Development And Standardization Of "Attitude Towards Mentors (Atm) Questionnaire Of Prospective Teachers"

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Abstract

In this article, the construction and standardization of questionnaires for assessing the Attitude of Prospective Teachers towards Mentors (ATM) have been explained. The simple random sample technique was used for the pilot study. The sample consists of 130 prospective teachers randomly selected from Chennai District. The "Cronbach's Alpha" technique was used to find out the reliability of the tool. Face and content validity was found out.

Keywords: Attitude, Prospective Teachers, Mentors.

Introduction

Teacher-student relationships are crucial for the success of both teachers and students. A good teacher can mould the student's personality and attitude towards life .As a part of classroom management, inter relationships and attitude towards teachers are the most significant factor in determining teacher's potentiality and effectiveness. A teacher has to display exceptional empathy, persistence, diligence, sincerity, research orientation, honesty, and flexibility as a person. Teachers also need to be thoughtful in the way in which they react to students' comments. Generally, teachers react by praising, acceptance, remediation, or criticism in responding to students (Derk, 1974).

Attitudes are inner feelings or beliefs of an individual towards particular phenomena. One of the chief objectives of education is the development of desirable attitudes in individuals. Attitudes are an expression of inner feelings and beliefs that they reflect whether a person is favorably or unfavorably predisposed to some phenomenon. It is also to be kept in view that education is required to develop several attitudes in the students; attitude towards self; attitude towards studies; attitudes towards others; an attitude towards certain ideals.

Le Roux (1994: 06) defines attitude to be a positive or negative emotional relationship with or predisposition toward an object, institution, or person. Pointing to yet another definition, Brecker and

Wiggins (1991: 137), defined Attitude as enduring non-verbal features of the social and physical world, and they are acquired through experience and exert a directive influence on behavior. Both these definitions reveal that an attitude can be understood as an emotion that has an influence on the behavior of human beings.

Chambers and Pettman (1986) have shown that both feelings and information are critical factors in the formation of attitudes and that these are critical components of understanding. Attitudes are closely related to opinions. A distinction made, however, is that a person can state his opinion in words but may not be able to express his attitude by his action.

According to Lord (1997:222), Attitudes have, three elementary components:

(1) The cognitive component,

(2) The feeling or affective component and,

(3) The actions or behavioral component.

Behavioral components consist of the tendency, to act or react to the object in a certain way. A positive or favorable attitude decides the course of life.

Behavior is a response, which an individual shows to his environment at different times. Behavior can be positive or negative, effective or ineffective, conscious or unconscious, overt or covert, and voluntary or involuntary. Dusenbery, (2009) stated that "Behavior can be regarded as any action of an organism that changes its relationship to its environment. Behavior provides outputs from the organism to the environment." The meaning of behavior is to conduct or carry oneself or behavior in what we do, especially in response to outside stimuli (UNESCO, 1986); anything that an organism does that involves action and response to stimulation (UNESCO, 1986).

There is no doubt that teacher's play a major role in what happens in their classrooms. Teachers provide leadership or guiding role in the teaching and learning context and therefore are extremely influential person in teaching learning process. A University teacher plays multirole of acting as a Guide, Counselor, Disciplinarian, Custodian, Evaluator, Curriculum developer, Lifelong learner, Extension worker, Researcher / Innovator, Organizer of Co curricular activities, and Administrator. Teachers and administrators of all categories and levels should be aware of the roles played by them in the present context of education. They should understand that their roles and behaviors are not fixed, but are revolving around the influence of changes taking place in society and the educational system itself (UNESCO, 1975).

A number of studies have indicated that the personality and behavior of the teacher are very important in the formation of students' attitudes (Fontana, 1988; Moore, 1993). In such a case teachers may easily forget about issues relating to students' attitudes and see the problem as merely a situation of poor performance or lack of motivation on the part of the student. What the teachers may not realize is that the problem may be a result of differences in personality.

Teacher Education plays a vital role in educating and training young teachers. The teaching practice is an important practical component pursued by the student teachers. The period of teaching practice has been increased to 3 months by NCERT. Attitude of student teachers towards their mentors during teaching practice plays a crucial role in the teaching practice phase as it helps them to learn not only handling their subject but also control of the class, using teaching aids ,fostering self discipline , preparation of teaching aids and understand their responsibility as a teacher.

Role in Teaching and Learning Process

A role model is a person who inspires and encourages us to strive for greatness, live to our fullest potential and see the best in ourselves. A role model is someone we admire and someone we aspire to be like. We learn through them, through their commitment to excellence, and through their ability to make us realize our own personal growth. We look to them for advice and guidance.

A role model can be anybody: a parent, a sibling, a friend but some of our most influential and life-changing role models are teachers.

Work commitment

Work commitment is defined as the level of enthusiasm an employee has towards his/her tasks assigned at a workplace. It is the feeling of responsibility that a person has towards the goals, mission, and vision of the organization he/she is associated with.

Role model

A person whose behavior in a particular role is imitated by others.

Definition of the key terms used in this study:

Mentor: "Mentor" is the teacher specialized in a particular subject and experienced person working in an educational institution that trains and counsels student teachers during their teaching practice phase.

Attitude: Attitude is the opinions or feelings towards a person, thing or issue.

Attitude of Prospective teachers towards Mentors: Attitude towards mentor is the predisposition of the student teacher's view regarding his mentor during teaching practice.

Prospective Teachers: Teachers are those Students who study B.Ed., second year.

Review of Related Literature

Neville John Ellis., Dennis Alonzo., & Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen. (2020) in their report focused on the elements for qualities in being pre-service teacher mentor. For this purpose, seventy peer-reviewed publications were reviewed and analyzed. A typology consisting of 53 indicators and seven dimensions was developed based on the findings. This contributes towards the knowledge of improving the quality in mentoring of pre-service teachers. It also provides the authors with the groundwork for developing a set of standards that describe the key elements of a quality mentor of pre-service teachers.

Maphalala, M.C. (2017) revealed in the findings of the research work that Mentor teachers have become key players in launching student teachers into the teaching profession. Mentor teachers are recognized for their practical knowledge of the teaching profession. This complements the theoretical knowledge that the student- teacher has acquired from the University of South Africa. The paper therefore investigated how mentor teachers understand and perceive their roles as they prepare University of South Africa (UNISA) student teachers for their teaching careers during a teaching practice session in cooperating schools. The study adopted a mixed methods research design because of its ability to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. A total of 46 mentor teachers filled in the questionnaire and 15 of them were also interviewed to gather more qualitative data to enrich the study. Findings revealed that mentor teachers understood their roles of facilitating socialization of student teachers into the teaching profession, by assisting them to gain competence in the various areas of the school functioning, including lesson planning and presentation, classroom management and appropriate use of teaching strategies and resources. The mentor teachers also demonstrated an understanding of the concept of 'mentoring', but they needed feedback from UNISA to assure them if student teachers are being assisted according to the institution's expectations. This indicates that UNISA still needs to do more to enhance the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers in supporting student teachers.

Betty J. Haslett (1976) correlated the evaluative dimensions students used in assessing their academic self-concept with judgmental dimensions students utilized in evaluating teachers by means of a stepwise multiple regression analysis. All students evaluated themselves as students in terms of academic skill and ability, interpersonal effectiveness, and quality of scholastic involvement. College students evaluated themselves on self-confidence and style of intellectual inquiry, while high school students evaluated themselves on their tolerance. All the students judged their teachers on the dimensions of student/teacher rapport, communicative style, instructional style, and stimulation. Dimensions of student's academic self-concept were significantly related to students' judgments of teaching. The student's interpersonal effectiveness was found to be the most significant overall predictor of high school student's attitudes toward teachers. The student's assessment of his academic abilities was the major predictive variable among college students. The gender of the students was not a significant predictor of students' attitudes toward teachers except for the dimension of student/teacher rapport among college students. The rating given by female students about their teachers was significantly higher in the dimension of student/teacher rapport than male students.

Yousef Mehdipour and Balaramulu (2013) investigated the attitude of University Postgraduate students towards their teacher's behavior. The students of 13 Hyderabad Universities constituted the population for the study. The sample of the study is 900 students randomly selected from five universities out of 13 universities in Hyderabad. A questionnaire was developed and validated through pilot testing and administered to the sample for the collection of data. The researcher personally visited respondents, thus 100% of data were collected. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed by Software Package for Statistical analysis. Results showed that the majority of the Postgraduates have a positive attitude to their Teacher's behavior. The major conclusions of the study were that Students were found to be satisfied with the positive behavior of their teachers. About 450 students indicated that the important

qualities of a teacher's Behavior were punctuality, honesty, hardworking, friendliness, and confidence, and competency.

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED FOR CONSTRUCTION AND STANDARDISATION OF THE TOOL

DESCRIPTION OF THE TOOL

Since no standardized tools were available for assessing the attitude of prospective teachers towards mentors, the investigator decided to construct the tool with the help of the research supervisor .Extensive review of related literature were done to select the suitable variable pertinent to the independent variable, attitude of prospective teachers towards the mentors. As the study is pertinent to the teaching practice phase, the following three dimensions were chosen for framing the attitude scale after consulting with the Research supervisor and the field experts.

The investigator constructed the Attitude towards Mentors (ATM) Questionnaire for prospective teachers. The scale used for the pilot study consists of 51 statements. The statement of the Questionnaire consists of three dimensions related to the attitude of prospective teachers towards their mentors such as Role in the Teaching and Learning process, Work Commitment, and Role model.

i.   Role in Teaching and Learning Process
ii.   Work commitment.
iii.   Role model

TABLE 1. DIMENSIONS- WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED ITEMS IN ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENTORS (ATM) QUESTIONNAIRE OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

S. No.	Dimensions	Statements	Negative Statements	Total
1.	Role in Teaching and Learning Process	1 - 20	2,4,5,14,18	20
2.	Work commitment	21 – 34	23,25,27	14
3.	Role model	35 - 51	nil	17

Scoring Procedure:

The tool consists of 51 statements Attitude of the prospective teachers towards Mentors. The respondents were asked to put a tick (√) mark against each statement under one of the five responses such as Strongly Agree, Agree, No idea, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Each item has scored as 5 - for c, 4 - for Agree, 3 - for No idea, 2 - for Disagree, and 1- for Strongly Disagree for all the positive statements, and the reversible score is used for negative statements. The Attitude of prospective teachers' towards Mentors (ATM) gives the sum total of statement scores of all the 3 subscales. The maximum score is 255 and the minimum score is 1.

Pilot Study

The tool was administrated to the sample of the 130 prospective teachers studying in B.Ed., colleges of Education a Cronbach's Alpha method was used to find out the reliability of the tool pursuing teaching practice in the schools of the Chennai District.

Reliability

A reliability coefficient measures the accuracy of a test or measuring instrument obtained by measuring the 130 responses by using the SPSS to find out the item total Cronbach's alpha correlation of the 130 individuals screened twice and computing the correlation by the Cronbach's Alpha method. Therefore, the reliability value is **0.946** which is found to be highly reliable.

The statements which have a value above **0.3** and **0.7** and below levels were selected for the final study. Thus, out of 51 statements, 38 statements were selected for the final study. Table 2 shows the details of the items selected as the final statement based on the statistical analysis.

TABLE 2. STATEMENT ANALYSIS FOR ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENTORS (ATM) QUESTIONNAIRE OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS AND SELECTION OF STATEMENTS FOR FINAL STUDY.

Q. No	Item Total Correlation Screening - I	Item Total Correlation Screening - II	Item selected for final study
1	-0.067	Item Removed	Item Removed
2	0.164	Item Removed	Item Removed
3	0.473	.348	selected
4	0.109	Item Removed	Item Removed
5	-0.107	Item Removed	Item Removed
6	0.555	.599	selected
7	0.645	.558	selected
8	0.577	.573	selected
9	0.418	.486	selected
10	0.615	.626	selected
11	0.619	.645	selected
12	0.701	Item Removed	Item Removed
13	0.427	.425	selected
14	0.368	.350	selected
15	0.084	Item Removed	Item Removed
16	0.618	.662	selected
17	0.592	.639	selected
18	0.097	Item Removed	Item Removed
19	0.487	.615	selected
20	0.636	.633	selected
21	0.272	Item Removed	Item Removed
22	0.638	.595	selected

23	0.222	Item Removed	Item Removed
24	0.390	.525	selected
25	-0.171	Item Removed	Item Removed
26	0.189	Item Removed	Item Removed
27	0.256	Item Removed	Item Removed
28	0.226	Item Removed	Item Removed
29	0.531	.607	selected
30	0.337	.401	selected
31	0.489	.566	selected
32	0.507	.570	selected
33	0.646	.619	selected
34	0.596	.634	selected
35	0.441	.554	Selected
36	0.583	.586	Selected
37	0.583	.586	Selected
38	0.679	.606	Selected
39	0.476	.485	Selected
40	0.649	.585	Selected
41	0.523	.592	Selected
42	0.523	.523	Selected
43	0.372	.468	Selected
44	0.372	.516	Selected
45	0.372	.567	Selected
46	0.411	.534	Selected
47	0.425	.565	Selected
48	0.525	.574	Selected
49	0.527	.604	Selected
50	0.529	.619	Selected
51	0.519	.588	selected

Validity

Face validity and content validity was established by getting the expert opinion from experienced teacher educators and teachers.

The square root of the reliability gives the validity of the tool (Garrett 1979).The square root of the reliability value of 0.946 was found to be   **0.973**   which is also highly valid.

Table 3 indicates the Dimension-wise details of the finalized tool.

TABLE 3. DIMENSIONS- WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SELECTED ITEMS IN ATTITUDE TOWARDS MENTORS (ATM) QUESTIONNAIRE OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS AND SELECTION OF STATEMENTS FOR FINAL STUDY.

S. No.	Dimensions	Statements	Negative Statements	Total
1.	Role in Teaching and Learning Process	1 - 13	9th Question	13
2.	Work commitment	14 - 21	nil	8
3.	Role model	22 - 38	nil	17
	Total Statements			38

Conclusion and discussion

The construction and standardization of the scale was found to be highly reliable and valid to measure the level of attitude of prospective teachers towards the mentor. Hence, the standardized scale can be used for the main study by the investigator to measure the extent level of attitude of prospective teachers towards their mentor.

From the students' perspective, a good mentor is a nurturing teacher and a 'knowledgeable friend' (Bennett 2002). These are emotive attributes, but mentors, while recognizing the importance of the personal relationship, also understand that they have a responsibility to maintain the standards of their profession and a contractual duty to their employer.

Teachers' education should be modified so that all teachers have a good attitude to accommodate all aspects of the teacher's activities. Teachers have to understand their new role and the need for acquiring new competencies for the demand of our educational development. A positive attitude towards teachers is leading the teacher to the path of success in the teaching profession. It also leads them to go forward to fulfill their objectives in the proper way for all-round development of a student.

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