

**THE ATTITUDES OF THE STUDENTS
AT THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION
TOWARDS TEACHING AS A PROFESSION**

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SUMMARY

A test of thirty multiple choice type items dealing with teaching situations was designed and given to 401 students at the Faculty of Education to measure their attitudes towards teaching as a profession. The results indicated that the attitudes of students varied significantly according to their departments. The attitudes of students in humanities-based departments did not differ significantly from those in science-based departments. Female students have significantly more favorable attitudes than male students. The attitudes of senior students did not differ significantly from the attitudes of freshmen.

ÖZET

Öğretim durumu ile ilgili otuz maddelik çoktan seçmeli türden bir test hazırlanmış, meslek olarak öğretmenliğe yönelik tutumları ölçmek amacıyla eğitim fakültesinden 401 öğrenciye verilmiştir. Veriler, öğrenci tutumlarının bölümlere göre değiştiğini göstermiştir. Sosyal bilimler alanında okuyan öğrencilerin tutumları fen bilimlerinde okuyan öğrencilerin tutumlarından önemli farklılık göstermemiştir. Bayan öğrenciler, erkek öğrencilere oranla belirgin biçimde daha olumlu tutumlara sahip olmuşlardır. Son sınıf öğrencilerinin tutumları, birinci sınıf öğrencilerinkine karşılaştırıldığında büyük farklılık göstermemiştir.

INTRODUCTION

In Iraq, students are distributed to the universities and faculties by a central committee. The interests of students are taken into consideration only when the students' achievement scores enable them to be accepted to a certain university and to a certain faculty. Most students are interested in the universities in Baghdad and faculties such as Medicine and Engineering. The capacities of these faculties are limited and they usually accept students with high achievement scores. Thus, faculties

of education accept students with low achievement scores and perhaps with low interests in these faculties.

Ridha (1979) designed a test for measuring the attitudes of students at the Faculty of Education, Basra University, towards teaching as a profession. The results of the study revealed that the attitudes of students tended to be in a negative direction. This study is trying to give more details of the attitudes of students towards teaching as a profession.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypothesis are going to be tested:

a- The students of Basra University Faculty of Education differ in their attitudes towards teaching as a profession according to their departments.

b- The students in humanities-based departments at the Faculty of Education Basra University have more favorable attitudes towards teaching as a profession than those in science-based departments at the same faculty.

c- Female students at the Faculty of Education Basra University tend to have more favorable attitudes towards teaching as a profession than male students at the same faculty.

d- Senior students at the Faculty of Education Basra University tend to have more favorable attitudes than freshmen in the same faculty.

THE INSTRUMENT

The test which was given to the students differed from other tests dealing with attitudes. The statements were designed as situations dealing with teaching, given to the students. They were asked to reflect their ideas in terms of those situations. Thus, the direct way, which may not reflect the students' actual attitudes of measuring the attitudes, has been avoided. The attitude has been measured in an indirect way, as it has been argued by Anastasi (1976: 527).

The test included thirty statements of multiple choice type items, in each of which students were asked to choose one of the three choices; one reflecting the favorable attitude, one the unfavorable attitude, and the other uncertainty. One score was given to each item when the choice was representing the favorable attitude.

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Content validity used with the test showed that the test was valid enough for the operational use. Test-retest method used with forty-six students to provide reliability revealed of 0.603.

THE SAMPLE

In 1976-1977 academic year, in which this study was carried out, the Faculty of Education, Basra University had 1650 students in eight departments, namely; Arabic, Biology, Chemistry, English, Geography, History, Mathematics and Physics. Four hundred and twelve students were selected randomly and given the test, of whom four hundred and one were suitable for the analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a- The Attitudes of Students Towards Teaching as a Profession According to Their Departments:

The means and standard deviations of scores gained by students in departments are shown in Table 1:

Table 1:
Means and Standard Deviations of
Students' Attitudes According to Their Departments

Department	N	M	SD
1- Arabic	41	18.24	4.79
2- Biology	51	20.56	3.75
3- Chemistry	52	18.55	4.68
4- English	51	15.78	5.04
5- Geography	51	20.62	3.27
6- History	45	20.86	4.04
7- Mathematics	58	19.05	3.85
8- Physics	52	18.69	4.70
Total	401	19.05	4.55

The results of analysis of variance showed that the difference among the groups is much more than the difference within the groups at a significance level of 0.01. Thus, the first hypothesis is accepted. The results can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2:
The Results of Variance Analysis

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Expected Mean Square
Between	982.7616	7	140.39
Within	7378.6	393	18.77
Total	8861.3616	400	F=7.479*

* Significant at 0.01 level of significance

It seems from tables 1 and 2 that the students of some departments such as History, Geography, and Biology have much more favorable attitudes towards teaching than other students in departments such as English. This result may be explained that while there is chance for graduates to work in jobs in which they can earn more money the students feel less favorable attitudes towards teaching; this happens especially to the graduates of English department. In contrast, when there is no chance for graduates to

do more than teaching, the students show more favorable attitudes towards teaching; this is true with students in History, Geography and Arabic departments.

b- Attitudes of Humanities and Science Students:

The result of comparison between the attitudes of students towards teaching as a profession in Humanities-and Science-based departments showed that there is no significant difference between the two groups. Thus, the second hypothesis is rejected. The details of the attitudes of students in Humanities and Science based departments are shown in table 3.

**Table 3:
The Attitudes of Students Towards
Teaching in Humanities-and Science Based Departments**

Attitudes of Students in	N	M	SD	T Value	Level of Significance
Humanities	188	18.85	4.810	-0.556	N. S.
Science	213	19.20	4.332		
Total	401	19.05	4.550		

This result can be explained that although the attitudes of students in some humanities-based such as History and Geography, is more favorable than the general mean, there are still other departments such as English and Arabic in which the students feel less favorable attitudes towards teaching.

c- Attitudes of Male and Female Students Towards Teaching as a Profession:

The result of the comparison of the attitudes of male and female students in the Faculty of Education, Basra University showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups at a significance level of 0.01. Thus, the attitudes of female students towards teaching as a profession are more favorable than the attitudes of male students and the third hypothesis is accepted. The details of students' attitudes according to their sex are shown in table 4.

Table 4:

The Attitudes of Male and Female Students Towards Teaching as a Profession

Sex	N	M	SD	T Value	Level of Significance
Male	266	18.62	4.70	3.028	0.01
Female	135	19.91	4.12		
Total	401	19.05	4.55		

This result may reflect the suitability of teaching to the social role of female students, especially in a Muslim country such as Iraq. The faculty prepares them to teach girls in separate secondary schools.

d- The Attitudes of Freshmen and Senior Students:

The result of comparison of the attitudes of freshmen and senior students towards teaching as a profession showed that there was not a significant difference between the two groups. Thus, the fourth hypothesis is rejected. The details of freshmen and senior students' attitudes towards teaching are shown in Table 5:

Table 5:

The Attitudes of Freshmen and Senior Students Towards Teaching as a Profession

Students' Attitudes	N	M	SD	T Value	Level of Significance
Junior	197	19.26	4.526	0.977	N. S.
Senior	204	18.82	4.594		
Total	401	19.05	4.550		

It seems that the educational and psychological programs for one year was not fair enough to change the attitudes of students significantly towards positive direction. In contrast, there was a tendency towards negative direction in favor of first-year students.

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