



## Professional ethics of secondary school teachers in relation to their gender: A comparative study

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### Abstract

The present study was conducted to evaluate the level of Professional ethics of higher secondary schools teachers on the basis gender. By using the descriptive survey method 800 respondents were drawn by the investigator with the help of random sampling technique. Professional Ethics Scale developed by Mattoo, M. I. & Thoker, A. A. was used for data collection. The data was subjected to statistical treatment by using percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation, and 't' test. Results revealed that impact of gender seems to be significant on level of professional ethics of teachers. However, Male School teachers were found high level of Professional ethics as compared to their counter parts (Female School teachers).

**Keywords:** professional ethics, gender viz. male school teachers, and female school teachers

### Introduction

Teaching is considered the noblest among all the professions and the teaching personnel are always called as nation builders. Teaching as a profession is the body of knowledge, a set of attitudes, codes of ethics and a technique which is applied to the service of mankind through an educated group. Teachers play a pivotal role as front liners in every system of education. Teachers' role is not simply to disseminate knowledge or impart information to teeming millions, but being a human resources engineer, he is the key figure in building the whole nation. Education system without teacher is just like a body structure without the soul, a skeleton without flesh and blood, a shadow without substance. The task of a teacher is the transaction of knowledge imparting the skill, shaping and moulding the character and inculcating the highest values among the learners. Unless the country has persons of proper temperament and ability as teachers, it cannot have citizens of great vision and character. Broadly speaking, God creates human beings, the structure of their image and the teacher designs the God's bestowed structure by nourishing its intellectual capacities. Teacher in Indian heritage has always been given a valued platform of respect and reverence. The teachers' role is regarded important not only in moulding the personality of the child but also in shaping the society at large. The importance of teacher is well documented in the opening page of Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) which recommends that teachers are the architects of nation and they shape the destiny of the nation in their classroom. They develop societies, lead us towards the path of progress and sustain the human aspects of existence. They nurture and cultivate humanistic, ethical and moral values among pupils. Teacher is the backbone of the entire educational edifice. In our teaching process, teacher is the nuclear part of the total system. The worth and potentiality of any nation gets evaluated on the basis of teachers performance and contribution. The teacher is an important constituent in the instructional process. In fact, the teacher is the top most academic and professional personnel in the

educational pyramid under whose charge, the destiny of our children is placed. The teacher has a vital role to play to relate education to national development and social change (Shah, 1994). The teacher is said to be the torch bearer who guides, inspires and finally inculcates the values in our teeming millions in accordance with our cultural heritage and social objectives". The success of any educational system finally depends on the qualities of a teacher. In this context, teachers seem to have more responsibilities in moulding the character of students. It is rightly said, "if a teacher runs, students will walk; if a teacher walks, students will sit; and if a teacher sits, students will sleep". Teacher's beliefs, practices, and attitude are important for understanding and improving educational processes. They are closely linked to teacher's strategies for coping with challenges in their daily professional life and to their wellbeing and they shape students learning environment and influence student motivation and achievement. Teachers can be popular just because they are friendly and helpful, but to be truly professional and effective they need other qualities. Students may not be able to put their finger on just why one teacher is more effective than another but we need to be able to identify the skills and behaviour we require in a true professional. A professional teacher needs to be confident and ethically sound. He should have sense of discrimination between right and wrong. The researcher is trying to pursue a study on such professionalism of teachers, as to how a teacher is aware towards his / her professional ethics, and how such awareness can bring results in the rewards and achievements of students. The study will bring to surface the professional awareness of teachers and will serve as the criteria to formalize such professional training if required.

### Need and importance of the study

In contemporary society, scientific and technological developments are observed to be unimaginatively progressing. The character and conduct of the individual, society, teaching personnel and the students are at the lower ebb with some unpleasant situations reported in major parts of our country.

Besides, reports of molestation, racial discrimination, bribery, and favouritism are galore. Teaching personnel are required to help the society to control these unwarranted tendencies with their intellectual potentialities. This is possible if a code of professional ethics is evolved, enforced and practiced. Ethics basically is a science of discrimination between the right and the wrong. Conduct and character development should be considered an integral part of teaching profession. Since teachers are the makers of history who prepare the future responsible citizens of our country. The teachers of India should resolve to adopt the professional ethics of day to day dealing with those entire concerned. To make the human relationship sacred, worthy, fruitful and productive, professional ethics are must. In our present society, there is violence, injustice, oppression and we witness more broken communities, to remove these social evils, responsibility lies on the shoulders of teachers. Professional ethics in teaching is the only effective medium through which we can achieve peace, justice, love through the process of reconciliation. Thus, the code of professional ethics for teachers provides a framework of principles to guide them in discharging their obligations towards students, parents, colleagues and community. Increased awareness of the ethical principles governing the teaching profession is essential to ensure 'professionalism' among teachers. In pursuance of the recommendations of the National Policy on Education (1986), a Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers (CPET) was jointly developed by National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) and the All India Federation of Primary and Secondary School Teachers Organizations. The preamble of the draft code of the professional ethics (2010) gives a professional obligation message in the field of education that teachers should integrate their professional behaviour with below mentioned qualities of professional ethics: i) recognizing that every child has a fundamental right to education of good quality, ii) recognizing that every child has an inherent potential and talent, iii) recognizing that education should be directed to the all-round development of the human personality, iv) recognizing the need for developing faith in the guiding principles of our polity, viz., democracy, social justice and secularism, v) recognizing the need to promote through education the concept of composite culture of India and a sense of national identity, vi) recognizing that teachers, being an integral part of the social milieu, share the needs and aspirations of the people, vii) recognizing the need to enhance self-esteem of teachers, viii) recognizing the need to organize teaching as a profession for which expert knowledge, specialized skills and dedication are pre-requisites, ix) recognizing that the community respect and support for the teachers are dependent on the teachers' professionalism, and x) recognizing the need for self-direction and self-discipline among the members of the teaching community. In the modern world when empowerment of the women is increasing leaps and bound but despite that fact they are lagging behind due to their low sense of self efficacy. Thus to conclude from the above observations it is evident that level of consciousness in teaching profession is need of hour. Therefore, keeping this thing into consideration efforts have been made by the present researcher to study the research problem as:

### Statement of the Problem

Professional Ethics of Secondary School Teachers in Relation to Their Gender: A Comparative Study

### Objectives of the Study

The following objectives have been formulated for the purpose of investigation:

1. To study and compare professional ethics of male and female school teachers on below mentioned dimensions:
  - a. honesty and sincerity,
  - b. transparency and confidentiality,
  - c. respect towards students and society and
  - d. high quality of teaching,

### Hypothesis

Based upon the above mentioned objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated:

2. There is significant difference between professional ethics of male and female school teachers on below mentioned dimensions:
  - a. honesty and sincerity,
  - b. transparency and confidentiality,
  - c. respect towards students and society and
  - d. high quality of teaching,

### Operational definitions

Operational definitions of terms and variables are given as under.

1. **Professional ethics:** Professional ethics in the present study refers the set of scores obtained by the respondents on Professional ethics Scale developed by the Mattoo, M. I. and Thoker A. A.
2. **Male and female Secondary School Teachers:** Male and female Secondary school teachers in the present investigation refer to those teachers who are working at + 2 level at Higher Secondary schools level.

### Delimitations of the Study

The present study delimited in following way:

- a. The Male and female teachers working in different higher secondary schools and
- b. Five districts of the valley viz. Srinagar, Anantnag, Shopian, Pulwama and Kulgam.

### Methodology

Keeping in view the research methodology, the researcher found it suitable to go through descriptive survey method.

### Sample

The present investigation was carried out on a sample of 800 teachers working in Higher Secondary Schools of Kashmir Valley. These teachers were drawn from five districts: Srinagar, Anantnag, Shopian, Pulwama and Kulgam. A random sampling technique was adopted to carry out the investigation. The age of the subjects was between 30 to 50 years.

### Tools used

Professional ethics Scale developed by the Mattoo, M. I. and Thoker A. A. was used for data collection.

**Statistical Techniques Employed**

Information gathered was put to suitable statistical analysis by computing:

- Percentage,
- Mean, S.D. and
- Test of significance (t-test).

**Analysis of data**

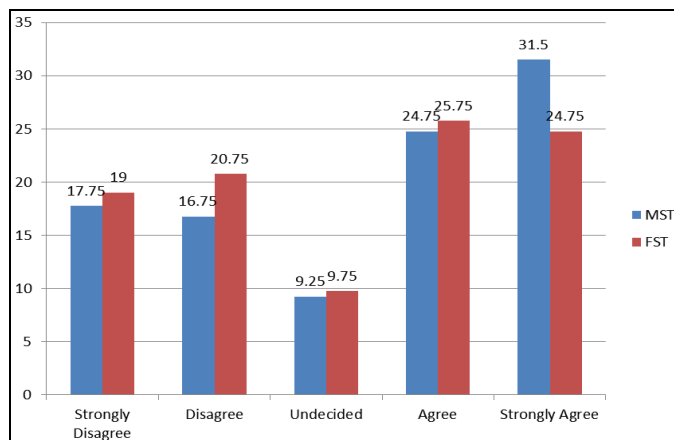
The data was analysed into below mentioned captions:

- SET-I (Descriptive Analysis)
- SET-II (Comparative Analysis)

**SET-I (Descriptive Analysis)**

**Table 1:** Showing the Percent-wise Distribution of Male and Female School Teachers on Various Levels of Professional Ethics.

Levels of Professional Ethics	MST		FST	
	N	%age	N	%age
Strongly Disagree	71	17.75	76	19
Disagree	67	16.75	83	20.75
Undecided	37	9.25	39	9.75
Agree	99	24.75	103	25.75
Strongly Agree	126	31.5	99	24.75
Total	400	100	400	100



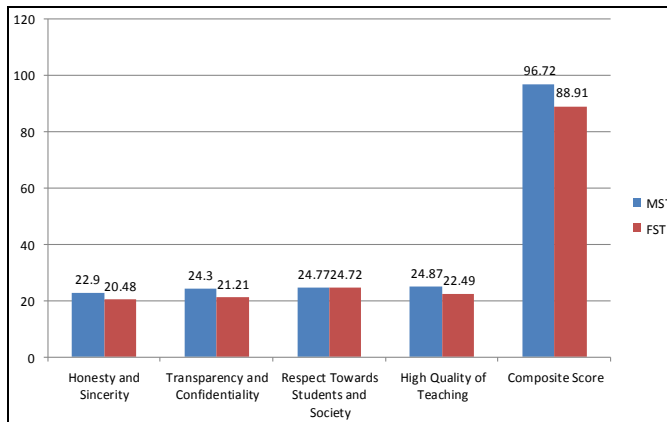
**Fig 1:** Comparison of Male and Female School Teachers on Various Levels of Professional Ethics.

**Index:** MST: Male School Teachers  
FST: Female School Teachers

**SET: II (Comparative Analysis)**

**Table 2:** Showing the Significance of Difference between the Mean Scores of Male and Female Teachers on Various Dimensions of Professional Ethics (N=400 each).

Dimensions of Professional Ethics	MST		FST		t-value
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
I Honesty and Sincerity	22.90	4.09	20.48	5.12	7.37**
II Transparency and Confidentiality	24.30	4.59	21.21	7.07	7.33**
III Respect Towards Students and Society	24.77	5.01	24.72	6.41	0.17*
IV High Quality of Teaching	24.87	3.97	22.49	5.31	7.17**
V Composite Score	96.72	13.84	88.91	17.25	7.05**



**Fig 2:** Comparison of Male and Female Teachers on Various Dimensions of Professional Ethics.

**Index:** MST: Male School Teachers  
FST: Female School Teachers  
\*\* Significant at 0.01 level of confidence  
\* Not Significant at 0.01 level of confidence

**Interpretation of data**

In the light of the above observation, the collected data was put statistical treatment. Percentage and inferential procedure was followed to test the hypotheses. The present investigator delineated this process under two captions as:

- **SET-I:** Descriptive Analysis on the basis of gender (male/female)
- **SET: II:** Comparative Analysis on the basis of gender (male/ female)

**SET-I: Descriptive Analysis**

While analysing the percent-wise distribution of male and female teachers on various levels of professional ethics (Refer Table 1, Fig. 1), 17.75% male teachers were observed to fall in strongly disagreement category, 16.75% in disagreement category. The data further reveals 9.25% male teachers unable to elicit their professional ethics. However, 24.75% male teachers were found in agreement and 31.5% in strong agreement towards their professional ethics. The results further revealed that among female school teachers, 19% were found strongly disagreed and 20.75% disagreed towards their professional ethics. Conversely, it was found that 9.75% female teachers were undecided to opt their professional ethics. Description of the results further indicate that 25.75% female teachers were found agreed and 24.75% were found strongly agreed towards their professional ethics. Percent-wise distribution of the two groups under discussion revealed male teachers as strongly in agreement towards their professional ethics.

**SET: II: Comparative Analysis**

The results presented in Table 2 (Fig. 2) give information about the mean comparison of male and female higher secondary school teachers on different dimensions of professional ethics. Higher mean score has been observed in case of male teachers on the first dimension (Honesty and Sincerity) of professional ethics scale (M= 22.90), as compared to female teachers (M=20.48).The obtained ‘t’

value is reported to be 7.37 which exceeds the table value at .01 level of confidence. On the basis of this, it is observed that male teachers seem to be in a favourable agreement on honesty and sincerity dimension.

With regard to second dimension (*Transparency and Confidentiality*) of professional ethics, the mean score in case of male group of teachers was observed to be higher ( $M = 24.30$ ) in comparison to the mean score of female group of teachers ( $M = 21.21$ ). The obtained 't' value was found significant at .01 level of confidence ( $t = 7.33$ ). From these results, it is revealed that male group of teachers have a favourable leaning towards transparency and confidentiality dimension of professional ethics as compared to their comparable group. Further, it was found that these teachers favour transparency and confidentiality with regard to dignity and privacy of the students. It may, therefore, be said that the teaching aptitude of the male teachers show least bias over female group. Besides, male teachers are reported to be democratic in the expression of their institutional activities.

A quick glance on third dimension (*Respect towards Students and Society*) of professional ethics scale reveals the significance of mean difference between male and female teachers. The mean score of male group of teachers ( $M = 24.77$ ) is reported to be almost similar to those of female teachers ( $M = 24.72$ ). The calculated 't' value has been found to be 0.17, which could not differentiate these teachers at any level of significance. Therefore, it may be revealed that male and female teachers equally respect students and society. Both the groups under discussion were seen to respect the suggestions of the stakeholders of education and subsequently enhance their professional competence by using these suggestions as feedback mechanism.

On the last dimension of professional ethics scale i.e. *High Quality of Teaching*, the male teachers were observed to have a higher mean score ( $M = 24.87$ ) than female teachers ( $M = 22.49$ ). The obtained 't' value was reported to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t = 7.17$ ). It can be said that male teachers are inclined towards the high quality of teaching as compared to female teachers and seem to have a high belief in the principle of self-discipline and self-direction. These teachers seem to favour the optimistic approach in teaching as well as the adherence of proper supervision and administrative approach.

Male and female teachers were further compared on the composite score of professional ethics scale. The mean score in case of male teachers is reported to be 96.72 which is higher than the composite mean score of female teachers ( $M = 88.91$ ). The calculated 't' value is reported to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence ( $t = 7.05$ ). It can be inferred that male group of teachers may be sincere and decent in their teaching profession. Male teachers were found to have a positive attitude in the inculcation of basic values among children. The table further reveals that male teachers always respect the dignity and privacy of the students. They consider it as their primary duty in shaping the psychological makeup of the students. Further, male teachers are seen to help the students in their intellectual, social and moral growth by introducing innovative skills and techniques of teaching. Male teachers were reported attentive towards the academic integrity of the students. On the basis of the results it can be concluded that

impact of gender seems to have a positive effect on professional ethics of school teachers. In the light of hypothesis which reads as, "*There is significant difference between professional ethics of male and female higher secondary school teachers.*" stands retained. As it has been found that male and female teachers are different on all the dimensions of professional ethics except third dimension. The results are in line with the findings of some the researchers in the field (Dhinakaran and Sivakumar, 2014; Kamal, 2014; Muhammed and Aruna, 2014; Odunaike, Ijaduola & Epetimehin, 2013; Shah, 2013; Srivastava, 1986) <sup>[21, 22, 34, 49]</sup>. Dhinakaran and Sivakumar (2014) <sup>[21, 22]</sup> found a significant difference between male and female high school teachers on cultural values, morality and professional ethics. Cultural values, morality and professional ethics of male teachers were reported to be higher than female teachers. Kamal (2014) conducted a study on teacher effectiveness, general intelligence and creativity of secondary school teachers and found that male teachers of private secondary schools more creative than female teachers of private secondary schools. Muhammed and Aruna (2014) <sup>[39]</sup> found significant differences between: male and female teachers, Government and private school teachers, and more experienced and less experienced teachers in professional development. Odunaike, Ijaduola, Epetimehin (2013) established female teachers with more commitment towards teaching profession than male teachers. Professional achievement among male teachers was found higher as compared to female teachers. Shah (2013) found male teachers of Government schools with higher teaching attitude towards their teaching profession as compared to females teachers. Srivastawa (1986) <sup>[49]</sup> conducted a study on *job satisfaction and professional honesty of primary school teachers with necessary suggestion*. The researcher reported that male teachers as compared to female teachers and married teachers as compared to unmarried much level of professional honesty.

### Conclusions of the study

The major conclusions of the study are as under:

1. Percent- wise distribution revealed urban male teachers as high achievers on all levels of professional ethics as compared to female to teachers.
2. The impact of gender was found significant on professional ethics of higher secondary school teachers. Male teachers were observed with high level of professional ethics as compared to female teachers on all the dimensions viz. honesty and sincerity, transparency and confidentiality, respect towards students and society and high quality of teaching,

### Educational implications

Keeping the whole process under consideration, below mentioned implications are recommended:

1. In order to enhance the level of ethical consciousness at secondary school level, conferences and seminars should be organised and participation of female teachers should be must.
2. Draft Code of professional ethics should frame at District level so that ethical awareness may reach in every corner of the state.



3. Value and moral education should be imparted at secondary school level. So that importance of values is realised to a great extent.
4. Women empowerment should be kept under consideration while framing different policies and programmes.

### Suggestions for Further Research

1. A comparative study on professional ethics is recommended to be conducted on teachers at various levels like: primary, secondary, college and university.
2. The present piece of research was confined on variables-professional ethics, in relation to gender. Therefore, similar investigations are recommended to be carried out on the variable of demographic profiles, socio-economic status, length of service and marital status.
3. It is recommended to undertake co-relational studies on the variables of professional ethics, professional commitment and occupational self-efficacy by involving teachers regulated by different autonomous organizations.
4. The study may be conducted to find out the impact of various draft code of professional ethics on cross cultural based teaching.
5. Studies are suggested to be conducted on job satisfaction of teachers at different levels in relation to their professional ethics.

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