

Professional commitment of senior secondary school teachers in relation to their emotional competence

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Abstract

The study aimed to examine and compare the professional commitment among senior secondary school teachers w.r.t. (i) Gender (ii) Varying length of teaching experience in relation to their emotional competence. Descriptive survey method of research was used in the study. A sample of 600 senior secondary school teachers from Punjab state were taken for the study, out of which 351 teachers were male and 249 teachers were female; Similarly 253 teachers were having less than ten years of teaching experience and 347 teachers were having more than ten years of teaching experience. The data was collected by using standardized tool as professional commitment scale for teachers by Kaur and Kaur (2011) and emotional competence Scale by Sharma and Bhardwaj (1998). Statistical techniques like co-efficient of correlation were used to analyze the collected data. On the bases of data analyzed, it was found significant positive relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers irrespective of their gender and length of teaching experience.

Keywords: Professional commitment, emotional competence

Introduction

It is no exaggeration if it is said that the development of a nation is solely dependent on its citizens who have had an access to quality education. The most important factor in the educational upliftment is without doubt a teacher. A teacher's competence, dedication, commitment, personality, attitude, work value etc. have a far reaching effect on his students. Teachers' role and commitment is the primary mechanism which can yield positive outcomes. Commitment is an indispensable component of all professions, but mainly of the teaching profession as a teacher is considered to be the nation builder.

Professional commitment: Professional commitment is something beyond a commitment for a particular organization and includes one's perspective towards his profession and the motivation that they have to stay in their job with willingness to strive and uphold the values and goals of the profession (Siraneh *et al.*, 2018). Professional commitment plays a decisive role in effective teaching. Here, the individual has a socio-psychological bonding with his profession. The extent to which individuals behave in an expected manner can be reflected in their commitment to the profession.

According to Randall (1985) "commitment is defined as a strong belief in and acceptance of the goals and values of the profession:

- i) A willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the profession
- ii) A desire to maintain membership in the profession".

Emotional Competence: Emotional competency refers to the essential set of personal and social skills which enable one to recognize, interpret, understand, regulate and respond

constructively to emotions, not only in oneself but also in others (Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Mikolajczak, 2009). As a result when emotions are used effectively, conflicts can be dealt with empathetically and challenges can be overcome efficiently. Emotional competency makes use of knowledge, focus and ability which affect all areas of one's life. Understanding one's emotions fall under the domain of 'knowledge'; managing one's emotions under the domain of 'focus' and coping with problematic situations using one's emotional knowledge is the work of one's 'ability' (Nelis *et al.*, 2011).

It can further be assumed that the more competent a person is emotionally, the more will he be able to recognize his emotions and understand how they would affect others. He will then be able to respond correctly to others' emotions. Emotional competence refers to "individual differences in the identification, understanding, expression, regulation and use of one's own emotions and those of others. Higher EC is associated with greater happiness, better mental and physical health, more satisfying relationships and greater occupational success" (Brasseur *et al.*, 2013).

Emotional competence plays a central role in determining how, why and what teachers do in a class. It helps them create a positive and congenial environment. It also helps them manage ups and downs at work (Martin *et al.*, 2017).

If a teacher knows how to manage his emotions and feelings, he can ultimately manage his behaviour, decisions and relationships. It is a well-known fact that we all are made up of emotions and feelings above everything, but not everyone has the capability to regulate his emotions in a proper way. There is a direct connection between the competence to manage one's emotions and success in life. This competence helps one to resolve emotional problems constructively rather than trying to run away from them or avoid them (Lau and Wu, 2012).

The most challenging issues faced by any system of a country and also faced by an individual in his life are failures and low performances. Reasons for this can be varied - ranging from financial constraints to employment tensions, from relationship difficulties to parenting challenges and the like.

Review of related literature

- Veisi and Alizadeh (2012) conducted research on the relationship between emotional intelligence and the staffs' professional commitment among 300 persons of the staff of Iran oil products distribution and national refinery company in Shiraz. About 148 people were chosen by means of Kokran formula based on sample capacity. A positive relationship was found out between self-control, social skills with emotional competence and professional commitment.
- Sharma (2016) aimed to find out the relationship between professional commitment of teacher educators with their emotional intelligence and socio-economic status. A sample of 321 teacher educators teaching in colleges affiliated to Panjab University, Chandigarh was selected through stratified random sampling. Statistical analysis was done through coefficient of correlation. The result of the study revealed that professional commitment was significantly related to emotional intelligence.
- Buettner *et al.* (2016) conducted research on teachers' socio-emotional capacity and factors associated with teacher' responsiveness and professional commitment. The sample consisted of 1,129 teachers in centre-based child-care programs and public preschools in the US. It was found that teachers' psychological load (depression, stress and emotional exhaustion) was associated with teachers' negative reactions to children and teachers' professional commitment after controlling for a wide range of teacher/classroom characteristics.
- Lopez *et al.* (2021) aimed to explore the mediator role of study engagement in the association between self and other focussed emotion regulation abilities and occupational commitment in a sample of pre-service teachers. The sample comprised 249 participants. Results showed that the relationship between self-focused emotion regulation skills may facilitate occupational commitment among beginning teachers through desirable states that facilitate energy and reduce the likelihood of fatigue work. The processes relying on

their ability to manage others' emotions could eventually lead them to feel more engaged and committed to teaching.

- Stamouli and Gerbeth (2021) investigated the relevance of job satisfaction and emotional competence for commitment in a sample of 96 healthcare professionals belonging to the catchment area of five clinics in Bavaria, Germany. The aim was to examine the moderating role of emotional competence on the relationship between job satisfaction and commitment. High emotional competence was found to have a direct link with high commitment.

The Review

The review indicated that a positive and significant relationship was found out between emotional competence and professional commitment (Veisi and Alizadeh, 2012; Sharma, 2016). Teachers' psychological load (depression, stress and emotional exhaustion) was found to be negatively related to teachers' professional commitment and teachers' emotion regulation and problem-focused coping strategies were positively related to their professional commitment (Buettner *et al.*, 2016; Lopez *et al.*, 2021). Healthcare professionals with high emotional competence were found to deal more effectively with dissatisfaction at workplace, without compromising with their commitment (Stamouli and Gerbeth, 2021).

Significance of the problem

In this era of competitiveness and uncertainty, a teacher is of foremost importance in shaping the attitudes, behaviour and overall personality of his students. The need of the day is to have professionally committed teachers who contribute towards the upliftment of education directly or indirectly. They are the ones who are passionate to bring about positive and productive changes in the lives of their students by virtue of their dynamic beliefs and vigorous actions. A teacher who is committed as well as emotionally competent is an asset to the educational system. He is armoured with the essential skills and qualities which help him perform his role effectively by establishing cordial student-teacher relationship in accordance with societal norms and professional ethics. Such a teacher will be able to produce students with not only academic excellence but emotional competencies, too. A professionally committed and emotionally stable teacher is a boon to the very cause of education; who will be able to play a diversified role of a communicator, leader, role model, collaborator, facilitator, risk taker and a visionary in this new era of information technology, economic globalization, knowledge explosion and societal demands.

Although, there were a few studies available related to the variables under study, and a limited ones showing the combination of two variables, namely professional commitment with emotional competence. Hence, the investigator decided to take up these variables along with the following demographic variables i.e. gender and varying lengths of teaching experience of teachers. The present study will provide help in understanding the importance of Professional Commitment of teachers in relation to their Emotional competence, for better performance in an organization and also for enhancing the quality of school education.

Operational definition

- **Emotional competence:** Emotional competence is the efficiency that an individual acquires to deal with emotional situations effectively. The different dimensions of emotional competence are adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to cope with emotional problems and encouragement of positive emotions.
- **Professional Commitment:** Professional commitment of teachers is the pledge or promise or role obligation of teachers' measurable behaviour pattern according to certain rules, norms and code of ethics of the teaching profession concerning

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the relationship of professional commitment with emotional competence of

senior secondary school teachers with respect to gender and varying lengths of teaching experience.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers.
2. There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of male senior secondary school teachers.
3. There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of female senior secondary school teachers.
4. There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers having less than 10 years of teaching experience.
5. There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers having more than 10 years of teaching experience.

Sample of the Study

A sample is a group which is selected from a larger group of population for the purpose of examination. Sample plays an important role since generalization about population is made from findings based on the sample, which will have validity of results depending upon the characteristics of the sample itself. Due to the factors of expense, time and accessibility it is not possible or practical to obtain measures from a population. The population, from which the sample was selected for the present study, was secondary school teachers from the 23 districts of Punjab, out of which 3 districts were selected in such a way that the knowledge gained was the representation of the total population.

Stratified randomization technique of sampling was used to select the schools in the present study. As it was not possible to cover the entire school population of the state of Punjab, the sample was drawn from three districts i.e. Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar, randomly.

The justification for taking these three was-

- One district was taken each from Malwa, Doaba and Majha respectively.
- All the three districts were at par with each other with respect to their educational facilities, infrastructure, development and standard of school education.

Further, schools (urban/rural) were selected randomly from all the three districts. In order to ensure wider applicability of the findings, the total sample of 600 senior secondary teachers was taken, with 300 male and 300 female teachers. The teachers (male and female) were classified according to the length of their teaching experience i.e. less than 10 years and more than 10 years. Teachers who were engaged in teaching senior secondary classes became the subjects of the study.

Tools Used

1. Emotional Competence Scale by Sharma and Bhardwaj (1998).
2. Professional Commitment Scale for teachers by Kaur and Kaur (2011).

Statistical Techniques used for Data Analysis

Coefficient of correlation was calculated to find out the relationship of professional commitment of teachers with their emotional competence.

Correlational Analysis

To find out the relationship of professional commitment with emotional competence; Pearson's Product Moment correlational technique was employed on the scores of professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers across gender and length of teaching experience. The values of 'r' are given in Table 1.1 and

the pictorial form is shown in fig. 1.1:

Table 1.1: Showing Coefficient of Correlation between Professional commitment and Emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers

Group	Variables	Variable	N	r
Senior secondary school teachers		Commitment to the Learner	600	0.37**
		Commitment to Society		0.38**
		Commitment to the Profession		0.40**
		Commitment to Attain Excellence		0.46**
		Commitment to Basic Values		0.44**
		Overall Professional Commitment		0.49**
Male Teachers		Commitment to the Learner	351	0.35**
		Commitment to Society		0.37**
		Commitment to the Profession		0.43**
		Commitment to Attain Excellence		0.47**
		Commitment to Basic Values		0.44**
		Overall Professional Commitment		0.51**
Female Teachers	Professional Commitment and Emotional Competence	Commitment to the Learner	249	0.41**
		Commitment to Society		0.46**
		Commitment to the Profession		0.36**
		Commitment to Attain Excellence		0.46**
		Commitment to Basic Values		0.44**
		Overall Professional Commitment		0.48**
Teachers with <10 year teaching experience		Commitment to the Learner	253	0.39**
		Commitment to Society		0.42**
		Commitment to the Profession		0.45**
		Commitment to Attain Excellence		0.46**
		Commitment to Basic Values		0.43**
		Overall Professional Commitment		0.50**
Teachers with >10 year teaching experience		Commitment to the Learner	347	0.34**
		Commitment to Society		0.34**
		Commitment to the Profession		0.36**
		Commitment to Attain Excellence		0.47**
		Commitment to Basic Values		0.43**
		Overall Professional Commitment		0.52**

**Significant at 0.01 level.

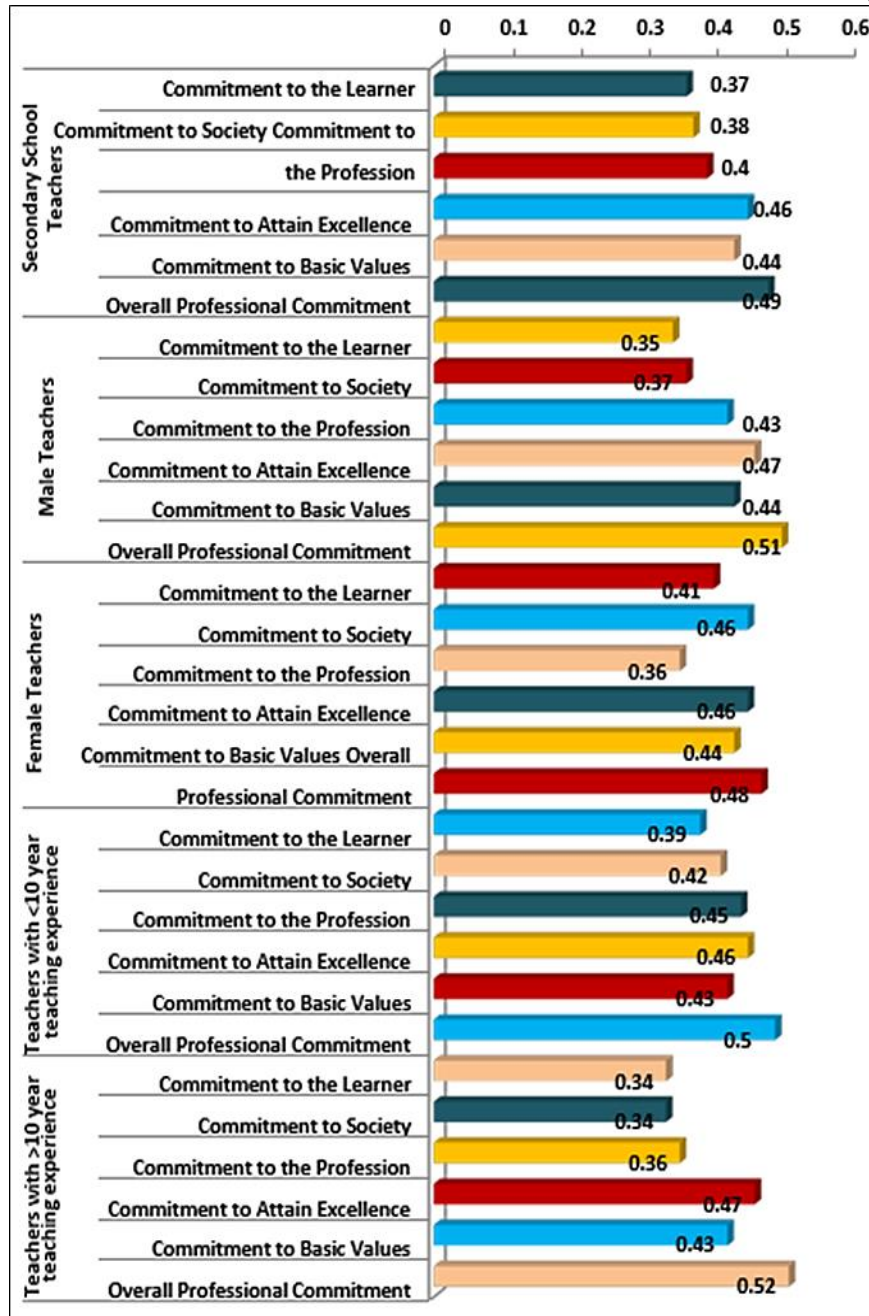


Fig 1.1: Coefficient of Correlation between Professional commitment and Emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers

Table 1.1 and Fig. 1.1 show the coefficient of correlation between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers.

The coefficients of correlation between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of total sample of senior secondary school teachers were found as 0.37, 0.38, 0.40, 0.46, 0.44 and 0.49 respectively, all of which were positive and significant at 0.01 level of confidence. This shows that a significant positive relationship exists between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers. Therefore hypothesis 1 stating, “There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers” stands rejected.

The coefficients of correlation between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of total sample of male senior secondary school teachers were found as 0.35, 0.37, 0.43, 0.47, 0.44 and 0.51

respectively, all of which were positive and significant at 0.01 level of confidence. This shows that a significant positive relationship exists between professional commitment and emotional competence of male senior secondary school teachers. Therefore hypothesis 2 stating, “There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of male senior secondary school teachers” stands rejected.

The coefficients of correlation between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of total sample of female senior secondary school teachers were found as 0.41, 0.46, 0.36, 0.46, 0.44 and 0.48 respectively, all of which were positive and significant at 0.01 level of confidence. This shows that a significant positive relationship exists between professional commitment and emotional competence of female senior secondary school teachers. Therefore hypothesis 3 stating, “There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of female senior secondary school teachers” stands rejected.

The coefficients of correlation between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of total sample of senior secondary school teachers having less than 10 years of teaching experience were found as 0.39, 0.42, 0.45, 0.46, 0.43 and 0.50 respectively, all of which were positive and significant at 0.01 level of confidence. This shows that a significant positive relationship exists between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers having less than 10 years of teaching experience. Therefore hypothesis 4 stating, “There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers having less than 10 years of teaching experience” stands rejected.

The coefficients of correlation between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of total sample of senior secondary school teachers having more than 10 years of teaching experience were found as 0.34, 0.34, 0.36, 0.47, 0.43 and 0.52 respectively, all of which were positive and significant at 0.01 level of confidence. This shows that a significant positive relationship exists between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers having more than 10 years of teaching experience. Therefore hypothesis 5 stating, “There does not exist a significant relationship between professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers having more than 10 years of teaching experience” stands rejected.

Conclusion and Discussion of the result

A significant positive relationship exists between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values dimensions of professional commitment and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers irrespective of their gender (male and female) and length of job experience (having less than and more than 10 years of job experience). The result of the study revealed that a significant positive relationship exists between commitment to the learner, commitment to society, commitment to the profession, commitment to attain excellence, commitment to basic values dimensions of professional commitment and overall professional commitment and emotional competence of senior secondary school teachers irrespective of their gender (male and female) and length of teaching experience (having less than and more than 10 years of teaching experience). It implies that the senior secondary school teachers who are more emotionally competent deem to have higher professional commitment whereas the senior secondary school teachers who are less emotionally competent deem to have lower professional commitment. The similar finding was revealed by studies conducted by Veisi and Alizadeh, 2012; Sharma, 2016; Stamouli and Gerbeth, 2021. It may be due to the reason that the teachers that are emotionally

capable are more likely to recognize the emotional needs of the students and parents; and are thus more likely to communicate with them honestly and deeply making them more committed to their profession.

Delimitations of the study

The present study was confined to the following:

1. The study was conducted in Punjab state only.
2. The study was conducted in only three district of Punjab-Ludhiana, Amritsar, Jalandhar.
3. 600 senior secondary teachers were taken up for the study.
4. The teachers were classified on the basis of the length of their teaching experience i.e. less than 10 years and more than 10 years.

Educational Implications of the Study

The following educational implications are recommended in the light of the study's findings:

1. In order to enhance the efficiency of the teachers, all the stakeholders should take measures to improve the working conditions so that teachers feel stress free and emotionally empowered and competent.
2. Motivational workshops on yoga, meditation and the like should be a regular feature of Institutions which would help them understand, control and regulate their emotions.
3. The results of the study would be helpful for the policy makers and administrators towards the importance of teachers becoming emotionally competent and committed to their profession. Incentives and awards for such teachers would boost up their morale, further.

Suggestions for Further Research

There is always a scope for more research in a particular field. The present study also leaves ample scope to carry on further meaningful research. Here are some suggestions for future research projects.

1. The present study focused solely on teachers from Punjab. A similar study may be carried on other states on a national or even international level.
2. A comparative study can be undertaken among senior secondary teachers of different streams of study.
3. A comparative study might be undertaken on college teachers and university teachers or it can also be conducted on teachers belonging to diverse professions like law, medicine, nursing, engineering, etc.
4. The purpose of the present study was to find out the relationship of emotional competence with professional commitment. Research can be conducted on various other variables to see their relationship with professional commitment.

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