

Study of Relatedness between Attitudinal Orientations of Secondary School Teachers towards Teaching and Their Perceptions Regarding Difficult Behaviour of Adolescent Learners

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Abstract

The paper unfolds an investigation of influence of attitudinal orientations of secondary school teachers in respect of teaching on their perceptions regarding difficult behaviour of adolescent learners. Study was divided in two phases- first extracting of factors of the concept difficult behaviours (using ipsative choice method and Q-type factor analysis constituting Q-methodology) followed by finding relatedness between attitudinal orientations and difficult behaviours magnitude using normative data. The first phase included only sample of seventy secondary school teachers, whereas the second phase involved two hundred secondary school teachers. Q-type factor analysis revealed seven factors namely- Rebelliousness, Coldness, Dominance, General Behavioural Deviance, Absurdity, Mannerism and Maliciousness. These items were converted in to normative measures for collection of normative data. Likert type attitude scale was developed which included four orientations namely- Designation, Profession, Person and Outcome. All the seven factors were individually correlated with all the four orientations of attitude. It was discovered that none of the correlation were significant. The result was corroborated by one-way calculations done in respect of all the factors of difficult behaviours across four attitudinal orientations. Finally it has been concluded that perceptions of secondary school teachers about difficult behaviours of adolescent learners are not influenced by their attitudinal orientations.

Key words: Difficult behaviours, Challenging behaviours, Disruptive behaviours, attitudinal orientations, Secondary school teachers

Classroom is a place of learning is supposed to take place at its best. It necessitates number of conditions and a repertoire of skills from a teacher. Besides knowledge of content and methodology teacher also needs to ensure a wonderful social environment of the classroom. As per Pask et al (1973) theory of conversation interaction is essential for transfer of learning which can only occur in a problem free environment. ‘Problem free classroom’ is a hypothetical proposition which is objected to by availability of huge literature for existence of intolerance in classroom situations. Rose & Gallup (2005) report the single most common request for assistance from teachers is related to behaviour and classroom. Rosenberg and Jackman (2003) informed teachers are spending more time on discipline than on classroom instructions due to an increase in off task and poor behaviours”. Bru (2009) found that disruptive behaviour impairs the classroom learning environment. Finn, Pannozzo, & Voelkl (1995) reported disruptive behaviour in the classroom takes away attention from other students. Shinn, Ramsey, Walker, Stieber, & O’Neill (1987) observed classrooms with frequent disruptive behaviours had less academic engaged time, and the students in disruptive classrooms tend to have lower grades and do poorer on standardized tests. Schneider (1998) reports recently faculty has reported more threatening behaviours, including stalking, intimidation, physical or verbal attacks, and “hijacking” classrooms”. McCarthy, Lambert, ’Donnell, & Melendres (2009) in their study concluded that disruptive behaviours in classroom results in increased teacher burnout rate. There is no dearth of more evidence on the issue of disturbed classrooms. Literature reveals that deviant behaviours differ significantly from society to society. More advanced societies have both extremes of extremely good learning and extremely violent classrooms. Whereas moderate societies like India, has moderately disturbed classrooms which usually call for only management strategies. Thus author chose difficult behaviours instead for justifying the magnitude of the problem.

What is a difficult behaviour?

The term difficult behaviour is not well defined and has been synonymously used as deviant behaviour, undesirable behaviour, challenging behaviour, disruptive behaviour, aggressive behaviour, digressive behaviour etc. unacceptable behaviours could be ‘acting out’ as well as ‘acting in’ which does not suits to any other term except difficult behaviour. The term challenging

behaviour is most close to difficult behaviour, but it also includes extreme behaviour like verbal threatening, vandalism, sexual abuse, physical attack and the like. Thus, a difficult behaviour is most suitable term for classroom situation and for otherwise normal children. Author believes that difficult behaviours are the most suitable term for classroom scenario. On analysis of available literature author developed a working definition of 'difficult behaviours' as stated below.

“A difficult behaviour is a verbal or physical action of a learner in classroom which violates norms and protocols of classroom and is certainly not a primary outcome of deviant mental or physical state of the child. It needs to be exceptional, of high intensity, of high frequency, consistent and should have a recognizable pattern so that a commoner should be able to endorse presence or absence of a difficult behaviour”.

Attitude

On reviewing the concept of attitude conceptualized and defined by exponents in the field like Allport (1935), Thurstone (1946), Katz and Stotland (1959), Anastasi (1961), Campbell (1963), Kerlinger (1967), Triandis (1971), Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), Kerlinger (1967), Eagly and Chaiken (1993), and Hogg & Vaughan (2005) the researcher could conclude that attitude is a consistent, decisive and individual reaction/response of a human being towards an object which has potential to generate stimuli to respond. This object may be an idea, a concept, a phenomenon an organization, a designation or a person and the like. Response can be favourable or unfavourable, decided by our direct or indirect experience with/about it.

Objectives

The study was conducted to address the following objectives

- To extract factor of difficult behaviours using Q-type factor analysis applied on data obtained using ipsative choice method.
- To prepare research instruments- normative scale of Difficult Behaviours and Attitudinal Orientations measure.
- To analyse the relatedness between measure of difficult behaviours and attitudinal orientations.

Research Tools

Difficult Behaviour Measure

The measure has been developed using Q-methodology which involves ipsative (forced choice) method of data collection, followed by Q-type factor analysis. This type of factor analysis involves inter-person correlation instead of inter-item correlation. Groups of persons so obtained are analysed for preferred perceptions of difficult behaviours. Each set of behaviours is unique which constitutes a factor (dimension) of the concept. By studying the nature of the items in these factors names were given to the factors. The factors are detailed in table 1.

Table 1: Factors of Difficult Behaviours obtained using Q-Type Factor Analysis

Sr. No.	Factor Number	Name of the Factor	Number of items
1.	I	Rebelliousness	8
2.	II	Coldness	8
3.	III	Dominance	7
4.	IV	General Behavioural Deviance	6
5.	V	Absurdity	5
6.	VI	Mannerism	5
7.	VII	Maliciousness	5
	All factors		44

Out of total fifty items forty four item got selected under one or other factor, which is good percentage of selection, thus justifying good structure of framed items. These factors were converted in to normative measures for assessment of magnitude of difficult behaviour. Items thus obtained are used to structure the seven point normative scale.

Reliability of the Measure

The factors obtained are small ones, thus reliability has been calculated only for whole scale. Reliability values are found to be $R_h = .4321$, and $R_f = .4698$ which are considered gratifying to consider instrument fit for use.

Validity of the Measure

Measure possesses factorial validity as it has been developed on the basis of factor analysis. Thus, it can be used for normative data collection.

Developing Attitudinal Orientations Measure

Steps for development and standardization of the measure

- Theoretical Constructs for the concept 'Attitudinal Orientations'
Investigator surveyed literature and collected various referents for attitudinal orientations specifically in respect of teaching profession. So Selected theoretical constructs are- Designation, Profession, Person and Outcome.
- Designing of items
- Item selection
- Organization of items
- Distribution of items
- Structure of the measure
- Try out of the measure
- Reliability of the measure
- Validity of the measure

Scoring Procedure

Positive items were scored from 7 to 1 from 'strongly agree to strongly disagree', while the 'negative items' were scored from 1 to 7 in the same order.

Internal Consistency of the Measure

Internal consistency has been found by calculating part and whole correlation for four constituent orientations as well as whole measure. The 'r' values ranged from .29 to .53 gratifying to accept the measure internally consistent.

Reliability of the Measure

The reliability of attitude scale has been found by using split-half method using product moment correlation. Reliability of attitude measure has been found to be .73 for half-length and .84 for full length. The obtained values suggest that instrument is reliable on psychometric index.

Validity of the Measure

Validity of the attitude measure has been found by using 'contrast groups method'. Two contrast groups were obtained by using a bi-directional item (Do you like classroom teaching?). The t-ratio between the means of these contrast groups has been found to be $t=5.37$ which is greater than table values (table values $t_{0.05}=1.97$, $t_{0.01}=2.59$; $df=198$). This indicates that instrument is valid and a reliable measure of attitudes assessment.

Sample

Seventy secondary school teachers were the participants of snow-ball sample for Q-study to reveal factors of 'difficult behaviours'. Stratified disproportionate random sample of two hundred secondary school teachers was used for second phase to develop normative measures and quantitative analysis.

Data Analysis

Testing Normality of the Data

It is necessary to ascertain the nature of sample for choosing quantitative analysis technique. It is mandatory for sample to be normal for application of parametric tests. Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) Goodness-of-Fit test has been used for testing normality of the sample. It is one of the samples of K-S test which compares the available observation set with theoretical Gaussian distribution. Tables 2 to 4 present results of K-S test has been applied on variables taken for the study.

Table 2: Summary of K-S Test applied on Factor1 (Rebellion) of Difficult Behaviour

C. I	F	C. F	C. P _o	X _u	Z = (X _u -M)/σ	C. P _e	I C.P _o -C.p _e I
9-10	2	2	0.0200	10.5000	-2.03433	0.0212	0.0012
11-12	15	17	0.0850	12.5000	-1.29357	0.0985	0.0135
13-14	39	56	0.2800	14.5000	-0.5528	0.2912	0.0112
15-16	55	111	0.5550	16.5000	0.18797	0.5753	0.0203
17-18	44	155	0.7750	18.5000	0.928738	0.8238	0.0488
19-20	30	185	0.9250	20.5000	1.669506	0.9525	0.0275
21-22	14	199	0.9950	22.5000	2.410274	0.992	0.0030
23-24	1	200	1.0000	24.5000	3.151043	0.9992	0.0008

C.I = Class Interval, f = Frequency, C.F = Cumulative Frequency, C. P_o = Observed Cumulative Fraction, X_u = Upper Limit of Class Interval, M= Sample Means, σ = Standard Deviation of the Sample, Z = Standard Score, C. P_e = Expected Cumulative Fraction

M = 15.9925

I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{max.} = 0.0488

σ = 2.6999

Condition for Normality

I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{max.} needs to be $\leq 1.36/\sqrt{N} \leq 1.36/\sqrt{200} \leq 0.0962$ at 0.05 level of significance

I C.P_o-C.p_e I_{max.} needs to be $\leq 1.63/\sqrt{N} \leq 1.63/\sqrt{200} \leq 0.1153$ at 0.01 level of significance

The observed I C.p_o-C.p_e I_{max.} is far less than table values hence approves normality of the sample. Similarly I C.p_o-C.p_e I_{max.} value has been found for other six factors of difficult behaviours as well as four dimensions of attitudinal orientations and have been found to be in normal range.

Hypotheses Testing

Testing of Hypothesis H₁

There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviours and attitudinal orientations for secondary school teachers

This general hypothesis could be further branched in to constituent factors of difficult behaviours and attitudinal orientations.

H1.1 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviours (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), IV (General Deviance), V (Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with 'Designation' Attitudinal Orientation for secondary school teachers.

H1.2 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviours (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), factor III (Dominance), IV (General Deviance), V (Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with 'Profession' Attitudinal Orientation for secondary school teachers.

H1.3 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviour (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), factor III (Dominance), IV (General Deviance), V -----

(Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with ‘Person’ Attitudinal Orientation for secondary school teachers.

H1.4 There is significant positive relation between difficult behaviour (in respect of factor I (Disobedience), factor II (Insensitivity), factor III (Dominance), IV (General Deviance), V (Irrationality), VI (Challenge), VII (Psycho-academic Deviance), VIII (Mannerism), IX (Mischievousness) and all factors combined with ‘Outcome’ Attitudinal Orientation for secondary school teachers.

Normative data obtained from 200 secondary school teachers obtained on difficult behaviours and attitudinal measure was tested for relatedness using Pearson product moment correlation. Results of correlation analysis have been presented in table 3 given below.

Table 3: Seven Difficult Behaviours Factors and Four Attitudinal Measures Correlated

		Difficult Behaviours							
		F ₁	F ₂	F ₃	F ₄	F ₅	F ₆	F ₇	Total
Attitude Measures	A	-0.0038	-0.1593**	-0.0765	-0.0034	-0.0498	0.0657	0.0062	-0.0798
	B	-0.0686	-0.0258	-0.1386**	0.0018	-0.0301	-0.0265	-0.0514	-0.1890**
	C	-0.0689	-0.1798**	-0.1690**	-0.0215	-0.0237	0.0366	0.0378	-0.0989
	D	-0.0267	0.0132	-0.0092	-0.0301	-0.0501	-0.0318	-0.0535	-0.1009
	Total	-0.0565	-0.0005	-0.1399**	-0.0201	-0.0645	-0.0100	-0.0152	-0.0212

A= Designation, B= Profession, C= Person, D= Outcome

From table 3 it is clear that majority of the ‘r’ values (34 out of forty) are found to be negative and whereas only six are greater than table values ($r_{0.05}=0.098$, $r_{0.01}=0.128$; $df= 398$) thus indicates that difficult behaviours are to great extent independent of attitudinal orientations. Also means were compared across attitudinal orientations using one way-ANOVA for all the seven

factors of difficult behaviours. Results of calculations have been presented in table 4 to 10 presented in following pages.

Table 4: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 1 (Rebelliousness) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	26.0121	3	8.6707	1.2027	Not significant
With in	1412.9865	196	7.2091		
Total	1438.9986	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

Table 5: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 2 (Coldness) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	5.8597	3	1.9532	0.1742	Not significant
With in	2197.5879	196	11.2122		
Total	2203.4476	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

Table 6: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviour Factor 3 (Dominance) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	34.7895	3	11.5965	1.0080	Not significant
With in	2254.8745	196	11.5045		
Total	2289.6640	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

Table 7: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviour Factor 4 (General Behavioural Deviance) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	39.0831	3	13.0277	1.6749	Not significant
With in	1532.3119	196	7.7782		
Total	1571.3950	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

Table 8: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 5 (Absurdity) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	13.6985	3	4.5662	0.4762	Not significant
With in	1879.4594	196	9.5891		
Total	1893.1579	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

Table 9: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviour Factor 6 (Mannerism) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	28.9645	3	9.6548	1.0985	Not significant
With in	1722.6987	196	8.7893		
Total	1751.6632	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

Table 10: Summary of One way-ANOVA for Difficult Behaviours Factor 7 (Maliciousness) across Attitudinal Measures

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between	21.9689	3	7.3230	0.6626	Not significant
With in	2166.3265	196	11.0527		
Total	2188.2954	199			

(Table values: $F_{0.05} = 2.65$, $F_{0.01} = 3.88$; $df = 3, 196$)

It is clear that one-way ANOVA calculations endorse the results obtained by virtue of correlation analysis. This implies that teachers' perceptions of difficult behaviour of learners are not influenced by their attitudinal orientations.

Findings:

- Teachers maintain that difficult behaviour is a reality of classrooms.
- There are at least seven factors are running under the concept 'difficult behaviours', which can be even more.
- The seven factors of difficult behaviour are- Rebelliousness, Coldness, Dominance, General Behavioural Deviance, Absurdity, Mannerism, and Maliciousness.
- Attitudinal orientations are – Designation, Profession, Person and Outcome.
- None of the seven factors of difficult behaviours is significantly related to 'Designation' attitudinal orientation of secondary school teachers.
- None of the seven factors of difficult behaviours is significantly related to 'Profession' attitudinal orientation of secondary school teachers.
- None of the seven factors of difficult behaviours is significantly related to 'Person' attitudinal orientation of secondary school teachers.
- None of the seven factors of difficult behaviours is significantly related to 'Outcome' attitudinal orientation of secondary school teachers.

Educational Significance

The results show that attitudinal orientations of teachers have no effect on the perceptions regarding difficult behaviours of the adolescent learners. It means difficult behaviours exist

irrespective of attitudes of teachers i.e. are not creation of attitudes toward teaching. Thus managers can think of strategies effective for managing difficult behaviours in classroom for all teachers alike.

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