant to try them due to a lack of training and resources. Bhargava and Pathy (2014) examined the attitudes of student teachers toward the teaching profession in India. They found that while most student teachers had a positive attitude toward teaching, some were concerned about job security and low salaries.

Fakoladeet al., (2009) investigated the attitude of teachers toward the inclusion of special needs children in Nigeria. They found that while most teachers were positive about inclusion, many lacked the necessary training and resources to effectively support special needs children in the classroom. Chakraborty and Mondal (2014) explored the attitudes of prospective teachers toward the teaching profession in India. They found that while most prospective teachers had a positive attitude toward teaching, some were concerned about the workload and stress associated with the profession.

Karacabeyet al., (2019) studied the attitudes of teachers toward multicultural education in Turkey. They found that while most teachers were positive about multicultural education, some lacked the necessary training and resources to effectively implement it in their classrooms. Saloviita (2020) examined the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education in Finland. They found that most teachers had a positive attitude toward inclusion, but some lacked the necessary training and resources to effectively support special needs children in their classrooms.

Karr (2011) investigated the attitude of teachers toward teaching reading in the content areas. She found that while most teachers recognized the importance of teaching reading in the content areas, many lacked the necessary training and resources to effectively do so. Finally, Galovićet al., (2014) explored the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education in Vojvodina, Serbia.

Many demographic factors may have an impact on teachers' views about including disabled children in their classrooms. These findings can often be contraindicative. For example, as far as gender is considered a demographic variable, the evidence doesn't seem to be consistent. According to certain research (Aksamit et al., 1987), female instructors exhibit a more optimistic outlook than male teachers, however, Jobe and Rust (1996) noticed that male teachers exhibit a more positive outlook. Some researchers found no causal association between the two variables (Parasuram, 2006).

Some research suggests that male and female teachers may differ in their teaching styles and instructional strategies. For example, some studies have found that female teachers tend to employ more interactive and collaborative teaching methods, while male teachers may be more inclined towards using authoritative or directive approaches. (Gilligan, 1982)

There is some evidence to suggest that male and female teachers may differ in their approach to classroom management and discipline. Research indicates that female teachers may use more indirect strategies, such as verbal reprimands or time-outs, whereas male teachers may be more likely to use direct discipline strategies, such as physical reprimands or detentions. (Ferguson, 2000)

Studies have also found that male and female teachers may develop different types of relationships with their students. For instance, female teachers have been observed to focus more on emotional support and nurturing, while male teachers may emphasize mentorship or guidance. However, it is essential to note that these patterns can vary widely based on individual personalities and teaching approaches. (Pianta et al., 2003)

The attitudes of teachers toward their profession vary across different countries and aspects of teaching. While most teachers have a positive attitude toward teaching, challenges such as low salaries, lack of resources, and inadequate training can negatively impact their attitudes toward the profession. Additionally, teachers' attitudes toward inclusion, multicultural education, and teaching special needs children can be influenced by their level of training and resources available to them. Therefore, it is important for policymakers and educational leaders to provide adequate support and resources to teachers to ensure a positive attitude toward the profession and effective implementation of inclusive and diverse education practices.

The impact of whether teachers belong to a government or privately owned school on their attitudes is a significant area of study that has garnered attention primarily in the context of specific countries or regions. However, there is a need for more comprehensive research that examines this demographic variable in a global context. By exploring

the attitudes of teachers in diverse settings worldwide, we can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that shape their experiences and perceptions.

Investigating the government-private divide in a global context can provide valuable insights into the similarities and differences in teacher attitudes across various cultural, socioeconomic, and educational contexts. It allows us to identify common challenges and patterns, as well as unique characteristics specific to each setting.

The primary objective of conducting a study in this area would be to shed light on the impact of government and private settings on teacher attitudes, including job satisfaction, commitment, motivation, and overall well-being. By examining these factors globally, researchers can discern the influence of various contextual factors, such as educational policies, cultural norms, socioeconomic disparities, and resource allocation, on the attitudes of teachers. Moreover, a global perspective enables the exploration of best practices and effective strategies employed in different government and private settings. By understanding the experiences and attitudes of teachers across diverse regions, educational policymakers and stakeholders can gain insights into successful approaches to improve teacher recruitment, retention, and professional development in both urban and rural areas.

The global study can also identify areas where teachers in government and private settings face similar challenges and where they differ significantly. This knowledge can inform the development of targeted interventions that address the specific needs of teachers in each context. For example, if the government and private teachers worldwide exhibit higher levels of stress and burnout, strategies can be devised to provide adequate support systems, professional development opportunities, and resources that are tailored to the unique circumstances of each setting.

In view of these studies, it is appropriate to think that none of this type of study was carried out by any researcher in the Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block in Darjeeling District of West Bengal at the primary school level. Therefore, the investigator took up this study.

Research Study: “Beyond Sex and School Types: Unlocking the Dynamics of Primary School Teachers' Attitudes in Education”

Objectives of the study: The investigator formulated the following objectives:

1. To assess the attitude of primary school teachers towards education in Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block of Darjeeling District of West Bengal.
2. To study the influence of sex as a variable on the attitude of teachers towards education in Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block of Darjeeling District of West Bengal.
3. To study the influence of types of schools as a variable on the attitude of teachers towards education in Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block of Darjeeling District of West Bengal.
4. To find out the influence of any interaction of sex and types of schools as variables on the attitude of teachers towards education in Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block of Darjeeling District of West Bengal

Operational terms:

- 1) Attitude - a mental position with regard to a fact or state
- 2) Education - the act or process of imparting or acquiring general /particular knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment
- 3) Sex – Gender (male/female)
- 4) Types of schools – Government and private

Delimitation: this study is limited to the primary school teachers of Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block of Darjeeling District in West Bengal.

Methodology: It is the methodology which determines the quality of any piece of research work. Therefore, the researcher/investigator needs to adopt an appropriate methodology as per the nature of the study. In case of the present study, the investigator adopted normative survey methodology of educational research.

Population and sample of the study: There are over 150 primary schools in the Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block and 21 schools were selected for the study.

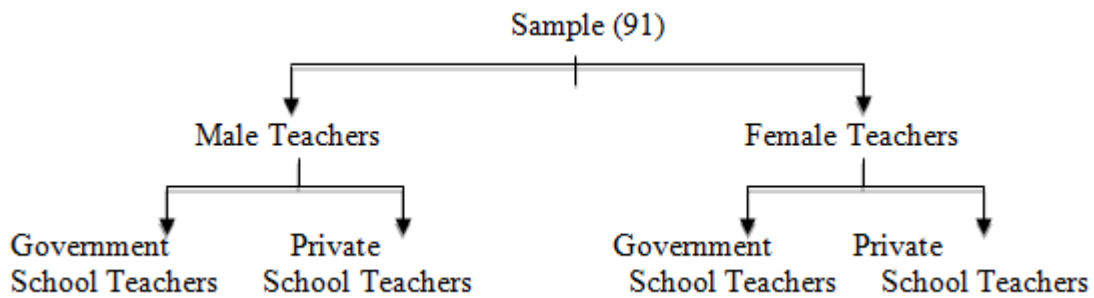
Tool used: The investigator used an attitude scale as a tool which was constructed and standardised using the following procedure: After constructing the questionnaire, it was studied by a subject expert and language expert after which a list of 29 questions were selected. A try-out of the preliminary draft of 29 question scale was administered to 40 selected school teachers from the entire population of the study. The scoring work was completed as per the nature of the statements (items) and weightages given to different categories of responses of

each statement. Further to make high and low, two groups of the respondents 25% from the higher performers and 25% from the lower performers were selected. The *t*-value of 29 statements were computed and 5 more statements got rejected and finally 24 statements made to the final questionnaire.

Reliability: for establishing the reliability of this attitude scale, the researcher used the test-retest method of selecting a sample of another 20 secondary school teachers. The coefficient of reliability came out to be 0.89 which was considered adequate for the purpose.

Validity: The content validity of the scale was ensured by making use of the opinions of the content experts as stated earlier.

Research Design: As the study aims at assessing the attitude of teachers towards education and the data was collected from a Jorbunglow - Sukhiapokhri block, the investigator adopted cross sectional research design and the collected data was analysed using two-way analysis of variance (2X2 factorial design) as shown below:



**Table Summary of Analysis of Variance
(Attitude scores of teachers)**

Scores of variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Squares (MS)	F-value	P-value
Sex (A)	11.603	1	11.603	0.139	0.710
Types of Schools (B)	0.346	1	0.346	0.004	0.949
Sex x Type (A x B)	14.098	1	14.098	0.169	0.682
Within Treatment	7271.988	87	83.586		

Methods

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

1. There is no significant main effect of sex on the attitude scores.
2. There is no significant main effect of school ownership on the attitude scores.
3. There is no significant interaction effect between sex and school ownership on the attitude scores.

Participants: The study focussed on four adult groups following a 2 x 2 factorial design - male and female teachers belonging to government-owned schools and male and female teachers belonging to privately owned schools. Initially, data was collected from a total of 116 participants from 27 schools, but 25 of the responses (from 6 schools) had to be excluded because of incomplete data. Finally, 91 participants from 21 schools were included in the study of whom approximately 44% (N = 40) belonged to the private group and the rest (N = 51) belonged to the rural group. The demographics are summarized in the following table.

Table 1: Sex and Years of Service

Categories	Male		Female	
	N	Mean Years of Service (years)	N	Mean Years of Service (years)
Government	24	14.29 (5.87)	27	13.74 (6.79)
Private	11	10.63 (10.58)	29	6.96 (6.46)

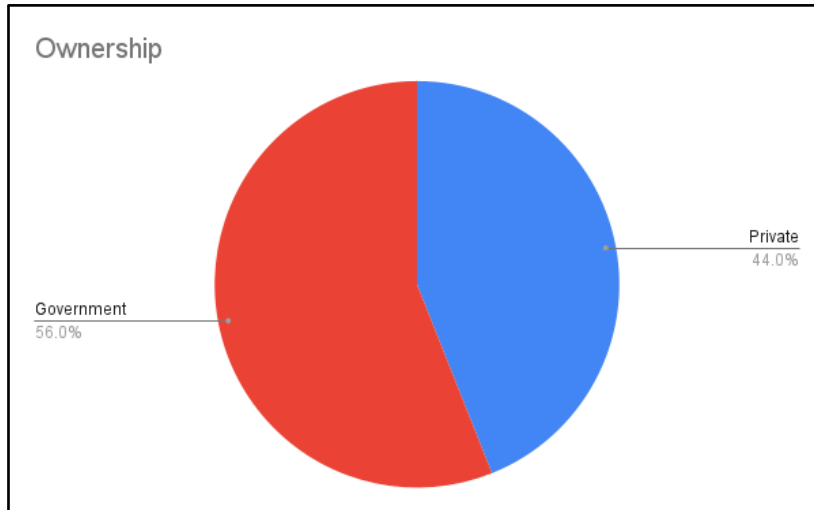


Figure 1: Percentage of Government and Private School Teachers

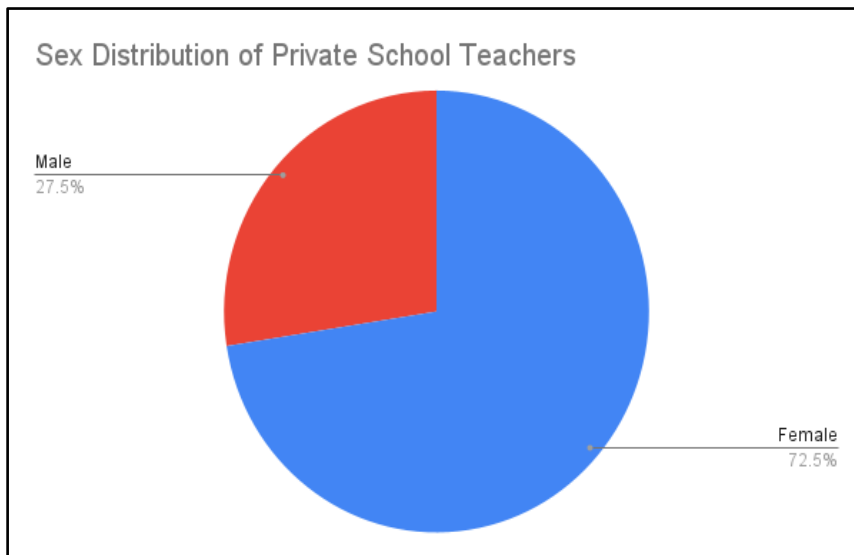


Figure 2: Sex Distribution of Private School Teachers

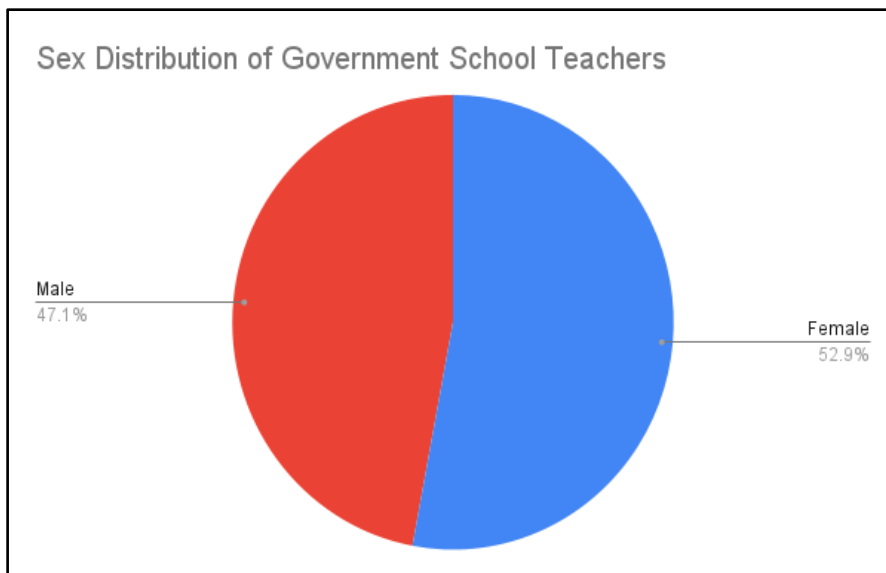


Figure 3: Sex Distribution of Government School Teachers

Procedure: A self-constructed attitude scale was administered to the participants. A group of 91 participants was collected using a convenience sampling design. Basic demographic data like age and sex were also collected using the same form. After the collection of the data, statistical analyses were done using *Jeffrey's Amazing Statistical Program (JASP Version 0.15.0.0)*. The hypothesis was tested by computing two-way ANOVA and the results of the main effects of both the variables and their interaction effects were discussed in light of the existing literature.

The Instrument: The Attitude Scale to measure attitude of Primary School Teachers towards teaching profession, follows a Likert scale format, which is a commonly used rating scale in social science research. The Likert scale allows respondents to express their level of agreement or disagreement with a statement using a predetermined set of response options.

In this case, the Likert scale is implemented using the following response options for each of the 24 items:

- SA: Strongly Agree
- A: Agree
- U: Undecided
- D: Disagree
- SD: Strongly Disagree

Participants are asked to select the response option that best represents their attitude or opinion toward each statement. The Likert scale allows for a graded response, ranging from the strong agreement (SA) to strong disagreement (SD), with intermediate options for agreement, disagreement, or uncertainty (A, U, D).

By using the Likert scale, researchers can assess the strength and direction of attitudes by analysing the distribution of responses across the scale. This enables the quantification and comparison of attitudes, facilitating the interpretation and analysis of the data collected. The Likert scale provides a structured and standardized approach to measuring attitudes, making it a widely utilized tool in social research.

RESULTS

To test the three hypotheses based on the given information, we need to compare the F ratios with their respective critical values or determine the P-values associated with each F ratio.

- **Hypothesis 1: Main Effect of Variable A (Sex):** Based on the given information, the F ratio of the main effect of A is 0.004 with a corresponding p-value of 0.949. Since the p-value (0.949) is greater than the significance level (usually $\alpha = 0.05$), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant main effect of sex on attitude scores.
- **Hypothesis 2: Main Effect of Variable B (School Ownership):** According to the given information, the F ratio of the main effect of B is 0.139 with a corresponding p-value of 0.710. As the p-value (0.710) is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant main effect of school ownership on attitude scores.
- **Hypothesis 3: Interaction Effect between Variables A and B:** Based on the given information, the F ratio of the interaction effect between A and B is 0.169 with a corresponding p-value of 0.682. Since the p-value (0.682) is greater than the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$), we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we do not have sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant interaction effect between sex and school ownership on attitude scores.

In summary, based on the F ratios and p-values provided, none of the three hypotheses have sufficient evidence to be supported. Therefore, there is no significant main effect of sex, school ownership, or interaction effect between sex and school ownership on the attitude scores.

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the potential effects of sex (male and female) and school ownership (government and private) on teachers' attitudes toward teaching. Attitudes toward teaching are crucial as they can significantly impact teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, and ultimately student outcomes. The study employed a quantitative research design to examine the main effects of sex and school ownership, as well as their interaction effect, on teachers' attitudes.

The study utilized a sample of teachers from diverse educational settings, including both government and private schools. Data on teachers' attitudes towards teaching were collected using a validated survey instrument,

specifically designed to assess various dimensions of teaching attitudes. The survey encompassed items related to job satisfaction, professional fulfilment, intrinsic motivation, and perceived efficacy in teaching.

To analyse the data, a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The main effects of sex and school ownership were examined, along with their interaction effect. The F ratios and associated p-values were calculated to determine the statistical significance of the effects. The significance level (α) was set at 0.05.

Based on the obtained non-significant main effects and interaction effect, the study reveals no statistically significant relationship between the variables of sex (male and female) or school ownership (government and private) and teachers' attitudes towards teaching. These results indicate that neither sex nor school ownership, either independently or in combination, exert a substantial influence on teachers' attitudes toward the teaching profession within the examined context.

The findings are consistent with the existing literature on the subject. Previous research has produced mixed results regarding the main effect of sex on teaching attitudes. Some studies have reported gender differences, with females exhibiting more positive attitudes toward teaching compared to males (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). Conversely, other studies have failed to find significant gender disparities in teaching attitudes (Deem, 2003). It is important to consider that attitudes are multifaceted constructs and can be influenced by numerous individual and contextual factors, resulting in inconsistent findings across studies and contexts.

Regarding the impact of school ownership on attitudes toward teaching, the available literature is limited, with few studies specifically examining this relationship. While school ownership may be associated with factors such as resource allocation, organizational climate, and administrative policies, its direct influence on teaching attitudes remains largely unexplored.

Moreover, the non-significant interaction effect between sex and school ownership suggests that the relationship between sex and teaching attitudes does not significantly differ between government and private schools. This finding implies that the influence of sex on attitudes towards teaching is likely independent of school ownership, highlighting the potential prominence of other factors in shaping teachers' attitudes.

It is important to interpret the findings of this study in light of its research design, sample characteristics, and the specific measures employed to assess teaching attitudes. Furthermore, the absence of statistically significant effects does not imply the absence of meaningful or practical differences; rather, it suggests that the observed differences do not meet the threshold for statistical significance in the present study.

Further research is warranted to advance our understanding of the complex factors that contribute to teaching attitudes and to explore the potential influence of sex and school ownership in diverse educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

Although sex and school ownership did not significantly affect teachers' attitudes toward teaching in this study, more research is required to understand the complex mechanisms underlying these attitudes and to guide evidence-based interventions that support positive attitudes in teachers.

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