

Relationship between Teachers' Attitude towards Curriculum and Students' Academic Achievement at Secondary School Level

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ABSTRACT

This research paper investigates the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement at the secondary school level. Utilizing a descriptive-correlation study design, the research employs quantitative methods to explore this relationship. The population for this study includes 148 secondary schools for boys, comprising 1,649 male teachers and 37,349 boy students. From this population, a sample of 600 male teachers was selected through a stratified random sampling technique. To measure teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum, a 21-item Likert scale questionnaire was employed, with response options ranging from 1 to 5. Student academic achievement was evaluated using the average scores from the annual examination of Class IX, as provided by the Boards of Intermediate & Secondary Education Peshawar (BISEP). The analysis incorporated various statistical tools, including one-sample t-tests, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis, to test the study's hypotheses. The results indicated that teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum positively contributed to students' academic achievement. Additionally, the study found a reciprocal positive contribution between teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement. The overall conclusion is that the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement is statistically significant.

Keywords: teacher attitudes, curriculum, academic achievement, secondary education, student performance, educational outcomes, teacher influence, educational assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

Education holds a crucial place in the development and strengthening of society, directly influencing its social and economic progress. The quality of education in a country is heavily dependent on its teachers, who serve as role models through their attitudes and self-compassion, which are critical to their credibility and success in the profession. Observations indicate that some teachers perform exceptionally well, while others are less effective in the classroom. Teachers profoundly impact the educational, economic, and social lives of their students. Societal demands can be met by cultivating teachers who possess positive attitudes, self-compassion, and credibility, supported by both theoretical and practical knowledge. Such teachers are better equipped to enhance students' academic achievement.

According to Reddy (2017), attitudes reflect teachers' past and present experiences and are expressed through their behavior. Teachers' attitudes are consistent predispositions towards their environment, influencing their actions, which are interpreted by students through the teachers' credibility and subsequently affect student achievement.

1.2. Teachers 'Attitude towards Curriculum

Nurdiana et al. (2013) assert that teachers are a fundamental tool for curriculum implementation, significantly influencing students' success, educational improvement, and experience. When teachers are given little respect in society, educational goals become unachievable in the long term. A lack of respect can cause psychological and emotional problems, negatively affecting teachers' performance. Educators play a major role in instruction and must maintain a sense of professionalism in rapidly changing situations. Effective strategies and practices are essential for adapting to societal changes, enhancing students' skills and knowledge.

Teacher attitude towards the curriculum is crucial for learners' success and reflects their engagement with the curriculum. Longobardi et al. (2021) emphasizes that a positive teacher attitude can significantly improve learners' achievement. Learner-centered education highlights the impact of teachers' attitudes on students' achievement and lifelong development. Teachers' attitudes

and behaviors help develop learners' personalities and provide them with a clear view of the world.

Educators must understand their practices and how they influence student achievement. Comprehending the nature of what they teach supports their understanding of the teaching-learning process (Wanderi, 2015). According to Lewis and Bryan (2021), teachers benefit students and the curriculum to which they relate. Both schools and teachers must understand pupils' needs and utilize relevant subject materials. Pupils are more successful when teachers' behavior and appearance resemble adults in their lives.

Klehm (2013) highlights that teachers are expected to have mastery of subject matter knowledge and the teaching-learning process. They should collect relevant materials according to their learning objectives and create a conducive learning atmosphere in the classroom. Effective presentation of subject matter can motivate students and make lessons interesting.

A teacher's positive attitude impacts student learning outcomes when they demonstrate expertise and enthusiasm for the subject. Providing feedback and introducing new ideas for lessons can significantly influence students' motivation and learning.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement. Teacher attitudes significantly influence their behaviors, personality, teaching skills, and subject knowledge. Education is a vital tool for socio-economic growth and development, and a sound school environment is unimaginable without an updated education system. Achieving better educational outcomes requires teachers to maintain positive attitudes.

The education system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa faces diverse challenges, such as inadequate learning environments, poor sanitation, inexperienced teachers, poorly maintained buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of parental interaction with school administration.

There is a lack of specific information regarding the impact of teacher attitudes towards the curriculum on student academic achievement in secondary schools

in the districts of Peshawar and Charsadda, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The existing literature clearly depicts a relationship between teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and student outcomes. This study aims to contribute to the research on teacher attitudes towards their profession and their impact on student academic achievement.

1.4. Objectives

- To find out the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement.
- To determine whether teachers' attitudes are a predictor of student academic achievement.

1.5. Hypotheses

H0. There is no relationship between teachers' attitude towards curriculum and students' achievement.

H0. Teachers' attitudes are not a significant predictor of student academic achievement.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Education experts have demonstrated significant interest in understanding teacher attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that enhance students' academic achievement. The role of a teacher's attitude towards their subject and student academic achievement is pivotal in enhancing the school environment at district, provincial, and national levels.

This study is essential for expanding knowledge on teacher attitudes towards their subject and student academic achievement. It will assist principals and teachers in understanding their attitudes towards the curriculum and shed light on methods to improve the environment for better student academic achievement. Furthermore, this research will focus on various dimensions of teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum that can positively impact student academic achievement.

The study is also significant for raising awareness among the staff community and other stakeholders in both public and private education sectors regarding the

importance of a positive teacher attitude towards the curriculum and its profound impact on students' academic achievement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review sheds light on various facets of teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and their impact on students' academic achievement. Reddy (2017) emphasizes that attitudes reflect teachers' past and present experiences and are expressed through behavior. Teachers' attitudes are consistent predispositions towards their environment, influencing their actions, which are interpreted by students through their credibility and subsequently affect student achievement.

The study contributes to a better understanding of government schools in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan by examining central themes related to teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and their effect on students' academic achievement. Ullah and Usman (2023) highlight the importance of teachers' beliefs and expectations in influencing students' academic achievement. Education plays a crucial role in society, ensuring achievements in various life fields. Trained individuals in any country depend on the recognition of the importance of education by civilized societies.

Secondary education lays the foundation for further education, enabling students to better face life challenges. Uy et al. (2023) underscore the need for schools and teachers to align curricula and teaching methods with a focus on objective standards. Teachers' attitudes towards their subject significantly impact student achievement, as articulated by Maliki (2013). Professional attitude fosters a constructive relationship between students and teachers, creating a positive school environment conducive to better academic achievement.

Attitudes, according to Bhargava and Pathy (2014), are a situation of motivation, shaped by experience and guiding individual responses to different situations and objects. Renthlei and Malsawmi (2015) define attitude as a predisposition to organize objects, events, and react to them reliably. It is a crucial aspect of individuals' intellectual preparation, influencing their postures, actions, thoughts, and perceptions, as highlighted by Barros and Elia (2017).

Teacher training plays a pivotal role in improving attitudes towards teaching curriculum and subsequently affecting students' academic achievement (Brew et

al., 2021). Khamari and Guru (2013) summarize major characteristics of attitude, including its range, roots in behavior, variability, integration, cultural differences, and lasting yet modifiable nature. Dispositions, as noted by Awofala et al. (2022), are inherent traits that significantly influence growth and development, affecting all students positively when possessed by teachers.

Teachers' attitudes are shaped by life experiences, situations, and objects, influencing their behavior towards their subject and profession (Soibamcha & Pandey, 2016). Attitudes affect behavior and create precise value systems impacting all traits of social behavior (Maliki, 2013). Ahmadi (2015) emphasizes that attitudes provide a structure for understanding the social atmosphere through its various components. Teacher performance highly depends on teacher-student interactions, highlighting the importance of teachers' command over their subject, confidence, self-awareness, and approach to the school atmosphere (Aldrup et al., 2022).

3. METHODS AND PROCEDURE

The study employed a descriptive correlational method, utilizing a quantitative research design for data collection and analysis. Quantitative research involves gathering numerical data and analyzing it using statistical procedures to draw conclusions. The research was conducted in Boys Government High Secondary Schools located in District Peshawar and Charsadda. Social Studies Teachers (SST) were invited to participate by completing a survey instrument.

3.1. Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised male Social Studies Teachers (SSTs) at the secondary school level in District Peshawar and District Charsadda. There was a total of 148 boys' schools and 1649 male SSTs teachers in the population. From this population, a sample of 600 male SSTs teachers was selected using a random cluster sampling technique. The selection of the sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table, which provided guidelines for sample size determination based on population size. Therefore, 600 male teachers were chosen as the sample for the study.

3.2. Data collection Instrument

For data collection, a Teacher Attitude towards Curriculum Scale was utilized. This scale was administered through a Likert scale questionnaire, which consisted of rating items ranging from 1 to 5. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements related to their attitudes towards the curriculum on a five-point scale, with 1 indicating "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicating "Strongly Agree."

3.3. Data Analysis

The data collected were subjected to comprehensive analysis utilizing a range of statistical tools, including the one-sample t-test, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis. These statistical techniques were instrumental in examining the relationship between teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and students’ academic achievement. To perform the analysis, SPSS software programs were employed, providing a robust platform for data processing and interpretation. By leveraging the capabilities of SPSS, the statistical tests were applied rigorously, yielding results that contributed to drawing informed conclusions regarding the research hypotheses and objectives.

4. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. One sample t-test

One sample t-test was used for mean value and mean difference. The result is given below table 1.

Table 1: One sample t-test for teacher attitude toward curriculum (N=600)

| | One-Sample Test | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|------|--------|-----|-----------------|-----------------|---|-------|
| | Test Value = 3 | | | | | | | |
| | M | SD | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Teacher attitude toward curriculum | 4.11 | 0.49 | 32.250 | 202 | .000 | 1.106 | 1.04 | 1.17 |

Note: P<0.05

The results indicate that most respondents expressed agreement, as evidenced by the mean value of teacher attitude towards the curriculum at 4.11, which surpasses the midpoint value of 3. This suggests a prevailing positive attitude among teachers towards the curriculum.

Furthermore, the calculated t-value of 32.250 and the mean difference of 202, both higher than the midpoint value of 3, indicate a statistically significant result at $p < 0.05$. This underscores the strong significance of the relationship between teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and student academic achievement.

Overall, these findings reinforce the notion that teachers generally hold positive attitudes towards the curriculum, which correlates positively with student achievement. Such positive attitudes among teachers are instrumental in fostering an environment conducive to student learning and success.

4.2. Hypothesis 1

Table 2: Pearson correlation between teacher attitude toward curriculum and student academic achievement (N=600)

| | | Pearson coefficient (r) with student achievement | |
|---|------------------------------------|--|------|
| | Variables | r | sig |
| 1 | Teacher attitude toward curriculum | 0.477 | .000 |
| 2 | Student average score | | |

The results demonstrate that teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum positively contribute to students' academic achievements. The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) of 0.477 indicates a strong and statistically significant relationship between teacher attitude towards the curriculum and student academic achievement, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

Therefore, based on these findings, the null hypothesis, which posited no relationship between teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum and student academic achievement, is rejected. This supports the conclusion that there is indeed a significant and positive association between teacher attitudes towards the curriculum and student academic outcomes.

4.3. Hypothesis 2

Regression analysis was for hypothesis no 2. The model summary and result are given below.

Table 3: Summary of model (N=600)

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|---|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .628 ^a | .394 | .385 | 7.540 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Teacher attitude toward curriculum and students' academic achievement | | | | |

The results indicate that the predictors, which likely include teacher attitudes towards the curriculum among other variables, were effective in predicting students' academic achievement. The values provided suggest that the model has a good fit for predicting student academic outcomes.

The coefficient of determination (R square) of 0.394 suggests that approximately 39.4% of the variance in students' academic achievement can be explained by the predictors in the model. The adjusted R square value, which accounts for the number of predictors and sample size, is 0.385.

Additionally, the standard error of the estimate (Std. Error of the Estimate) of 7.540 suggests that the model's predictions are relatively close to the actual values of students' academic achievement.

Given these results, it is reasonable to reject the null hypothesis, indicating that the predictors, including teacher attitudes towards the curriculum, are indeed effective in predicting students' academic achievement. This highlights the importance of considering teacher attitudes and other factors in understanding and predicting student outcomes.

5. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The primary finding of the research paper indicates that most teachers perceive the teaching profession as highly significant. Furthermore, most teachers reported being punctual and reliable in their roles. Additionally, many teachers expressed their ability to effectively interact with parents, colleagues, and students, highlighting their interpersonal skills.

A noteworthy finding is that the mean value of teacher attitude towards the curriculum was 4.11, suggesting that many teachers held a positive attitude towards their subject matter. This positive disposition towards the curriculum is essential for fostering an engaging and effective learning environment.

Moreover, the research revealed a strong and statistically significant Pearson correlation (r) of 0.477 between teacher attitude towards the curriculum and student average scores. This indicates a meaningful relationship between teachers' positive attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement, underscoring the importance of teacher attitudes in influencing student outcomes.

Overall, these findings emphasize the pivotal role of teacher attitudes in shaping the educational experience and academic success of students. Encouraging positive attitudes among teachers towards the curriculum can contribute significantly to enhancing student learning and achievement.

In conclusion, the research findings indicate that most teachers exhibited a positive attitude towards the curriculum. Moreover, the study revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum and students' academic achievement. This suggests that teachers' attitudes play a crucial role in influencing student outcomes.

Overall, the research paper yielded statistically significant results, highlighting the importance of teacher attitudes in shaping student achievement. These findings underscore the significance of fostering positive attitudes among teachers towards the curriculum to enhance student learning and academic success.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that teachers' attitudes towards their subject significantly predict students' academic achievement. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers should cultivate positive attitudes towards the curriculum to foster further development in students' academic performance.

To achieve this goal, training programs, both pre-service and in-service, should prioritize enhancing positive behaviors towards the subject matter among teachers. These training programs should focus on equipping teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and strategies to develop and maintain positive

attitudes towards the curriculum. Additionally, providing professional development opportunities that emphasize the importance of teacher attitudes and their impact on student achievement can be beneficial.

Furthermore, ongoing support and mentoring should be offered to teachers to reinforce positive attitudes and behaviors towards the curriculum. Creating a supportive school culture that values and encourages positive teacher attitudes can also contribute to improving student outcomes. By investing in teacher training and fostering a positive environment, schools can effectively enhance students' academic achievement and overall educational experience.

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