



## ATTITUDE OF SPECIAL SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS PROFESSIONALISM

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### ABSTRACT

*This study was undertaken to determine the Attitude of Special School Teachers' Towards Professionalism. Survey method was adopted for this study. The Sample consists of 120 special school teachers in Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts selected by Simple Random Sampling Technique. A self made tool, "Scale on Professionalism"(SP) and general data sheet were used to collect the data. The tool SP had 26 items to evaluate professionalism of special school teachers. The data collected was analysed by Percentage Analysis, Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test to find out the level and significance difference of special school teachers towards professionalism. The result reveals that: (i) level of attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism is moderate. (ii) There is significant difference in the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism with regard to background variable namely gender and age. (iii) There is no significant difference between rural and urban special school teachers in their professionalism. The educational implications and recommendations are made to enhance the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism.*

**KEYWORDS:** Professionalism, Special School Teachers.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Leiter, 1978, "Teaching is a semi-professional job because they are directed to perform certain standards by their superiors." Traditionally, teachers have enjoyed a position of great respect in our country. Many teachers are held in high esteem by their students and community. The service condition is isolation in which teachers work phenomenal expansion of the educational systems lowering of standards of teachers training a general impression that a very large number of teachers do not perform their duty properly and changes in the value system in society. The status of teachers has got a direct bearing on the quality of education and many of the ills of the later can be ascribed to different functions in which society has looked upon the teacher and the manner in which many teachers have performed their functions. Teachers who are focused on professionalism participate in these events regardless of the requirements. They are committed to staying up-to-date on best practices and other strategies for teaching.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Special education is a necessary component of education. And that's just one reason why special education is so important. Under the individuals with disabilities act, special education is defined as "Specially designed instruction, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability." A Special education teacher is someone who works with children and youth who have a variety of disabilities. Special education teachers are patient, Understanding educators dedicated to giving each individual student the tools and guidance needed to help



them maximize success. Special education teachers work with students who have a wide range of special needs and disabilities. These services are usually directed to students with physical, emotional or cognitive learning disabilities. We work one-on-one or in small groups, to help ensure that each student is being taught at his or her instructional level and is making adequate progress throughout the year. Special education teachers also involve themselves in each student's academic, social and behavioural development. Children with special needs require unique instruction by specially trained professionals to help them achieve their highest potential and strive to progress beyond their limitations.

Teaching profession demands a clear set of goals, love for profession, good interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and obviously a favourable management towards the profession. When compared to other professions teaching has certain features that make it more attractive. The teacher is the key to the whole educational process. Teacher remains in contact with the young minds which keep him mentally active and physically alert. Every teacher should know the peculiarities of this profession and the new role assigned to him in the educational system lies in the attitude possessed by them towards their profession. Teaching involves a wide range of activities, which gives personal satisfaction to the teacher that he is doing something for the nation. So, professionalism enables teachers to navigate the complexities at school and also to motivate others. Professionalism is very much important for special school teachers. So the investigator has taken up this present study for investigation.

### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS

Professionalism is defined as an ideal to which individuals and occupational. In this study the Attitude of Professionalism is assessed by the means scores obtained by special school teachers in the Professionalism Scale developed and administered by the investigator.

### SPECIAL SCHOOL TEACHER

In this study Special School Teacher refers to a teacher who works with children and youths who have a variety of disabilities having severe cognitive, emotional, or physical disabilities.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism.
2. To find out the significant difference if any, in the attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism with regard to background variable namely (i) gender, (ii) age and (iii) locality of residence.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference if any, in the attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism with regard to Gender.
2. There is no significant difference if any, in the attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism with regard to age.
3. There is no significant difference if any, in the attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism with regard to locality of residence.

### METHODOLOGY

The researcher has adopted the *survey method* to study the attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism.

### Sample

The Sample consists of 120 special school teacher's in Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts selected by *simple random sampling technique*.

### Tools use for the Study

The investigator has used self made tool, *Scale on Professionalism (SP)* prepared by D. Dhanuja and D. Packialakshmi in 2015. The tool SP had 26 items to test the attitude of special school teachers' towards professionalism. General data sheet was also used to collect the demographic details like gender, age and locality of residence.

### Statistical Techniques Applied

The data collected was analysed by Percentage Analysis and t-test to find out the level and significance difference in the attitude of special school teacher's towards professionalism.

### Delimitations of the Study

- The Study is conducted in special schools only.
- The area chosen for conducting the study was only at Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts.

**Table – 1**  
**Level of Attitude of Special School Teachers' Towards Professionalism**

Category	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender	30	30	55	39.2	35	30.8
Age	32	26.6	59	49.2	29	24.2
Locality of Residence	28	23.4	67	55.8	25	20.8
Professionalism	36	30	47	39.2	37	30.8

It is inferred from the above table that 30 % of teachers have low level; 39.2 % of teachers have moderate level; 30.8 % of teachers have high level of professionalism.

**Table – 2**  
**Significant difference if any, in the Attitude of Special School Teacher's Towards Professionalism with regard to Gender, Age and Locality of Residence**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated 't' Value	Remarks
Gender	Male	28	68.7	6.42	2.48	S
	Female	92	71.5	5.54		
Age	Below 40 years	32	68.5	6.36	2.43	S
	40 years & Above	88	73.1	4.95		
Locality of Residence	Rural	66	68.8	6.05	0.38	NS
	Urban	54	69.2	6.78		

(For df 118, the table value of 't' at 5% level of significance is 1.98)

S= Significant; NS= Not Significant

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' value (0.38) is less than the table value (1.98) for df 118, at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is **accepted**. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism with regard to locality of residence.

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 't' values (2.48) and (2.43) is greater than the table value (1.98) for df 118, at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is **rejected**. Therefore,

there is significant difference in the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism with regard to gender and age.

### FINDINGS

1. 39.2 % of the gender, 49.2% of the age, 55.8% of the locality of residence and 39.2% of the professionalism are at moderate level in their attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism.
2. There is significant difference in the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism with regard to gender.
3. There is significant difference in the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism with regard to age.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of special school teachers towards professionalism with regard to locality of residence.

### INTERPRETATIONS

1. The 't' test result shows that females have positive attitude than the males. Obviously, women are more sensitive and comfortable in handling with students in the classroom.
2. The 't' test result shows that the adults who are 40 years of age and older are leading students with their knowledge of their experience.
3. The 't' test result shows that there is no difference between urban and rural teachers because they are acting as they understand the mood of the students.

### EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Students should be encouraged to assess their own learning as well as their notions of how they learn, by giving them opportunities to reflect on the teaching learning process.
2. The activity in which knowledge is developed and deployed is not separate from or ancillary to learning and cognition.
3. Knowledge of students understanding, interest and experiences and co-produce knowledge through activity.
4. The special school teachers need to consider the implications of research findings and determine how they relate to particular course, students and available resources.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government and NGOs should honored and reward them to encourage teachers in specialized schools.
2. Government and School management must be organized by the medical and psychological departments to guide the teachers in specialized schools.
3. Financial assistance should continue to improve the learning process and maintain infrastructure.
4. Schools and community should support and encourage teachers of special school.
5. Seminars for special school teachers should create and improve their professionalism.

### CONCLUSION

Professionalism in special education is the catalyst for optimal learning of children with exceptionalities such as inclusion. An essential component of this infrastructure is well-prepared and qualified professional special educators from a variety of specializations with the appropriate resources and professional freedom to personalize the appropriate instruction and supports for each individual with an exceptionality. Special education is a mature profession that collegially advances the science of the profession and the interdisciplinary practice of effective interventions. The roles and responsibilities of special education professionals are varied. They are responsible for complying with many federal and local laws and regulations regarding the treatment and well being of people with disabilities. Their roles involve

every aspect of the educational process. While there are multiple challenges, continued progress toward professionalism in special education is possible and necessary.

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