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A STUDY ON THE ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS TOWARDS DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN VIZIANAGARAM DISTRICT

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Abstract

Education is an effective means of social reconstruction. It is the process of facilitating learning. It helps in the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, morals, beliefs and habits necessary for the human living. It helps to develop good qualities among people and tries to draw out the best in them. It is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It seeks to develop the innate capacities of the individuals. Education is a potential tool for creating awareness among people and enabling them to lead a happy and peaceful life. In the entire educational pyramid, the secondary stage of education is said to be very crucial for various reasons. It facilitates occupational and social mobility. It is considered as the minimum level of attainment for people to survive in the modern technological world. It leads to several middle level jobs, pre-job training courses and self-employment. In fact, it is the secondary stage of education on which the social, economic, technical and cultural efficiency of the nation depends. It plays an important role in training the youth of the country to take an effective part in understanding nature and its contribution to human living.

Keywords: awareness, education, individuals, knowledge, nature, skills, technological world

Introduction

Secondary Education plays a very significant role in the country due to its terminal and transitional nature. The Government of India has introduced very recently 5+3+3+4 pattern in School Education in our country under National Education Policy, 2020. The policy suggests measures to improve quality in education restructuring the existing system by introducing five years of foundation stage (one year Nursery, one year Lower Kindergarten, one year Upper Kindergarten, and one year each for classes 1 and 2) followed by three years of preparatory stage (one year each for classes 3, 4 and 5), three years of middle stage (one year each for classes 6, 7 and 8) and four years of secondary stage (two years for Lower Secondary

comprising of classes 9 and 10; and another two years for Upper Secondary comprising of classes 11 and 12). The Junior and Senior Intermediate classes will be replaced by classes 11 and 12 under school education. After completion of school education, the students may directly go for graduation or join any professional course depending on their interest.

In the present scenario, secondary stage of education should not be viewed as a mere extension of primary or elementary education. Instead, it should be perceived as the preparation of children/adolescents as a better human resource capable of contributing to national development. Being a terminal stage in the educational ladder, Secondary stage of education should make an attempt for the development of human personality among the individuals by imparting in them the necessary knowledge and skills that are necessary for human life on earth.

Status and Importance of English in India

The status of English in India has been changing according to the changes taking place in the political, social and cultural life of people living in the country. English was first introduced in India in the 16th century when East India Company came to India for trade. At that time, it was the language of traders. When the British established their rule in the 18th century, the status of English underwent a change. It was no more a foreign language of the traders; but it became the language of the rulers. Incidentally, Indians accepted it as a link language. Indians realized the advantages of English language and made an attempt to learn it. As a result, English established its roots in the Indian society and in the education system of the country. Its status was raised to that of an official language. It became the medium of instruction in many schools and colleges. English medium schools were established and English had become the language of the elite and the aristocrats. Thus, English language attained the status which no other language had secured. Even after Independence, the same situation has been continuing due to the linguistic diversity of the country. Its popularity and importance is still retained in all fields of development in India.

English language plays a very significant role in the Indian context. It is not simply because of its status as a link language, a language of trade and commerce, administration and management; but because of its association with the life of people. The social, cultural and educational exchanges in every walk of life have been taking place through English language. English is an International language, a library language and a language of scientific advancement. It is a language which is rich in literature – humanistic, scientific and technical. English in India is used not only for communicating with the outside world, but also for inter-state and intra-state communication. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) throws light on the importance of English. According to the Commission's report, English is no more a foreign language to us; it is a second language. It is a language of instruction in schools and colleges. It continues to be the *lingua-franca* of India. It is a living language. The Commission recommended that English should be given a right place in our school curriculum.

English is a widely spoken language today. It has often been referred to as 'global language', the language most often taught as a second language across the globe. Because of the great ethnic and linguistic diversity found within our nation, English acts as an indispensable 'link' language. With the revolution in Information Technology, most software and operating systems are being developed in the English language. English is said to be the world's most important language having communicative and educative value.

In higher education, the use of English is inevitable while teaching subjects like medicine, engineering and technology, education, law etc. A teacher, who is good at English, alone, can deliver the goods properly to the students while teaching these subjects. Teaching of English and teaching of other subjects should go hand-in-hand in the school programme.

English Language Education in Indian schools

“English language education” is a concept relating to the use of English in the teaching-learning process. It starts with the field of English language teaching (ELT), which encompasses ELT methodology and the teaching of various skill areas. It crosses the border of education and touches on the domains of curriculum and assessment. English language education also involves the immediate stake-holders of teachers and students. Finally, the outcome of teaching and learning of English should be looked into — language use, English standards and the impact on teaching and learning.

English, as a second or foreign language, is the use of English by speakers with different native languages. People, whose native language is not English, learn English language under different contexts, viz., ‘English as a second language’ (ESL), ‘English as a foreign language’ (EFL), ‘English as an additional language’ (EAL) or ‘English for speakers of other languages’ (ESOL).

Language is basically a means of communication. We communicate our thoughts, feeling and ideas through the medium of a language. Language helps us to communicate with other either in the spoken or written forms. Language makes our living in the society easy and comfortable. Since English is the language used widely by people across different states of the nation, the students should be conversant with English language right from the secondary stage of education.

Significance of the study

According to some researchers, the main reason for students’ failure in the secondary schools is their inability to study the school subjects through the medium of English. Other students of regional medium schools, who study English as a second language, determine it as a foreign language which restricts their opportunities to practice outside the classroom through informal way of learning (Dendir, 1981).

There are some research studies conducted to know the attitude of students towards learning English as a foreign language. These studies were confined to the general attitude of students towards learning English language at different levels; but did not consider the need for learning English for purpose of communication. The present study is different from the earlier studies in the sense that in this study, the researcher wants to know the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills among secondary school students.

Need for the present investigation

English plays an important role in the domains of education, administration, business, political relations, judiciary and industry; and is therefore a passport for employment and higher education. The teaching and learning of English today is characterized by the diversity of schools and linguistic environments, and by systematically pervasive classroom procedures of teaching a textbook for success in an examination. This does not really serve the purpose of English language learning. Every student, by the time he/she comes out of a secondary school successfully, should be able to converse in English freely with the same ease as how he/she converses in mother tongue. This is possible only when the students develop good skills of communication in English language at the secondary stage of

education. A positive attitude and right perceptions of teachers towards English language teaching make the students acquire English language skills easily. This helps the students get fluency in the spoken as well as written forms of English language. Many research studies revealed that there is a positive relationship between the attitude of teachers towards teaching a second or foreign language and the achievement of students in English Language learning. It is the need of the hour to develop the skills of communication among secondary school students. The present investigation is an attempt to study the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.

Statement of the Problem

“A Study On The Attitude Of Secondary School Teachers Towards Developing Communicationskills InenglishAmong Secondary School Students”

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the present study is to explore the attitude of teachers towards developingcommunication skills in English among secondary school students.

The following are the other specific objectives of the study:

1. To study the influence of gender on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills inEnglish among secondary school students
2. To study the influence of age on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in Englishamong secondary school students
3. To study the influence of teaching experience on the attitude of teachers towardsdeveloping communication skills in English among secondary school students
4. To study the influence of location of the institutions on the attitude of teachers towards developingcommunication skills in English among secondary school students
5. To study the influence of type of school management on the attitude of teachers towards developingcommunication skills in English among secondary school students

Hypotheses of the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers with an experience of less than 10 years and those with 10 years and above towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in rural and urban areas towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
5. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in Government and Private Institutions towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.

Limitations of the study

The study is confined to know the influence of five demographic variables, viz., gender, age, teaching experience, location of the institution and type of school management on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.

Delimitations of the study

The study is confined to 500 teachers (250 male and 250 female) working in 75 secondary schools located in the rural as well as urban areas in Vizianagaram district in Andhra Pradesh.

Design of the Study

(i) Method of Research

The researcher followed 'survey method' of descriptive research for the present investigation. This method is used to investigate into the conditions or relationships that exist, practices that prevail, beliefs, points of view or attitudes that are held, processes that are going on, influences that are being felt and trends that are developing. It is an organized attempt to analyze, interpret and report the existing status of a social phenomenon. The Survey Method of research involves a clearly defined problem and definite objectives. It requires imaginative planning, careful analysis and interpretation of data; and logical reporting of findings. In view of the obvious advantages found in Survey method of research, the investigator adopted Survey method for the present investigation.

(ii) Tools of Research

In Survey method of research, a 'Questionnaire' is felt a better research tool for collecting data in view of the obvious advantages found therein. The questionnaire is the most frequently used research tool consisting of a very concise, pre-planned set of questions designed to yield specific information to meet the research needs. The researcher used a well prepared questionnaire as the tool of research for the present investigation.

(iii) Population and Sample

The population of the present investigation comprises of teachers working in the secondary schools of Vizianagaram district.

Sampling is the process of selecting a sample from the population. It is a part to represent the whole of a population. There are various sampling methods that are available to draw sample from the population. Out of the various methods available for drawing the sample, the investigator used 'Stratified Random Sampling' method for the present investigation. The sample for the present study consists of 500 teachers (500 male and 500 female) working in 75 secondary schools located in the rural as well as urban areas in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh.

(iv) Variables

The researcher has considered the following variables for the present study. **Independent variables:** (i) Gender, (ii) Age, (iii) Teaching Experience, (iv) Location of the school; and (iv) Type of School Management

Dependent variable: Attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students

Construction and Administration of the Tool

The researcher proposes to develop a Likert's type questionnaire with a large number of statements on different aspects of teachers' attitude towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students. It is proposed to calculate the Reliability, Validity and Objectivity of the Tool by conducting a Pilot study on a small sample consisting of 50 teachers (25 boys and 25 girls) for purpose of standardization of the tool. After

standardization, the final tool will be administered to 500 teachers from the selected 75 secondary schools located in the rural as well as urban areas in Vizianagaram district of Andhra Pradesh for purpose of collection of data.

Analysis and Interpretation of data

The data collected from the respondents will be tabulated by the researcher for purpose of analysis. The researcher proposes to analyze data using different statistical techniques such as mean score values, standard deviations, t-tests and one-way Analysis of Variance. The researcher will provide necessary interpretation of the obtained results to arrive at findings and draw conclusions.

Expected outcomes

1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
It is concluded that 'gender' has no influence on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers aged below 40 years and those aged 40 years and above towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
It is concluded that 'age' has no influence on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers with an experience of less than 10 years and those with 10 years and above towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
It is concluded that 'teaching experience' has no influence on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
There is significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in rural and urban areas towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students
It is concluded that teachers working in urban schools exhibited better attitude towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students as compared to their rural counterparts.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of teachers working in Government and Private schools towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.
It is concluded that 'type of school management' has no influence on the attitude of teachers towards developing communication skills in English among secondary school students.

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