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**PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS WITH RESPECT TO GENDER AND LOCALE**

***Research paper in Education***

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**Abstract**

*One of the basic truths in education is that the quality and level of excellence in education depends largely upon the quality of the teachers. Therefore, they are expected to uphold the highest standards in professional commitment and integrity. The present study was geared to find out professional commitment of secondary school teachers on the basis of gender and locale. It was a descriptive survey and a sample of 1000 teachers was raised for the study. Female teachers and teachers teaching in rural areas were found to be more professionally committed.*

**Introduction**

One of the basic truths in education is that the quality and level of excellence in education depends upon the quality of its teachers. Therefore, they are expected to uphold the highest standards in professional commitment and integrity. To describe teachers as professionals does not simply mean that they have subject and pedagogical knowledge and are paid for sharing that

knowledge with their students. Rather, professional teachers are expected to exhibit professionalism in: personal characteristics, commitment to change, continuous improvement and thorough participation in educational activities beyond the confines of the classroom (Sokett, 1993; Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). Thus teachers as professionals should have both professional competence (the skill to do) and professional commitment (the will to do).

Commitment refers to the core set of values or beliefs which a teacher holds. It is an attitude- a psychological frame of mind which motivates people to work towards certain goals. It is dedication, loyalty and engaging oneself to take up a responsibility. It does not refer to a passive type of loyalty where teachers stay with their jobs, but are not really involved in the school or their work. Rather, it reflects the degree of internal motivation, enthusiasm and job satisfaction teachers derive from teaching and the degree of effectiveness they achieve in their jobs.

“A committed teacher reflects certain behavioural characteristics. For him professional development is a top priority, reflects excitement about teaching and learning, connects with students, shows positive attitude about students, is perceptive about student motives, strengths, needs and situations” (Simpson & Hood, 2000). Foundations of commitment are provided by professional ethics. It is professional ethics which provides principles for formulating the concepts of professional commitment.

Being committed to the profession includes taking pride in one's profession, passion for teaching, drive for excellence, professional attitudes, faithfulness to the organization, integrity, ethics, being a good role model, positive regard for students and colleagues, self-awareness, humility, dynamism, well rounded personality, optimism, patience for learning, motivation for self-improvement and desire for professional development. Professionalism demands that teachers should be innovative in their attitudes, flexible in their approach, inquisitive and reflective in their mind, always refreshing themselves with their new knowledge, recognizing the value and potential of the learner and providing an enriched learning environment.

### Objectives

1. To study and compare professional commitment of male and female secondary school teachers.

2. To study and compare professional commitment of secondary school teachers on the basis of the location of the school.

### Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the professional commitment of male and female secondary school teachers.
2. There is no significant difference between the professional commitment of rural and urban secondary school teachers.

### Method

The study was descriptive in nature.

### Sample

A sample of 1000 government secondary school teachers from six districts of Punjab was raised for the study. The sample consisted of 397 male and 603 female teachers. 500 teachers were taken from rural schools and 500 were selected from urban schools. Stratified random sampling technique was used.

### Research Tool

Professional Commitment Scale for Teachers by Baljeet Kaur (2007) was used to collect data. The scale consisted of 60 items spread over five commitment areas:

1. Commitment to learner
2. Commitment to society
3. Commitment to profession
4. Commitment to achieve excellence
5. Commitment to basic values.

### Results and Discussion

For testing the first hypothesis of the study the mean and SD scores of male and female teachers in professional commitment and all its five areas were computed. Standard error of difference of means was calculated and t-test was applied to find out significance of difference.



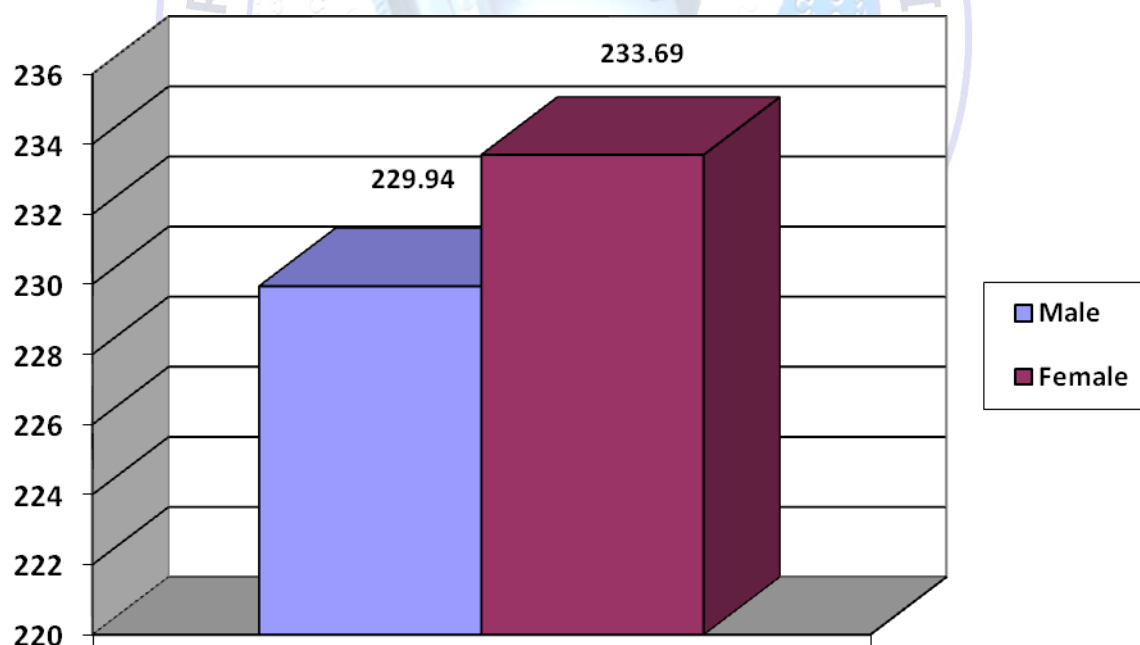
Table 1

**Gender Wise Mean, SD and Significance of Difference of Professional Commitment of  
Secondary School Teachers**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEd	t- ratio	Significance
Male	397	229.94	23.17	1.56	2.40*	Significant
Female	603	233.69	24.81			

\* Significant at .05 level of significance

The first hypothesis of the study was that there is no difference in the professional commitment of male and female secondary school teachers of Punjab. Table 1 and corresponding graph 1 show that in case of male teacher respondents the mean of the scores on professional commitment was 229.94 and in case of female respondents it was 233.69. The 't' ratio in respect of the two means was 2.40 which is significant at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the first null hypothesis stands rejected.



**Figure 1- Gender Wise Mean Scores of Professional Commitment.**

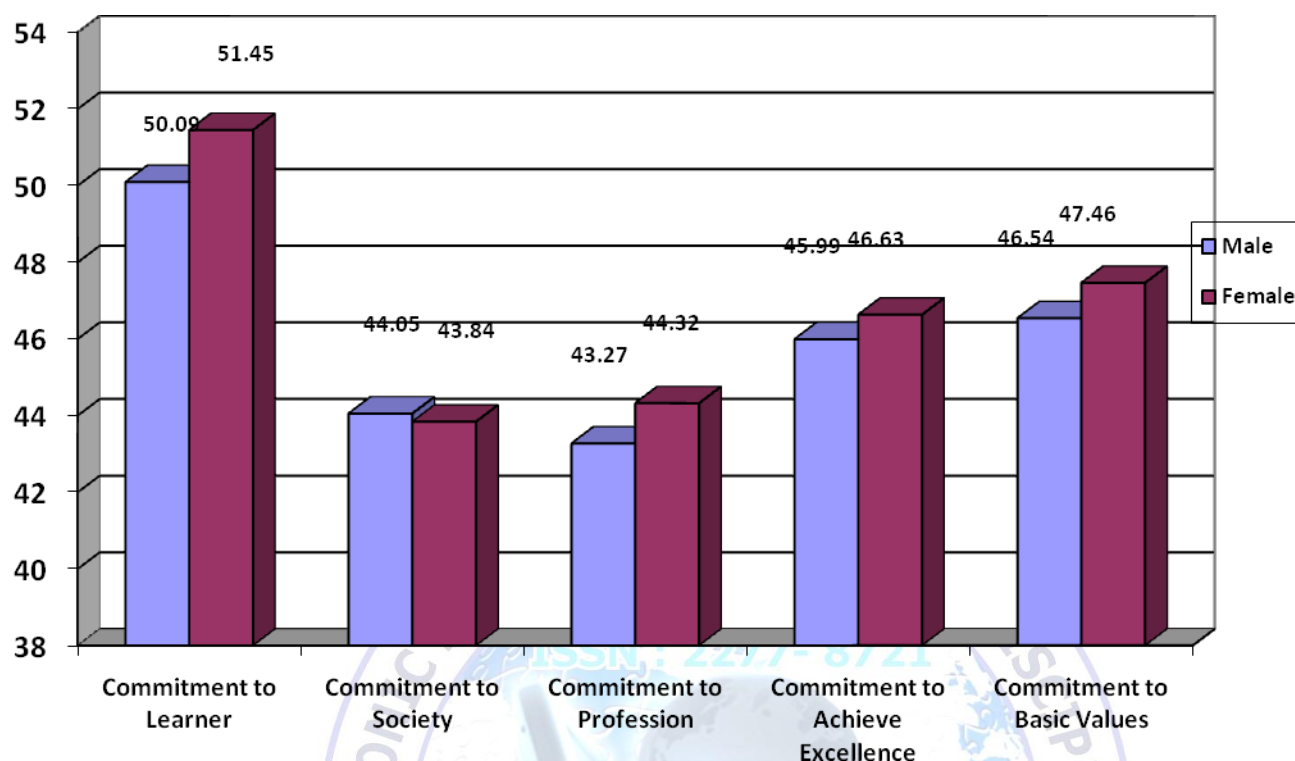
This difference went in favour of female respondents. There can be several possible explanations of this result. Firstly, in our social set up men are not so much interested in becoming teachers as are women. Teaching is considered quite safe and convenient for women. Also, by nature women are more caring and service- minded in case of children than men. Secondly, men are more status minded as far as their careers stand. For them the socio-economic status of the teachers is lower than many other professions. It is perhaps because of the said realities that women teachers are more committed to the teaching profession than men. Therefore, the difference in the professional commitment stands justified in favour of female respondents.

**Table 2**  
**Gender Wise Mean, SD and Significance of Difference of Areas of Professional Commitment**

Areas of Professional Commitment	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SEd	t-ratio	Significance
Commitment to Learner	Male	397	50.09	6.55	0.73	1.87	Not significant
	Female	603	51.45	13.46			
Commitment to Society	Male	397	44.05	5.45	0.36	0.60	Not significant
	Female	603	43.84	5.57			
Commitment to Profession	Male	397	43.27	5.62	0.36	2.93**	Significant
	Female	603	44.32	5.45			
Commitment to Achieve Excellence	Male	397	45.99	6.51	0.41	1.57	Not significant
	Female	603	46.63	6.22			
Commitment to Basic Values	Male	397	46.54	6.70	0.42	2.18*	Significant
	Female	603	47.46	6.41			

\* Significant at .05 level of significance.

\*\* Significant at .01 level of significance.



**Figure 2- Gender Wise Mean Scores of Areas of Professional Commitment**

In the light of analysis area wise( table-2) significant difference was found in the areas of commitment to profession and commitment to basic values. Female teachers scored higher in these two areas. No significant difference was found between male and female teachers in the areas of commitment to learner, commitment to society and commitment to achieve excellence.

In the present study significant gender difference was found in professional commitment. Female teachers were found to be more professionally committed as compared to male teachers. The findings are in accordance with the findings made by Wera (1982), Tapodhan (1991), Coladarci (1992), Singh and Billingsley (1998), Hung and Liu (1999), Joseph (2003) and Maheshwari (2005) who reported that female teachers had more professional attitudes and were more committed than male teachers. Karakus and Battal (2009) found that female teachers had

more affective and normative commitment than male teachers but had low levels of continuance commitment. Kaur (2009), Shaokang (2009), Taboddi (2009) and Talawar and Kumar (2010) also reported significant gender difference in professional commitment. However, the findings are at variance with the findings of Gupta and Rani (1988), Sengupta (1990) and Talawar and Kumar (2010) who found that male teachers and teacher educators had higher professional involvement as compared to their female counterparts. On the other hand, Duval and Carlson (1991) reported that qualities like professional commitment on the part of elementary and secondary school teachers were not gender specific. Al-Amri (1985), Chauhan (1995) and Sharma (2001) also found that sex had no bearing on commitment among school and university teachers. Kaur (2005) and Kohli (2005) found that there was no significant difference in the level of professional commitment of male and female teachers and teacher educators respectively.

Another objective of the study was to find out difference in professional commitment of secondary school teachers on the basis of the area (urban/rural) in which their schools were located. So mean and SD scores of urban and rural teachers in professional commitment and all its five areas were computed Standard error of difference of means was calculated and t-test was used to find out significance of difference.

**Table 3**  
**Location Wise Mean, SD and Significance of Difference of Professional Commitment**

Location	N	Mean	SD	SEd	t- ratio	Significance
Urban	500	230.36	22.97	1.53	2.41*	Significant
Rural	500	234.04	25.32			

\* Significant at .05 level of significance.

The second hypothesis of the study was that there is no difference in the professional commitment of urban and rural secondary school teachers of Punjab. Table 3 and corresponding figure 3 show that in case of urban teacher respondents the mean was 230.36 and in case of rural respondents it was 234.04. The 't' ratio came out to be 2.41 which is significant at .05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in professional commitment of urban and rural secondary school teachers



of Punjab stands rejected. The teachers teaching in rural areas were found to be significantly more committed than teachers teaching in urban areas.

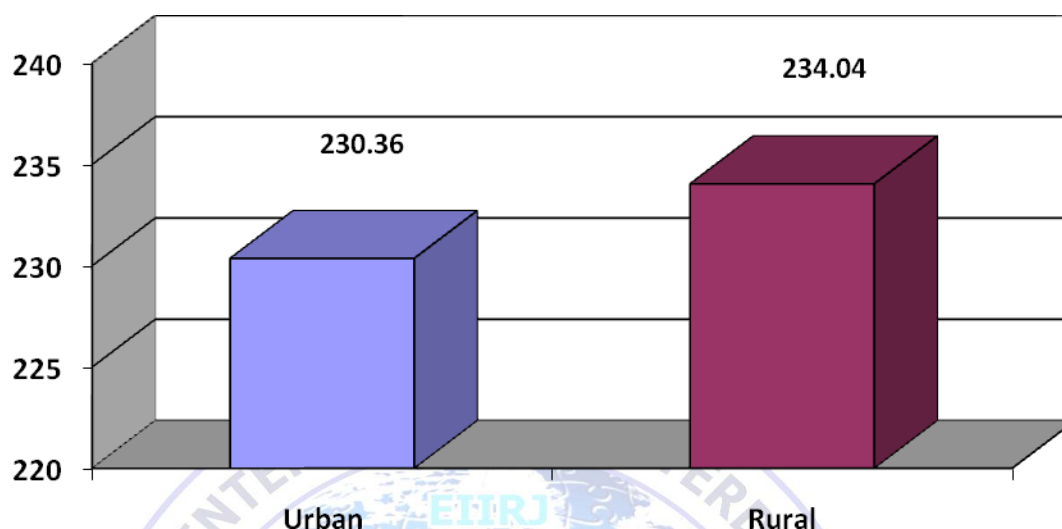


Figure 3- Location Wise Mean Scores of Professional Commitment

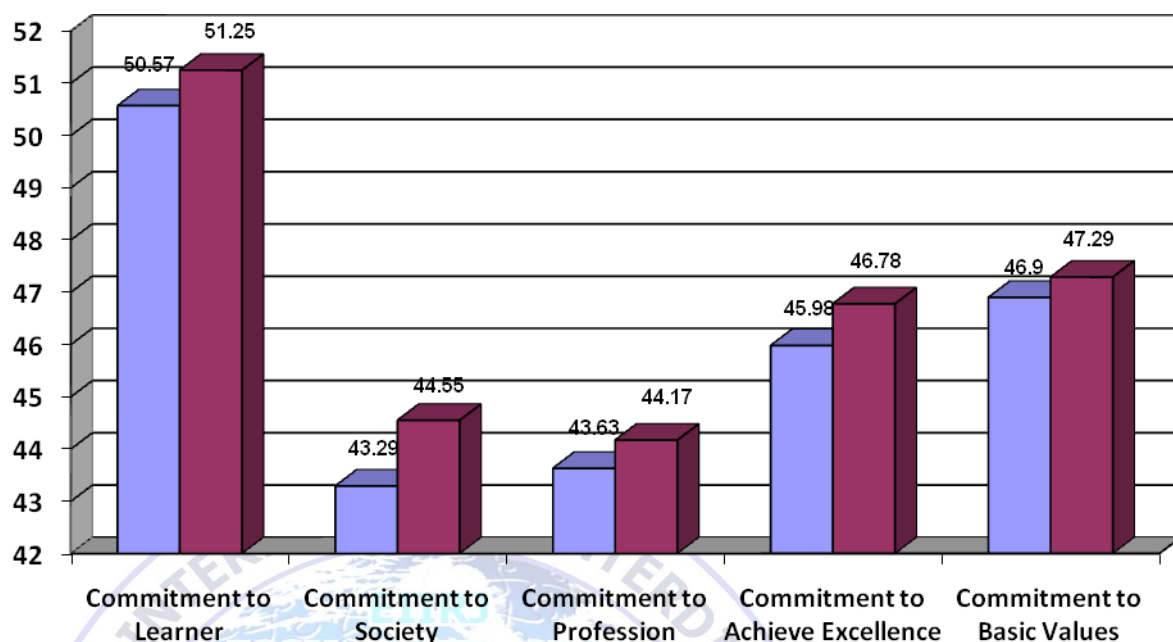
Table 4

Location Wise Mean, SD and Significance of Difference of Areas of Professional Commitment

Areas of Professional Commitment	Location	N	Mean	SD	SEd	t- ratio	Significance
Commitment to Learner	Urban	500	50.57	6.44	0.71	0.96	Not Significant
	Rural	500	51.25	14.56			
Commitment to Society	Urban	500	43.29	5.74	0.35	3.65**	Significant
	Rural	500	44.55	5.23			
Commitment to Profession	Urban	500	43.63	5.54	0.35	1.54	Not Significant
	Rural	500	44.17	5.53			
Commitment to Achieve Excellence	Urban	500	45.98	6.27	0.40	2.00*	Significant
	Rural	500	46.78	6.39			
Commitment to Basic Values	Urban	500	46.90	6.39	0.41	0.95	Not Significant
	Rural	500	47.29	6.68			

\* Significant at .05 level of significance.

\*\* Significant at .01 level of significance.



**Figure 4- Location Wise Mean Scores of Areas of Professional Commitment**

Looking at the difference area wise( table-4) rural school teachers were found to have more professional commitment as compared to their urban counterparts. Significant difference was found in the areas of commitment to the society and commitment to achieve excellence. Rural teachers scored significantly higher under these two areas than their urban counterparts. No significant difference was found between urban and rural teachers in the areas of commitment to learner, commitment to profession and commitment to basic values.

The difference went in favour of rural school respondents. There can be several possible explanations of the said result. In rural areas the status of the teachers stands at a higher pedestal in the eyes of the general public. This kind of situation is naturally morale boosting which is one of the plausible factors contributing to the feelings of professional commitment. Another possible reason for the result is that in rural area schools teachers feel more involved and more concerned with the performance of their duties. They are also perhaps somewhat under the watch of the community around.

The study also found significant difference in professional commitment on the basis of location of schools. Teachers teaching in rural area schools scored higher on professional commitment as compared to their urban counterparts. In previous researches also significant

difference has been found on the basis of location. Gupta and Rani (1988) found that teachers teaching in rural areas were less committed as compared to urban teachers. Russel McKenzie (2009) concluded that urban based teachers reported less long term teaching commitment. Tapodhan (1991) found that urban teachers had more favourable professional attitudes than rural teachers. However, John (1994) found that location of the college was not linked with professional values of teachers.

On the basis of the findings of the study relating to professional commitment it can be urged that male teachers need to be more conscious about the need of enhancing their commitment to the profession and commitment to basic values. However, all teachers irrespective of their gender and position as teachers in educational institutions need to follow the programmes that may be designed for professional improvement. Teachers must introspect seriously from time to time over their efforts for self-improvement and must also think of all those measures that can possibly be taken for the enhancement of professional commitment. Complacency in the field of education is fatal to the development of professional commitment. Teacher education is a very important factor in maintaining and reinforcing commitment among teachers. So improvement in teacher education programmes needs to be done to inculcate sense of devotion and duty among would-be teachers.

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