

## PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

**SHEERAZ AYOUB KUCHY**

Research Scholar  
Department of Education  
Annamalai University  
Email: [sheerazayoub11@gmail.com](mailto:sheerazayoub11@gmail.com)

**Dr. (Mrs.). T.THILAGAVATHY**

Associate Professor  
Department of Education  
Annamalai University

### ABSTRACT

The aim of the present investigation was to study the professional ethics of primary school teachers and to compare professional ethics of teachers with respect to their qualification and teaching experience. Normative survey was employed as a method of investigation. The present study was conducted on a representative sample of 100 primary school teachers selected from 15 primary schools located in district Kulgam of Jammu and Kashmir State, India. Stratified random sampling technique was employed for the selection of the sample. Data was collected from respondents by using professional ethics scale constructed by D.Mohana (2009). The collected data were subjected to statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation, one way ANOVA and post hoc analysis (in case of significant F- ratio). The main findings of the study indicated that primary school teachers exhibit average level of professional ethics and significant differences exists in their professional ethics with respect to their qualification and teaching experience. More qualified and more experienced primary school teachers were found to have more professional ethics as compared to less qualified and less experienced teachers.

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**Key Words:** Ethics, Ethics in teaching, Professional ethics.

### INTRODUCTION

Professional ethics refers to basic values and conceptions of good practice that constitutes guidelines for professional conduct. Like all other important professions, teaching profession should have its own code of professional ethics which is one of the basic requirements and characteristics. A code of ethics when properly enforced enhances the power, prestige and status of the teacher in particular and of the teaching profession as a whole. In fact, a code of ethics is a charter of rights and duties for the protection of professional autonomy and freedom. The constructive progressing this direction can develop a positive attitude of teachers as well as of the society towards the teaching profession. By following professional ethics, the teacher's conduct and behaviour becomes respectable and acceptable. Professional ethics provides framework of principles to guide teachers 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. Professional ethics provide direction and guidance to the teachers in enhancing the dignity of their professional work. Some important functions of professional ethics are given below:

- To assure clients that professional service will be rendered with reasonably high standards and acceptable moral conduct. This confidence enables professionals to exercise relatively independent judgments in decisions affecting clients.
- To assure the public at large that the professional is serving the public interest and should continue to enjoy public trust, support and confidence.
- To provide a code of uniform rules and behavioural standards by means of which professional conduct can be properly regulated. Such codes help to maintain the integrity of the professions.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- ❖ To study the level of professional ethics among primary school teachers for the entire sample and various sub samples.
- ❖ To find if there is any significant difference in the professional ethics of primary schoolteachers with respect to their qualification.
- ❖ To find if there is any significant difference in the professional ethics of primary schoolteachers with respect to their teaching experience.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The investigator employed normative survey method in order to study the professional ethics of primary school teachers. Normative survey method studies, describes and interprets what exists at present. The present study was conducted on a representative sample of 100 primary school teachers selected from 15 primary schools located in district Kulgam of Jammu and Kashmir State, India. Stratified random sampling technique was employed for the selection of the sample. Data was collected from respondents by using professional ethics scale constructed by D.Mohana (2009). . The scale consisted of 50 statements, each statement followed by five alternatives viz., 4= strongly agree, 3= agree, 2= undecided, 1= disagree and 0= strongly disagree.. Therefore one can get a minimum score of 0 and a maximum score of 250 on this scale. The score below 105 indicates low level of professional ethics and the scores 106-164 and above 164 indicates average and high level of professional ethics respectively. The statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation, one way ANOVA were employed for the analysis of the collected data.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

### Hypothesis – 1

The level of professional ethics among primary school teachers is average.

In order to find the overall level of professional ethics among primary school teachers, mean and standard deviation of the scores have been computed and is given in table 1.

**Table 1**  
**TABLE SHOWING MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS SCORES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

Variable	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Level
Professional Ethics	100	133.26	12.21	Average

It is clear from Table 1 that the mean score is 133.21 which falls in the score range of 106-164 (average level). Therefore the hypothesis 1 is accepted and it is concluded that primary school teachers possess average level of professional ethics.

### Hypothesis – 2

There is no significant difference in the professional ethics of primary schoolteachers with respect to their qualification.

For testing the above stated hypothesis, the investigator employed one way ANOVA and the results are given in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE AMONG GRADUATE, POST GRADUATE AND M.PHIL OR PH.D PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RESPECT OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Dependent variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Professional Ethics	Between Groups	3557.658	2	1778.829	21.338*	.000
	Within Groups	8086.182	97	83.363		
	Total	11643.840	99			

<b>Multiple Comparisons</b>					
LSD					
Dependent variable	(I) Qualification	(J) Qualification	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
<b>Professional Ethics</b>	Graduate	Post Graduate	-6.32071*	2.20040	.005
		M.Phil or Ph.D	-14.88074*	2.28369	.000
	Post Graduate	Graduate	6.32071*	2.20040	.005
		M.Phil or Ph.D	-8.56004*	2.23713	.000
	M.Phil or Ph.D	Graduate	14.88074*	2.28369	.000
		Post Graduate	8.56004*	2.23713	.000
* . The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.					

From Table 2 it is clear that the obtained F value (21.338) for professional ethics of primary school teachers with respect to the variable qualification is significant at 0.01 level of significance for the degrees of freedom 2 and 97 ( $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis-2 is rejected at 1% level of significance and it is concluded that there is significant difference in the professional ethics among primary school teachers with respect to their qualification.

In order to find out the exact differences among graduate, post graduate and M.Phil or Ph.D qualified primary school teachers with respect to their professional ethics, multiple comparisons were made with LSD method and its results are given in above table. From the details given in Table-2, it can be noted that the difference between graduate and post graduate primary school teachers with respect to professional ethics was found to be significant at 1 percent level. Similarly, the differences between graduate and M.Phil or Ph.D and between post graduate and M.Phil or Ph.D qualified primary school teachers with respect to professional ethics were found to be significant at 1 percent level.

Based on the value of mean differences given in table-2, it can be inferred that M.Phil or Ph.D primary school teachers have more professional ethics followed by post graduate and graduate primary school teachers respectively.

### Hypothesis - 3

There is no significant difference in the professional ethics of primary school teachers with respect to their teaching experience.

For testing the above stated hypothesis, the investigator employed one way ANOVA and the results are given in Table - 3.

**Table - 3**  
**ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE AMONG BELOW 6 YEARS, 6-16 YEARS AND ABOVE 16 YEARS EXPERIENCED PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RESPECT OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Dependent variable		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Professional Ethics	Between Groups	986.594	2	493.297	4.490*	.014
	Within Groups	10657.246	97	109.869		
	Total	11643.840	99			

Multiple Comparisons					
LSD					
Dependent variable	(I) Teaching Experience	(J) Teaching Experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Professional Ethics	Below 6 years	6-16 years	-3.71667	2.59117	.155
		Above 16 Years	-7.84902*	2.62559	.004
	6-16 Years	Below 6 Years	3.71667	2.59117	.155
		Above 16 Years	-4.13235	2.50666	.102
	Above 16 Years	Below 6 Years	7.84902*	2.62559	.004
		6-16 Years	4.13235	2.50666	.102

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

From Table 2 it is clear that the obtained F value (4.490) for professional ethics of primary school teachers with respect to the variable teaching experience is significant at 0.05 level of significance for the degrees of freedom 2 and 97 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis-3 is rejected at 1% level of significance

and it is concluded that there is significant difference in the professional ethics among primary school teachers with respect to their teaching experience.

In order to find out the exact differences among below 6 years, 6-16 years and above 16 years experienced primary school teachers with respect to their professional ethics, multiple comparisons were made with LSD method and its results are given in above table. From the details given in Table-3, it can be noted that the difference between below 6 years and above 16 years experienced primary school teachers with respect to professional ethics was found to be significant at 5 percent level. But the differences between below 6 years and 6-16 years experienced and between 6-16 years and above 16 years experienced primary school teachers with respect to professional ethics were found to be insignificant at 5 percent level.

Based on the value of mean differences given in table-3, it can be inferred that above 16 years experienced primary school teachers have more professional ethics followed by 6-16 years experienced and below 6 experienced primary school teachers respectively.

#### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- The level of professional ethics among primary school teachers is average.
- There is significant difference in professional ethics among primary school teachers with respect to their qualification. M.Phil or Ph.D qualified primary school teachers are found to have more professional ethics followed by post graduate and graduate qualified teachers respectively. It means qualification has a significant influence on the professional ethics of teachers.
- There is significant difference in professional among primary school teachers with respect to their teaching experience. Above 16 years experienced primary school teachers have more professional ethics followed by 6-16 experienced and below 6 years experienced primary school teachers.

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

The level of professional ethics among primary school teachers was found to be average. Therefore concerned authorities are recommended to conduct workshops and orientation programmes on importance of inculcation of work ethics like commitment, self- discipline, loyalty, work values etc for primary school teachers particularly for inexperienced and less qualified primary school teachers.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The investigator attempted to study the level of professional ethics among primary school teachers and the influence of factors like teaching experience and qualification of teachers on their professional ethics. Primary school teachers were found to possess average level of professional ethics and their

qualification and teaching experience was found to have significant impact on their professional ethics. So the teachers and the concerned authorities should make every possible effort to raise and maintain high level of professional ethics among teachers by prescribing a code of ethics for teachers and should ensure that this code is followed by teachers.

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