

Professional Commitment of School Teachers

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Abstract

Professional commitment refers to a mindset reflecting loyalty and willingness to give one's all to a particular person, principle or plan of action. A teacher's commitment may be reflected with reference to the following six dimensions of her/his role or obligation– Commitment to learner, Commitment to institution, Commitment to work, Commitment to achieving excellence, Commitment to society and Commitment to human values. This research paper compares the degree of professional commitment of secondary teachers in relation to their sex and the socio economic status. A comparative study of teacher's professional commitment with its six dimensions may be instructive in understanding the commitment dynamics and achieving the goal of quality education.

Introduction

Teaching is considered as one of the oldest as well as noble professions. The very word teacher is value loaded. Every teacher is expected to be an ideal person imbued with high moral character. Professionally s/he is supposed to have rapport with all concerned with teaching profession, learners and their parents. Hence s/he is expected to be committed to her/his

profession, to learners, to society, and to high human values. In fact, commitment is an essential ingredient of every profession. In case of education it is more so. If quality education is the goal, it cannot be achieved without the sincere efforts of dedicated and committed teachers. Unfortunately, however, the teachers have fallen victim to a popular criticism in regard to their professional commitment. International

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conference of education in Geneva identified the following trends and concerns regarding teachers throughout the world:

- The need for further professionalisation of teacher vocation, as well as more commitment and responsibility on the part of the teachers.
- Deterioration in the social standing of teachers.
- Deterioration in working conditions including teacher's salaries in real terms.
- Teacher's morale has gone down almost everywhere, standards have dropped and commitment has slowly eroded away.

Commitment plays a decisive role in effective teaching. The more a teacher is committed the more s/he would acquire competencies and the more s/he would tend to be a performing teacher. A committed teacher would certainly respond to most of the issues through their professional expertise. Various research studies have revealed that commitment enhances job satisfaction, performance and reduces absenteeism.

Professional commitment refers to a mindset reflecting loyalty and willingness to give one's all to a particular person, principle or plan of action. A teacher's commitment may be reflected with reference to the following six dimensions of his/her role or obligation:

- (i) Commitment to learner.
- (ii) Commitment to institution.

- (iii) Commitment to work.
- (iv) Commitment to achieving excellence.
- (v) Commitment to society, and
- (vi) Commitment to human values.

The above six components of a teacher's Professional Commitment may be operationalised as follows:

- (i) *Commitment to the learner:* Including love for the learner, readiness to help learners, concern for their all round development, etc.
- (ii) *Commitment to the institution:* Institutional commitment of a teacher will be reflected in relation to his/her identification with and involvement in the organisational activities of his/her school.
- (iii) *Commitment to work:* Internal acceptance of the role and responsibility of the teaching profession. It refers to a teacher's commitment to his/her profession, e.g., a sense of pride in his profession, adherence to professional ethics and commitment to his professional associations.
- (iv) *Commitment to achieving excellence:* Care and concern for doing everything in the classroom, in the school and the community, in the best possible manner and in the spirit of 'whatever you do, do it well'.
- (v) *Commitment to the society:* Such as awareness and concern about

impact of teacher's work on the degree of advancement of families, communities and nation.

(vi) *Commitment to human values:* Including the role model aspect comprising genuine practice of professional values such as impartiality, objectivity, intellectual honesty, nation loyalty, etc.

Factors, which shape and influence the professional commitment could be many. The first and the foremost among them is the gender, which plays a key role in shaping their attitude towards the profession. Both western and the Indian traditions, being patriarchal, assign *kinder, kitchen and the kreche* to women, whereas men are supposed to *sustain, support and succeed*, as much as, male teachers are more exposed to the vagaries of the competitive world. The pulls and the pushes of the teaching profession affect the male teachers more than the female teachers. Female teachers are in fact engaged in a dual career – home making and teaching. They have to maintain high standards on both fronts if they want to continue their profession. They have few diversions or extra professional activities to pursue. Hence female teachers are expected to be more committed than their counter parts.

Socio-economic status (SES) is generally measured on the basis of prestige, wealth and authority. Socio-economic status of a person influences both his life style and life chances i.e., the likely hood of realizing certain

quality of life. SES reflects one's social class also. Warner et al. (1949) discerned six social classes: Upper-upper, Lower-upper, Upper-middle, Lower-middle, Upper-lower and Lower-lower class. Their system of class division is the one still used most frequently by sociologists.

Teaching is known to be a middle class profession. Middle class exhibits a tendency of rising expectations. Now the grades of the teachers revised attractively, the teacher's SES can easily be gauged from the point of view of occupational prestige rankings. Davis and Smith have placed secondary school teachers in middle class. Keeping in view the fact that it is a profession of highly educated persons, it can safely be called a middle class profession. Hence it was decided to rank them in three economic strata on the basis of their monthly income, i.e. salary from school. Three income groups thus arrived were — up to 10,000, 10,000 to 12,000 and above 12,500.

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. compare the degree of professional commitment of secondary teachers in relation to their sex, and
2. compare the degree of professional commitment of secondary teachers in relation to their socio economic status.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, *ex post facto* research design has been chosen.

Sample Design

There are more than 100 secondary schools in Ghaziabad Janpad. It is obvious that all of the above schools and their teaching faculty could not have formed the subjects of study by a single researcher. Hence, it was decided to select a representative sample of 40 schools on the basis of the stratified cluster sampling technique.

A composite questionnaire, containing items related to personal identification data of the respondent and the scale measuring professional commitment were administered to the 400 teachers. Respondents are fairly distributed in regard to their gender. The female and male teachers are almost equally distributed, but female teachers are slightly higher in number than male teachers, because in the boys schools some female teachers are also working.

Table 1

S. No.	Sex	No. of Teachers	Per cent
1.	Male	189	47.3
2.	Female	211	52.7
	Total	400	100

Distribution of respondents on the basis of their socio-economic status shows that majority of respondents belong to middle socio-economic status. The teaching profession continues to be a middle class profession.

Table 2

S. No.	Socio-economic status	No. of teachers	Per cent
1.	Up to 10,000	159	39.8
2.	10,000 to 12,000	140	35.0
3.	Above 12,500	101	25.2
	Total	400	100

Tools and Technique

The main tool used in the study was a scale measuring professional commitment. A Likert 5-point scale for measuring professional commitment of secondary teachers was constructed. The scale included 30 items – 5 items each for the 6 dimensions of their professional commitment, all the items were positive. Each item in this scale was provided with five alternatives – strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree. The minimum-maximum score was 5 to 25. In all 30 items of 6 dimensions of professional commitment, the strongly agree alternative was assigned maximum weight, i.e. 5, strongly disagree was assigned the minimum value, i.e. 1, therefore the total score varies from 30-150.

Try out and the item analysis by 1/3 value-method, suggested by Anastasi (1968) and Guilford (1954) and used by Bureau of Psychology, Allahabad was adopted. The scale was fairly reliable as the reliability value was 0.83. Scale has high face, content and the criterion validity.

Table 3

	<i>Variable</i>	<i>Tools</i>
1.	Commitment	A scale measuring the level of commitment among the teachers has been specially constructed for the purpose of this study.
2.	Sex, Socio-economic Status	Identification data of the respondent gathered through the specially designed questionnaire.

The collected data was treated with the statistical techniques like t-test, F-test, multiple range and Duncan procedure wherever needed.

Results

Sex and Professional Commitment:

Table 4 depicts the significance of t-values calculated between mean professional commitment of male and female teachers. The present study revealed that gender is a discriminator of professional commitment among

teachers. Female teachers have exhibited more Professional Commitment (M=139.34) than male teachers (M=137.37). They have been found to differ significantly at 0.05 level on professional commitment score (t=2.20, p<0.05).

Table 5 highlights the significance of difference between means of male and female teachers with reference to six dimensions of professional commitment as dependent variable. The first t-value calculated to test the

Table 4

t-value Obtained between Male and Female Teachers on Professional Commitment Scores

<i>Sex</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Professional Commitment</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>t-value</i>
Male	189	137.37	8.87	2.20*
Female	211	139.34	8.69	

* = t-value significant at .05 level

No Star = t-value insignificant.

Table 5**t-values Obtained between Male and Female Teachers on Six Dimensions of Professional Commitment.**

Dimensions of Professional Commitment	Male(N=189)		Female (N=121)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
1. Commitment to learners	23.3	1.95	23.9	1.90	3.07**
2. Commitment to society	21.95	2.6	22.75	2.45	3.08**
3. Commitment to institute	22.24	2.75	22.55	2.6	1.30
4. Commitment to work	22.2	2.7	22.35	2.7	0.68
5. Commitment to achieving excellence	23.9	1.55	22.4	1.55	0.52
6. Commitment to human values	23.8	1.75	23.8	1.65	0.08

* = t value significant at .05 level
No star = t-value insignificant.

** = t-value significant at .01 level

significance of the difference between means of 'commitment to learner' of male teachers (M=23.3) and female teachers (M=23.9) was found significant (t=3.07, p<0.01). The reason for high 'commitment to learner' in female teachers is quite understandable. It is perhaps due to the fact that women are endowed with a natural mother instinct, she feels more natural closeness to the student, in comparison to men. The 'commitment to society' score of male teachers (M=21.95) and female teachers (M=22.75) was again found to be significant (t=3.08, p<0.01). Here again high mean 'commitment to society' score was found in favour

of female teachers. Perhaps a woman is still censored by the society, hence she feels more conscious of her social obligations. None of the other t-values pertaining to other dimensions of professional commitment of male and female teachers were found significant. The third t-value for 'commitment to institution' with mean scores of male teachers (M=22.24) and female teachers (M=22.55) was insignificant (t=1.30, p>0.05). The fourth t-value for 'commitment to work' of male teachers and female teachers was also insignificant (t=0.68, p>0.05). Similarly, t-value for mean 'Commitment to achieving excellence' of male teachers

and female teachers ($t=0.52, p>0.05$) and mean 'commitment to human values' ($t= 0.08, p>0.05$) were found insignificant. It is obvious that male and female teachers have exhibited same professional commitment to achieving excellence and human values.

Socio-Economic Status and Professional Commitment

The mean value on professional commitment for those whose income up to 10,000 is 138.65, for those whose income 10,000 to 12,500 is 139.94 and for those whose income is above 12,500 is 134.57. The F-value obtained for these SES groups ($F=1.15, p>0.05$) was found to be insignificant. It can, therefore, be inferred that the extent of professional commitment found among them is almost the same.

Table 7 depicts F-values obtained after comparing socio-economic status of teachers vis-a-vis their professional

commitment. Individual SES group-wise mean Professional Commitment scores are as follows:

F-values were calculated to compare the teachers of three socio-economic groups, i.e. G1, G2 and G3 on the six dimensions of professional commitment. As regard to the 'Commitment to learners', the resulting F-value was found fairly significant ($F=4.47, p<0.05$). Consequently, multiple range tests were carried out for pair comparison, Duncan procedure for the 0.05 level are 2.79 and 2.93. It was found significant for low SES, i.e. G1 and high SES, i.e. G3. Teachers belonging to low SES were having higher commitment than the teachers belonging to high SES. The second F-value was calculated to compare teachers of three socio-economic statuses on dimension 'commitment of society'. The resulting F-value was found insignificant ($F=1.014, p>0.05$).

Table 6

F-value Obtained after Comparing Teachers of 'Three Academic Career Range Group' on Professional Commitment scores

<i>Academic Career Range</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean Professional Commitment</i>	<i>S.D.</i>	<i>F-value</i>
1. Up to 10,000	159	138.65	8.63	1.15
2. 10,000 – 12,500	140	139.94	8.57	
3. Above 12,500	101	134.57	9.59	

Table 7

F-value Obtained after Comparing Teachers of 'Three Academic Career Range Group' on Six Dimensions of Professional Commitment Scores

<i>Dimensions of Professional Commitment</i>	<i>Up to 10,000 (N=159) (G1)</i>		<i>10,000 to 12,500 (N=140) (G2)</i>		<i>Above 12,500 (N=101) (G3)</i>		<i>F-value</i>
1. Commitment to learners	23.9	1.65	23.6	2.0	23.15	2.1	4.47
2. Commitment to society	22.3	2.9	22.6	2.2	22.1	2.5	1.04
3. Commitment to institute	22.15	2.95	22.75	2.5	22.25	2.4	2.04
4. Commitment to work	22.4	2.65	21.85	2.55	22.25	2.9	0.26
5. Commitment to achieving excellence	24.0	1.65	23.95	1.45	23.5	1.55	0.47
6. Commitment to human values	23.85	1.6	23.85	1.55	23.7	2.0	0.21

All the other F-values pertaining to other dimensions of professional commitment and socio-economic status were found insignificant. The F-value obtained after comparing teachers of three SES groups on 'commitment to institution' was found insignificant (F=2.04, p>0.05). Likewise, F-value calculated to compare teachers of three Socio-economic status groups on the dimension of 'commitment to work' (F=0.26, p>0.05), F-values for 'commitment to achieving excellence' (F=0.47, p >0.05) and F-value for 'commitment to human value' (F=0.21, p>0.05), were found insignificant.

It can, therefore, be inferred that on

'commitment to learner' the teachers of three socio-economic status were found differing significantly, otherwise commitment of teacher is not affected by the socio-economic status of teachers.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are drawn on the basis of findings of the study:

Sex and Professional Commitment

1. Male and female teachers were found to differ significantly on professional commitment.
2. Female teachers were found to be more professionally committed as compared to male teachers.
3. On mean 'commitment to learner' score, female teachers were more

committed to learners than male teachers.

4. Female teachers exhibited more 'commitment to society' than the male teachers.
5. Male and female teachers were similar on 'commitment to institution'.
6. Male and female teachers were similar on 'commitment to work'.
7. Male and female teachers were alike on 'Commitment to achieving excellence'.
8. Male and female teachers were found to be similar in their 'Commitment to human values'.

Socio-Economic Status and Professional Commitment

9. Secondary teachers coming from different socio-economic status were not found to differ significantly on professional commitment. Hence, socio-economic status was not found related to their professional commitment.

10. Teachers of low socio-economic status have been found to be much more committed to learners as compared to teachers of high socio-economic status.
11. Teachers belonging to low, middle and high socio-economic status were not found to differ significantly on 'Commitment to society' scores.
12. Teachers of different socio-economic status were similar on 'Commitment to institution'.
13. Teachers of different Socio-economic status have similar orientation towards 'Commitment to work'.
14. The difference between mean 'Commitment to achieving excellence' scores of teachers coming from different socio-economic status was insignificant.
15. Socio-economic status was not found a discriminator towards 'commitment to human values'.

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