

Attitude Towards Research in Higher Education Institutes

Dr. K.KAVIARASU

Assistant Professors

State College of Teacher Education

Kohima, Nagaland;

Abstract

Today Indian research scholars are exhibiting tremendous performance in foreign universities and contributing to the world holding the most prominent positions. At home, Research in higher education institutions never could hold a prominent place compared to the countries having world-ranked universities. Whereas the Government of India is encouraging higher education institutes for engaging in research-related activities and innovations through different attractive packages. Higher education is the testing ground where new knowledge is produced, tested, and given to the world; where reflective activities lead to discoveries and give meaning to education; where educators are concerned to construct the lives of students by facilitating them with the necessary skills for sustainable development.

Assessing the attitude of the individual engaged in higher education institutes towards research is the primary objective of the present study. Assessing the attitude and diagnosing the areas that need to be addressed is the need of the hour to find solutions to various problems in higher education institutions. This study also explored the top reasons that have a high level of importance in their decision to join higher education institutions.

The present study is conducted at higher education institutes in the state of Nagaland, India to enlighten attitudes towards research and problems associated with conducting research-related activities from both in-service and pre-service groups.

Keywords: Attitudes, Higher education institutions, Research

1. Introduction

Research has changed the world. Human progress and advancement in all fields has been made possible through research; without it the world would come to a halt. This is especially true where education is concerned. The contribution of research in the sphere of education is immeasurable. It has brought about changes and impacted the teaching- learning processes, developed teaching theories and strategies, enhanced the skills of teachers, given direction to policy makers and stake holders as to how and what educational exercises can lead to achievement of the goals of education. Research has enabled educators to adopt teaching strategies that are in tune with the changing times. This idea is corroborated by

Rathnakar, G. (2018) while stating that research helps the professionals to learn, find out new things, analyse information and adapt to the demands of the modern world. (Basu, M. 2020).

According to Florhaida V. Pamatmat (2016) the “conduct of research is a must for teachers in facing new and more challenges and toward becoming better practitioners”. Indeed, this statement is all the more applicable in higher education – the seat of higher learning. Higher Education is the proving-ground where new knowledge is produced and tested and gifted to the world; where reflective activities lead to discoveries and give meaning to education; where educators concern themselves with shaping the lives of the learners equipping them with the skills required to negotiate through the world. Therefore, educators themselves need to be updated with the recent trends in their respective fields and be equipped with the skills essential to facilitate the needs of the higher education learners. These can be achieved only when the educators have a favourable attitude towards research activities.

2. Objectives of the Study

This study was initiated with the aim to survey the attitude of college teachers and post graduate students towards research in Nagaland. Therefore, the objectives were formulated as-

1. To examine attitude towards research of the college teachers and M.Ed students engaged in higher education institutes.
2. To analyse attitude towards research of college teachers and M.Ed students with respect to gender.
3. To analyse attitude towards research between Male and Female teachers working in colleges.
4. To compare the attitude of college teachers and M.Ed students towards research.

3. Hypotheses:

H₀₁: The attitude towards research of Male and Female individuals does not differ significantly.

H₀₂: The attitude towards research between Male and Female individuals among College teachers does not differ significantly.

H₀₃: The attitude towards research between the College teachers and M.Ed. students Post graduate students does not differ significantly.

Population

The population consisted of teachers teaching in degree colleges and students of M.EdCouse.

Sample

Purposive sampling technique was adopted for convenience of the study. Sample was selected from three colleges and two M.Ed institutes.

4. Tool Used

Attitude Scale Towards Research, developed by Dr. Vishal Sood and Prof. Y. K. Sharma was used for collection of data. The scale consisted of forty-two statements out of which twenty-six were positive or favourable and sixteen were negative or unfavourable statements. The statements were further distributed in four dimensions of attitude towards research –

- I. Attitude towards General Aspects of Research and Research Process: this included statements indicating inclinations of respondents with respect to concept of research, research process, current scenario of research works, role of supervisor in research works, the relationship between research student and supervisor, publication of research findings etc.
- II. Attitude towards Usefulness of Research in Professional career: it comprised of statements concerning respondents' predispositions or feelings with regard to significance and usefulness of research and research findings in their professional life and career.
- III. Attitude towards Relevance of Research in Personal and Social Life: it related to students and teachers' notions or ideas about relevance of research and research-related activities in their personal and social life, and application of research methods/processes and findings to solve daily problems in one's personal-social life.
- IV. Attitude towards Difficulties in Research and Research Anxiety: this aspect included statements which reflected the respondents' dispositions at the time of planning or conducting research activities, feelings of anxiety, tension or easiness as well as difficulties faced by them when asked to engage themselves in different sort of theoretical and practical research-related activities

4. Analysis and Interpretation

Table-1: Dimension wise analysis of Attitude towards research

Dimension↓	N	M	SD	Std Error
General Aspects of research & research process	113	3.42	0.3827	0.0360
Usefulness of Research in professional Career	113	4.14	0.4410	0.0415

Relevance of Research in Personal-Social life	113	3.80	0.4561	0.0429
Difficulties in research & Research Anxiety	113	3.55	0.5327	0.0501
Attitude towards research	113	3.73	0.3589	0.0338

Table – 1 shows that the dimension on usefulness of research in professional career (M=4.14; SD=0.4410) in the higher education institutes has been scored the highest by the respondents as against the dimension on general aspects of research & research process in higher education (M=3.42; SD=0.3827) which scored the least in the five point scale. It may, therefore, be said that the respondents are aware of the importance of research for their professional career with a higher degree of variability but not much confident about the process of conducting research and its application in practice.

Overall attitude of most of the respondents towards research (M=3.73; SD=0.3589) was still found to be above average. This is indicative of a positive trend amongst the respondents of the higher education institutes.

Table-2: Gender-wise analysis

Category	N	M	SD	Std Error
Female	80	3.63	0.3476	0.0388
Male	33	3.73	0.3567	0.0620
College teachers Female	51	3.63	0.3098	0.0433
College teachers Male	31	3.72	0.3603	0.0647
MEd(In-Service)	82	3.64	0.3306	0.0365
MEd(Pre-Service)	31	3.66	0.4080	0.0733

It is evident from **Table-2**, that amongst all the categories under the study, Male respondents (M=3.73; SD=0.3567) score was highest and female (M=3.63; SD=0.3476) score was the least in the five point scale. Moreover, male college teacher respondents (M=3.72; SD=0.3603) score was higher than female college teacher (M=3.63; SD=0.3098) respondents.

It is also significant that the score of Pre-Service (MEd)(M=3.66; SD=0.4080) respondents was found to be higher than that of In-Service (MEd)(M=3.64; SD=0.3306).

Table-3: Test of Significance between the categories.

Category	Chi-Square Value	p-value	Remarks
Female	2.03496	0.729329	Not Significant

Male			
Female In-Service	2.43922	0.655552	Not Significant
Male In-Service			
In-Service (MEd)	1.50322	0.826071	Not Significant
Pre-Service(MEd)			

For testing the hypothesis, chi-square test and p-value were calculated as the collected data were in categorical scale. Comparing score of all the different categories, as shown in **Table3**, it was found that there exists no significant difference in the attitude towards research.

5. Conclusion

The attitude of college teachers and the students undergoing the MEd studies towards research seem to be favourable. The usefulness of research in their professional career and the relevance of research in their personal-social life have been accepted in a positive light. Such attitude will undeniably act as a motivation to engage in research activities for professional growth and contribution to the teaching-learning process. However, the survey also showed the presence of research anxiety and difficulty in dealing with research process indicating the need for more exposure and resources to facilitate and encourage research works among the individuals either working or studying in higher education.

Overall, the survey revealed that the college teachers and MEd students in Nagaland have a favourable attitude towards research. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers and post-graduate students of higher education in Nagaland have favourable attitude and the potential to carry out research activities for furtherance of their professional career and contribute towards the betterment of education.

6. Recommendations

In consideration of the findings and conclusions of the present survey some recommendations can be drawn. All colleges may be encouraged to establish a research department and activities carried out in line with the recommendations of the NEP 2020. The emphasis on collaborative research ventures may be encouraged where 'partner support' would boost confidence and ease research stress in an individual. Further, collaboration, whether inter or intra, will enhance learning and help in broadening research knowledge. Training and capacity building programmes should be organised to upgrade skills on research. In addition, institutional funds may be made available to carry out research and for publication of the same.

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