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Attitude of Academicians towards Increased Retirement Age

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ABSTRACT

Initially a set of ninety statements was prepared to construct the attitude scale with the help of available literature, discussion with subject matter specialists and extension scientists. The editing of statements was done with informal criteria and eighty three (83) unambiguous generalized relevant attitude statements towards increased retirement age of college teachers and scientists were selected for developing the attitude scale. The method of equal-appearing intervals as described by Thurstone and Chave (1929) was used for construction of the attitude scale. All the selected statements were rented through a group of fifty (50) judges for their responses towards each statement on eleven-point continuum varying from extremely unfavourable to extremely favourable. Thirty (30) judges returned the statements with their responses. The final selection of the statements constituting the attitude scale was completed with the help of scale value and Q values of all the 83 statements. 24 statements having Q value three and less than three were selected for the final scale to measure attitude towards increased retirement age of academicians. 100 randomly selected male as well as female academicians (college teachers and scientists) from different universities and institutions were taken as respondents to study the attitude towards increased retirement age. It was found that majority of the old age male and female academicians possessing M.Phil./Ph.D. degree with long service experience has favourable attitude towards increased retirement age while it was also inferred that the young male teachers favoured while female teachers favoured the increased retirement age of college teachers and scientists.

Key words: Academicians retirement age, attitude measurement, attitude scale.

INTRODUCTION

According to the University Grant Commission (UGC) directive, the retirement age of college teachers has been increased to sixty-two (62) years. However, some states have kept the retirement age as fifty-eight (58) years. It is true that the retirement of any official or staff of any organization depends on the age of a person. In this context it is imperative to measure the attitude of academicians towards increased retirement age by developing an attitude scale.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out to develop an attitude scale towards increased retirement age of college teachers and scientists. The method of equal-appearing intervals, as originally described by Thurstone and Chave (1929) has been used in this study for developing the attitude scale to measure attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers and scientists. Allen L. Edwards (1957) describes the same method of equal-appearing intervals. Based on the criteria suggested, twenty four (24) statements, having Q value of three and less than three were selected.

The reliability of the scale was analyzed with the help of test retest method. The scale was administered twice to thirty (30) college teachers at an interval of one month. The respondents were randomly selected from different institutions. The total score of a respondent on all the items was divided by the total number of the items to determine score of an individual on the scale (Shah and Gupta, 1993). The correlation coefficient was calculated and the r-value 0.898 was determined, which is highly significant at 1 per cent level of probability. It indicates that the scale is reliable and has the degree of dependability on the scale for measuring the attitude of academician towards increased retirement age. It was established that the scale is a reliable instrument for the measurement of attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers.

The validity of the scale was examined with the help of content validity method of determining how well the contents of the scale represented the subject matter under the study. Since the contents of the attitude scale were derived from relevant literature and discussion with teachers and subject matter specialists the constructed scale satisfied the content validity.

The developed scale was administered to 100 male as well as female respondents by mail and personally to assess the attitude of college teachers towards increased retirement age and relationship with other variables included in the study. Seventy respondents (22 male and

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48 female teachers) responded. For quantifying the data, each response of "agree" was assigned scale value of the statement as a score. The disagree response was assigned no score. The individual attitude scores of all the respondents were also calculated with the help of the scale values assigned to agree responses of respondents. The individual attitude score of a respondent is equal to sum of scale values obtained by respondent on all agree responses and divided by total number of agree responses. The Individual Attitude Score (IAS) of a respondent was computed by following formula.

$$IAS = \frac{Sum\ of\ Scale\ Values\ Obtained\ by\ Respondent}{Total\ Number\ of\ Agree\ Responses}$$

The overall group attitude score towards increased retirement age can also be computed with the following formula.

$$Group\ Attitude\ Score = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N} IAS}{N}$$

Where,

IAS = Individual Attitude Score

N = total number of respondents

According to the method of equal appearing intervals as described by Thurstone and Chave (1929), the attitude was divided into three levels as unfavourable attitude, neutral attitude and favourable attitude on 11 points continuum scale. The scale values from 1 to 5 points were considered as unfavourable attitude, 6 point was considered as neutral attitude and from 7 to 11 points were considered as favourable attitude. The scale values 1 and 11 were considered as extremely unfavourable and extremely favourable attitudes respectively and the middle value as neutral attitude. Therefore, the middle value of the 11 point continuum scale was 5.6 to 6.5 and it was considered as neutral attitude value in this study. The respondents were grouped into three categories such as unfavourable attitude, neutral attitude and favourable attitude with individual attitude scores up to 5.5, 5.6 to 6.5 and 6.6 to 11.0 respectively (Shah & Gupta, 1993).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attitude of academicians towards increased retirement age

The data in Table 1 revealed that 54.54 per cent male and 79.16 per cent female respondents were having favourable attitude whereas 27.27 per cent male and 16.66 per cent female teachers were having neutral attitude level. Only 18.18 per cent male and 4.16 per cent female teachers were having unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers. The data exhibits that majority of male and female teachers were having favourable attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers. It is also interested to note that more percentage of male teachers in comparison to the female teachers were having unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers. Similarly, more per cent of female teachers were having favourable attitude than the male teachers towards increased retirement age.

The group attitude score was also calculated to measure the attitude level of overall group of male and female teachers included in the study. It was computed that male teachers fell under the category of neutral attitude (6.4) and female teachers belonged to category of favourable attitude (6.9) and the overall attitude level of both male and female teachers fell under the favourable attitude with score value 6.75 towards increased retirement age.

Table 1: Attitude of male and female college teachers and scientists towards increased retirement age.

n=70

Attitude Level	Male (N=22)	Female (N=48)	Pooled (N=70)
Negative	18.18%	4.16%	8.57%
Neutral	27.27%	16.66%	19.99%
Positive	54.54%	79.16%	71.42%
Total %	100.00	100.00	100.00
Group attitude score	6.4	6.9	6.75

Gender wise attitude of young and old age academicians

The data in Table 2 indicated that 50 per cent of the young respondents were having unfavourable attitude as well as 50 per cent were having favourable attitude. Whereas, 57 per cent of old male teachers were having favourable attitude, 42 per cent were having neutral attitude and none unfavourable attitude.

Table 2: Gender wise attitude of young and old college teachers and scientists towards increased retirement age.

n=70

Attitude Level	Male (N=22)		Female (N=48)	
	Young (N=8)	Older (N=14)	Young (N=26)	Older (N=22)
Negative	50.0%	0.0%	7.69%	0.0%
Neutral	0.0%	42.85%	23.08%	9.09%
Positive	50.0%	57.14%	69.23%	90.91%
Total %	100.0	100.00	100.00	100.00

In case of young female teachers, the majority of 69 per cent were having favourable attitude, 23 per cent having neutral attitude followed by 7 per cent were having unfavourable attitude.The study revealed that the majority of 90.9 per cent of old female teachers were having favourable attitude and only remaining 9 per cent were having neutral attitude.

In comparison of male and female teachers, it was found that 50 per cent of young male teachers where having unfavourable attitude, whereas, only 7.69 per cent young female teachers didn't favour increased retirement age. The majority of old male and female teachers exhibited favourable attitude towards increased retirement age.

Table 3: Attitude of M.Sc. and M.Phil./Ph.D. college teachers and scientists towards increased retirement age.

n=70

Attitude Level	Male (N=22)		Female (N=48)	
	M.Sc. (N=12)	M.Phil./Ph.D. (N=10)	M.Sc. (N=16)	M.Phil./Ph.D. (N=32)
Unfavourable	33.33%	0.0%	12.50%	0.0%
Neutral	33.33%	20.00%	0.0%	25.00%
Favourable	33.33%	80.00%	87.50%	75.00%
Total %	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

It was found that almost equal per cent of male respondents with M.Sc. degrees were having unfavourable, neutral and favourable attitude (Table 3). The majority (80 per cent) of male respondents of possessing M.Phil./Ph.D. degree were having favourable attitude towards increased retirement age.

The majority of 87 per cent of female respondents with M.Sc. degree were having favourable attitude and remaining 12 per cent were having unfavourable attitude. Similarly, the majority 75 per cent of M.Phil./Ph.D. female teachers were having favourable attitude, 25 per cent were having neutral attitude and none had unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age.

Table 4: Attitude of male and female college teachers towards increased retirement age according to length of experience.

n=70

Attitude level	Male (N=22)			Female (N=48)		
	Less experience (< 6 years) (N=4)	Middle experience (6-15 years) (N=4)	High experience (>15 years) (N=14)	Less experience (< 6 years) (N=8)	Middle experience (6-15 years) (N=20)	High experience (> 15 years) (N=20)
Negative	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Neutral	0.0%	0.0%	42.86%	25.0%	20.00%	10.0%
Positive	0.0%	100.0%	57.14%	50.0%	80.00%	90.0%
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.00	100.0

It was found that majority of 57 per cent of high experienced male respondents were having favourable attitude, 42 per cent were having neutral attitude and none had unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age. Whereas, in case of female respondents 50 per cent of less experienced female teachers were having favourable attitude and 25 per cent teachers were having neutral and 25 per cent had unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age. 80 per cent middle experienced female teachers were having favourable attitude and 20 per cent had neutral attitude. 90 per cent of high experienced female teachers were having favourable attitude, and none had unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers (Table 4).

Interrelationship of personal variables with increased retirement age of academicians:

The correlation analysis (Table 5) of the four independent variables i.e. gender, age, education and service experience with the dependent variable i.e. increased retirement age of college teachers were computed. It is important to note that the variable gender was found unfavourablely and significantly correlated with increased retirement age of college teachers at 1 per cent level of probability. Age and service experience were found favourablely and significantly correlated with increased retirement age at 1 per cent level of probability.

Table 5: Correlation analysis of increased retirement age of college teachers and scientists.

n=70

Variables	Correlation value (r)	't' value
X_1 Gender	-0.379**	3.376
X_2 Age	0.341**	2.992
X_3 Education level	0.204	1.722
X_4 Service experience	0.352**	3.099

** Significant at 1 per cent level of probability.

CONCLUSION

It could be concluded from the present investigation that majority of female teachers were having favourable attitude towards increased retirement age of college teachers. The young male as well as female teachers possessing M.Sc. degree with less service experience exhibited unfavourable attitude towards increased retirement age. Whereas, majority of old age male and female teachers possessing M.Phil/Ph.D. degrees with long service experiences were in favour to increase retirement age.

The correlation analysis also explained that the age and service experience of teachers were positively and significantly correlated the attitude towards increased retirement age was increases.

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