



A Study of Secondary School Teachers' Attitude towards the Functioning of District Institutes of Education and Training

Mr. Navajit Saikia¹, Dr. Nirmala Singh Rathore², Amisha Raj³

¹Research Scholar, Department of Education, Nims University Rajasthan, Jaipur

²Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Nims University Rajasthan, Jaipur

³Psychologist, Bhargava Psychiatry, De-addiction & General Hospital, Jaipur

Abstract- The present paper reports the findings of a descriptive survey study to assess the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET). The institutes have been set up under the National Policy on Education (1986) as the premier agency at the district level for pre-service and in-service teacher education, academic support and research. A sample of 300 secondary school teachers including both government and government aided schools was selected using stratified random sampling technique. Teacher Attitude towards DIET Scale and a personal data sheet were used for collecting the data. The data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics including mean percentage, standard deviation, t-test and ANOVA. The study revealed that the teachers had a moderately positive attitude towards the functioning of DIET. They were very positive towards pre-service teacher education but negative towards research, evaluation, field relation and infrastructure facilities. The analysis further showed significant difference in the attitude of the teachers on various aspects of DIET functioning in terms of gender, locale and teaching experience. The paper ends with a discussion on implications and suggestions for improving the functioning of DIET.

Keywords— Teacher attitude, District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), teacher education, in-service training, descriptive research

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher education is considered to be the cornerstone of good school education. The mechanisms and processes by which teachers are educated, trained and prepared to practice their profession have a direct impact on classroom practices. The District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) has been set up as a sub-district level organization for providing elementary and secondary level teachers' training, counselling and academic support, field level extension services and research. Since their emergence, DIETs have been considered as the linchpin connecting the teachers, the school system, and the state education departments.

However, the success of any institution is largely dependent on the perception and outlook of its stakeholders. Attitude of stakeholders towards the working of DIETs is a matter of great concern and an important area of investigation. Teachers who are both trainees and trainers at various stages of their



career provide the most credible basis for assessing the working of DIETs. Their attitude towards DIET is influenced by their training needs, interactions with the institute's faculty and staff, and perceived usefulness of training and other services offered by the institute. A positive attitude may be expected to enhance utilization of training and other support services while negative attitude may lead to avoidance and lack of involvement. Hence, understanding teacher attitudes towards DIET and factors that may influence them is critical for effective functioning of the institutes. Although there are many studies documenting the various aspects of teacher education, a comprehensive survey on teachers' attitudes towards DIET functioning is still required. This study, therefore, aimed to describe the attitude of secondary school teachers towards various aspects of the functioning of DIETs and to determine if there are differences in the attitudes of these teachers based on selected variables.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There has been a considerable amount of literature focusing on various aspects of teacher education and in-service teacher training in India. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the National University for Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) have conducted several surveys on the working of DIETs on a regular basis. These reports highlighted a number of issues concerning the set of services provided by the institutes, including differences in infrastructure, faculty, and leadership across the states and districts. Similarly, reviews carried out by the Ministry of Human Resource Development also emphasized the disparities between the intended and actual roles of DIETs, particularly in relation to research and field interaction.

Studies have also shown that the attitudes of teachers towards training institutions have varied depending on their perception of the relevance of the training, the quality of resource persons, and the effectiveness of follow-up interventions conducted. However, most surveys have focused on evaluating and reviewing institutional functioning in general rather than concentrating on the attitudes of the teachers. Research on in-service training programs carried out by DIETs indicates that teachers generally appreciate the fact that they are provided with an opportunity for continuous learning and professional development. However, there were reports that the teachers felt that the content was repetitive and the follow-up was inadequate to support the implementation of newly acquired skills in the actual classroom situation.

It is therefore obvious that updated and comprehensive descriptive studies focusing on the attitudes of the stakeholders towards the functioning of DIETs are needed. Such an investigation may facilitate addressing the concerns of the teachers, which in turn, will contribute towards making the institutes more effective. The present study, thus, aimed to explore and describe the attitude of secondary school teachers towards various aspects of the functioning of DIETs.

Need and Significance of the Study

The need and significance of the present study can be discussed under the following points:

- It provides an empirical teacher-oriented view of the functioning of DIETs complementing the administrative-policy view.
- It finds out the areas where the DIET is performing well or poorly perceived by the teachers so that the authorities can take suitable remedial measures.
- It examines whether teachers differ in their attitude towards various aspects of the functioning of DIETs in terms of gender, locale, and teaching experience.
- There is a need for descriptive studies on the functioning of DIETs. This study contributes to the limited number of such studies.



- The results obtained may benefit the State Councils of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), the administrators, and policy-makers of DIETs in improving the quality of DIET services.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem for the present study can be stated as 'A Descriptive Study of Teachers' Attitude towards the Functioning and Effectiveness of the District Institutes of Education and Training'.

Operational Definitions

- Attitude: In the present study, attitude includes a teacher's positive or negative evaluation of the functioning of DIETs as per the score obtained on TADS.
- Functioning and Effectiveness of DIET: It involves the extent to which the functions like pre-service teacher education, in-service teacher training, resource and support services, research, and field interaction, and management activities of DIETs influence the effectiveness.
- In-service Teachers: They are the teachers employed in government and government aided secondary schools who have received direct or indirect training from DIETs.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the overall functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.
- To study the attitude of secondary school teachers towards various aspects of the functioning of DIETs viz-a-viz organisational administration, pre-service teacher education, in-service training, resource and support services, research and field interaction, and infrastructure facility.
- To compare the attitude of male and female teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.
- To compare the attitude of rural and urban secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.
- To study the influence of teaching experience on the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested for the present study:

- H01. There is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.
- H02. There is no significant difference between the attitude of rural and urban secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.
- H03. There is no significant difference in the attitude towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs of secondary school teachers in terms of teaching experience.

Delimitations of the Study

- The study was limited to in-service secondary school teachers working in government and government aided schools of the selected district(s).
- The study was confined to studying the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning of DIETs based on the scores obtained from the attitude inventory.
- The study was conducted among 300 respondents who were selected using a stratified random sampling procedure.



IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. Method of Study

The present study was descriptive in nature involving survey procedures for exploring the attitudes held by the respondents. The descriptive survey method is appropriate for the study because it helps to describe the situation or status of teachers' attitude in a given set of circumstances without manipulating any of the variables. Further, through the survey method, data were gathered from a fairly large sample covering a wider stretch of the population in a short period of time.

2. Population and Sample

The population for the present study consisted of all in-service secondary school teachers working in government and government aided secondary schools of the selected district(s). Using stratified random sampling procedures, 300 secondary school teachers were selected with strata formed based on gender, locale of the school, and teaching experience. Table 1 below gives the demographic details of the sample.

Table 1: Demographic Distribution of the Sample (N = 300)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	146	48.7
	Female	154	51.3
Teaching Experience	< 10 years	112	37.3
	10 – 20 years	128	42.7
	> 20 years	60	20.0
Locale of the School	Rural	198	66.0
	Urban	102	34.0
Educational Qualification	Graduate (B.Ed.)	204	68.0
	Post-Graduate (M.Ed./M.A.)	96	32.0

3. Tools Used

- Teacher Attitude towards DIET Scale (TADS): A self-constructed and developed self-report instrument using Likert's five-point scale comprising 40 items and six subscales viz-a-viz organisational administration, pre-service teacher education, in-service training, resource and support services, research and field interaction, and infrastructure facility.
- Personal Data Sheet: Used to gather personal attributes of the respondent.

4. Validity and Reliability

Items included in the TADS were subjected to content validation by experts, including teacher educators, to ensure that each item met the objectives of the study. Further, item analysis was done to retain items with good discriminative power. Reliability estimates of the tool were computed using the Cronbach Alpha and Split-half methods, revealing good reliability indices. Thus, the scale was found to be reliable and valid for the study.



5. Procedure of Data Collection

Permission for collecting data was sought from the concerned authorities of the schools and DIETs prior to the onset of data collection procedures. The TADS scale and Personal Data Sheet were administered to the respondents either as a group during school hours or as individuals with instructions given and assurance of the confidentiality of the responses. The responses were scrutinized for completion before they were scored.

6. Statistical Techniques Used

The following statistical techniques were used for the analysis of data gathered for the present study:

- Measures of central tendency, dispersion, and percentage were calculated to describe the data related to the overall and subscale attitudes of secondary school teachers towards various aspects of the functioning of DIETs.
- An independent sample t-test was performed to compare the mean attitude scores of different groups of secondary school teachers (Male vs. Female and Urban vs. Rural).
- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed to analyse the differences in the overall and subscale attitude scores of teachers with respect to teaching experience.

V. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 2 below presents the overall and subscale mean percentage scores and the inference drawn based on the scores. The level of attitude is classified as highly favourable, favourable, moderately favourable, less favourable, and highly unfavourable. The following formula was used for calculating the percentage scores of the respondents: $(\text{Sum of the scores achieved by the respondents}) \times 100 / (\text{Sum of the total possible scores on the attitude scale})$.

Table 2: Dimension-wise Attitude of Teachers towards DIET Functioning (N = 300)

Sl. No.	Dimension of Attitude	N	Mean %	Level
1	Organisational Structure & Administration of DIET	300	58.4	Moderately Favourable
2	Pre-Service Teacher Education Programmes	300	62.1	Favourable
3	In-Service Training & Continuing Education	300	54.7	Moderately Favourable
4	Resource & Support Services to Schools	300	49.3	Moderately Favourable
5	Research, Evaluation & Field Interaction	300	44.8	Less Favourable
6	Physical & Instructional Infrastructure	300	47.6	Less Favourable
7	Overall Attitude towards DIET Functioning	300	52.8	Moderately Favourable

An inspection of Table 2 reveals that except for pre-service teacher education, all the other dimensions of the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning of DIETs are moderately favourable to less favourable. The overall attitude of teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs is moderately favourable. Looking at the mean percentage (62.1) of the pre-service teacher education



programmes, it may be observed that the participants are quite satisfied with the programmes conducted by the DIETs in this regard. However, the mean percentages of research, evaluation, and field interaction (44.8) and physical and instructional infrastructure (47.6) are much lower, indicating less satisfaction on the part of the respondents in this regard. Thus, it may be inferred that even though the pre-service teacher education programmes of DIETs are appreciated, there is scope for improvement in other areas like research, evaluation, and field interaction, and upgrading of physical and instructional infrastructure.

With reference to the hypotheses, as per the results of the t-test, female teachers have a significantly higher mean attitude score than male teachers, signifying that the former have a more positive attitude towards the functioning of DIETs than the latter. Thus, the first null hypothesis (H01) is rejected. Rural teachers have a significantly higher mean attitude score than urban teachers, indicating a more positive attitude towards DIETs; as such, the second null hypothesis (H02) is also rejected. As per the results of the one-way ANOVA, teachers with 10–20 years of teaching experience possess the highest mean attitude score, which means that they have the most positive attitude towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs; as such, the third null hypothesis (H03) is also rejected.

Major Findings

- The overall attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs was moderately favourable.
- Secondary school teachers have the most favourable attitude towards pre-service teacher education programmes offered by DIETs.
- Secondary school teachers have a comparatively less favourable attitude towards research, evaluation, and field interaction activities and the physical and instructional infrastructure of DIETs.
- Secondary school female teachers have a significantly more favourable attitude towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs than their male counterparts.
- Secondary school rural teachers have a significantly more favourable attitude towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs than their urban counterparts.
- Teaching experience significantly influences the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs, with teachers having moderate teaching experience (10–20 years) possessing the most positive attitude.

Educational Implications

The findings of the present study may have the following implications for educational planners and administrators of DIETs:

- In-service teacher training programmes can be strengthened by adopting strategies similar to what DIETs have been doing for pre-service teacher education.
- Research, planning, and field interaction components of DIETs should be strengthened by upgrading the research, planning, monitoring, and evaluation capacity of the faculty members of DIETs.
- The availability of infrastructure facilities can be improved by providing financial assistance to schools and monitoring the process for its successful implementation.
- Awareness can be created amongst urban and less experienced teachers regarding the importance of DIETs so that they understand that DIETs are the primary agencies responsible for empowering teachers by providing them with training and support.



VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the objective of examining the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs, it may be concluded that the overall attitude of secondary school teachers towards DIETs is moderately positive. It may also be concluded that secondary school teachers hold a relatively more positive attitude towards pre-service teacher education programmes while holding a relatively less positive attitude towards aspects like research, evaluation, field interaction activities, and the availability of infrastructure facilities. Moreover, it may also be concluded that female teachers have a more positive attitude towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs than male teachers, rural teachers have a more positive attitude towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs than urban teachers, and teaching experience significantly influences the attitude of secondary school teachers towards the functioning and effectiveness of DIETs.

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