

Professional Self-Esteem of Secondary School Teachers

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Abstract

Professional self-esteem is a very important concept that should be highlighted to the professionals because it makes them understand their worthiness, evaluate their expertise and adjust themselves accordingly with their ambience. As far as the teachers are concerned, it becomes more imperative for them to persistently evaluate their competencies in order to perform their model role in their best. This continuous perusal of their professional abilities is the essence of professional self-esteem as it would, undoubtedly, enable them to explore those qualities which are complementary to the vitality of their role as a teacher. The perception of professional self-esteem is very important as it advocates the very essence of professionalism amongst the professionals. This research is mainly focused on professional self-esteem of teachers at secondary level. The major objective of this research is to compare the level of professional self-esteem of teachers (science/arts, rural/urban, male/female) at secondary level. Aricak (1999) Professional Self-Esteem Scale was used for this research study. Simple random sampling technique was used to get sample from the population. Data was collected from secondary school teachers of Sahiwal District, who were teaching different subjects of Science and Arts.

The response rate was 81% as 203 out of 250 questionnaires were returned. Independent Sample t-test was applied. There is no significant difference in the level of professional self-esteem of Arts and Science teachers and rural and urban teachers, whereas a significant difference is found in the professional self-esteem level of male and female. Female secondary school teachers have high professional self-esteem than male teachers.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Professional self-esteem

1. Introduction

Professional self-esteem is a multifaceted concept of a professional's life as it touches his / her personality attributes and their authenticity for his / her idea of professionalism. This necessitates the mentation, sentiments and psychomotor dimensions of human personality. Teachers as human beings live in the society where their sense of self-worth evolves from the frequent interactions with others. This sense of self-worth positively or negatively, affects their whole life and definitely their professional life too. This paper is an attempt to underline professional self-esteem of the teachers in order to inculcate a healthy sense of professionalism amongst the teachers.

1.1 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is actually the evaluation of an individual's self. There are some common elements of this concept which are found in literature as competence, respect, worthiness, identity, belongingness, security etc. All these are the constituent elements of the concept. The very conception of self-esteem is defined in different dimensions by different experts. In literature the manifestation of self-esteem is frequently used. This concept is initiated by James in 1890. Then several attempts are made to explore its depth. The most famous work amongst different experts is of Maslow (1943) who includes self-esteem in his hierarchy of needs. He places self-esteem on second

last and considers it as the basic human need that gives rise to the idea of self-actualization. Whereas White (1963) has called it a psychodynamic process that has developmental attributes in it. According to him self-esteem tends towards competency and an individual's ability to cope with anxiety. Different other psychologists and generalists have explained the same concept with varied dimensions. Rosenberg (1965) presents sociological view of self-esteem. The same concept is found in Higgins (1983) views with the description of an actual and ought self. Likewise, Coopersmith (1967) gives a behavioural perspective to self-esteem. Similar theme is found in Bedner's (1989) perceptions. Epstein (1985) presents cognitive approach to self-esteem. While Mruk (1994) presents a phenomenological perspective of self-esteem. Self-esteem is developed by the interaction of competency and worthiness.

1.2 Professional Self- Esteem

Professional self-esteem is the appraisal of one's capabilities that are suitable for a particular profession. In simple words, it is to get to know the real essence of a profession, its pre-requisites along and the competencies of a professional. Connel (1991) defines the concept as "Occupational self-esteem is an organized view of one's worth in the work role based on an evaluation of the self in relation to perceptions held about: (1) competency in work-related interpersonal relationships and (2) ability to achieve own role expectations". This definition explains that professional/occupational self-esteem is achieved through professional competency and fulfillment of professional demands and expectations. While Tinsely (2002) describes the same concept as "Professional self-esteem is an individual's self-esteem specifically in regard to his or her professional position and acceptance in that professional role". This definition also highlights the sense of importance of professional position and professional acceptance of individuals that makes them professionals in true sense.

In cahoots, professional self-esteem is that cognitive, emotional and behavioral state that makes an individual a true professional in real sense. Its need is ardently felt in teaching profession as teachers are directly interacting with the whole personality of their students. This interaction needs devotion, sense of ownership, and commitments which are directly linked not only with their mind but also with their enthusiastic attachment with their profession. Professional self-esteem is eminent for teachers so that they may be proceeding in their profession with confidence, attachment, and without any fear of failure. For all this, apposite attitude is required because if they are fall a victim to negative approach either towards themselves or towards their profession and they feel that they are somehow not good enough or unworthy of being fully loved and accepted, a little satisfaction would be remained there even in the ground where they can excel. It is pertinent to be aware of the professional self-esteem of secondary school teachers. This study aimed to know the professional self-esteem of secondary school teachers. Following were the objectives of the study.

- 1). To explore and compare the level of professional self-esteem of arts and science secondary school teachers.
- 2). To compare the level of professional self-esteem of male and female teachers.
- 3). To find out the difference between professional self-esteem levels of urban and rural teachers.

Keeping in view the financial constraints and available time the study was delimited to the survey of male and female secondary school teachers in the Government High Schools of Sahiwal District Punjab, Pakistan.

2. Methodology of the Study

This is an explorative and comparative study that was conducted to know the professional self-esteem of secondary school teachers. In Pakistan secondary education in the public sector have the same structure and curriculum throughout the country. All the male and female, urban and rural secondary school teachers of Sahiwal were taken as population on convenient basis for the present study. There are 146 high schools (47 female and 99 male high schools) in district Sahiwal. A sample of 25 high schools was taken randomly. A sample of 250 secondary school teachers (ten from each school) teaching 9th to 10th grades were taken randomly from selected schools on availability basis.

Lists of male and female high schools were obtained from District Education Officer Sahiwal. A written permission was sought from concerned Executive District Officer (Education) Sahiwal to conduct the survey. After getting permission the questionnaires were mailed to all the 250 secondary school teachers. After two reminders 203 questionnaires were obtained from the respondents. Hence the response rate remained 81%.

Aricak (1999) Professional Self-Esteem Scale along with self developed data sheet was used in this research study. The scale has 30 items in likert five point scales. Five point likert type weightage for positive items is as "I strongly agree" 5, "I agree" 4, "undecided" 3, "I disagree" 2, "I strongly disagree" 1, and for negative items the weightage is in reverse order. The scale was translated into Urdu language which is national language of Pakistan, to make it easier for the respondents. The translation of questionnaire was discussed with two experts

from within the population having master degree qualification to make it valid for the respondents. Then the reliability of the scale was checked through pilot testing on 50 respondents which were not included in the sample. The reliability of the translated version was .92, which shows the scale a highly reliable instrument.

Data was analyzed through software 'Statistical Package for Social Sciences' (SPSS). Mean scores, standard deviation were calculated and t-test was applied for the comparison of professional self-esteem level of arts and science, male and female, urban and rural teachers.

3. Discussion/Conclusion

This research study is mainly focused on professional self-esteem of secondary school teachers that is an attempt to generate a new sense in every individual who is connected with any profession especially with teaching profession. There are several researches on self-esteem in the field of education but no sufficient work is found to investigate the level of professional self-esteem of secondary school teachers in Pakistan. This research study provides a new dimension and orientation to the system. The findings of this research are unique in our environment.

This research study shows that there is no significant difference in the level of professional self-esteem of Arts and Science teachers. The Arts and Science teachers are working in the same environment with almost the same facilities and treatments, so they have almost the same level of professional self-esteem.

The research findings also show that there is significant difference in the level of professional self-esteem of overall male and female teachers. These male and female teachers are those who are teaching different subjects of Science and Arts. Female have higher level of professional self-esteem than male contradicts with (Major, Barr, Zubek, & Bebey 1999) who found Male have higher self-esteem than female. This is surely due to the change ambience. The possible reason for this higher professional self-esteem of female may be their strong professional commitment in our circumstances.

The findings of this research studies show that there is no significant difference in the level of professional self-esteem of rural and urban secondary school teachers. Rural arts teachers and urban arts teachers have the same level of professional self-esteem similarly the same results are found in rural science teachers and urban science teachers. Though there are great differences in the environment and facilities of both areas but the research findings show the similar results that both areas teachers have the same level of professional self-esteem.

Professional self-esteem is eminent for teachers so that they may be proceeding in their profession with confidence, attachment and devotion and without any fear of failure.

It is recommended that professional self-esteem of male secondary school teachers may be enhanced.

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Table 1. Professional self-esteem of overall Arts and Science teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Arts teachers	141	145.32	21.047	1.349	201	.179
Science teachers	62	149.37	16.209			

Table 1 shows that $t(201) = 1.349$, $p = .176$ is not significant. The professional self esteem level of arts teachers with mean ($M = 145.32$, $SD = 21.047$) and science teachers with mean ($M = 149.37$, $SD = 16.209$). The mean value of science teachers is more than arts teachers which shows that the professional self esteem level of science teachers is slightly greater than arts teachers. Statistically there is no significant difference in the level of professional self-esteem of arts and science teachers at secondary level.

Table 2. Professional self-esteem of overall male and female teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Male teachers	103	143.57	19.140	2.206	201	.029
Female teachers	100	149.63	19.980			

Table 2 shows that $t(201) = 2.206$, $p = .029$ is significant. The professional self-esteem level of male teachers with mean ($M = 143.57$, $SD = 19.14$) is less than female teachers with mean ($M = 149.63$, $SD = 19.98$). It shows that there is significant difference in the level of professional self-esteem of male and female secondary school teachers. It is obvious that professional self esteem of female teachers were more than male teachers.

Table 3. Professional self-esteem of overall rural and urban teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Rural teachers	129	144.97	20.525	1.518	201	.131
Urban teachers	74	149.32	18.106			

Table 3 shows that $t(201) = 1.518$, $p = .131$ is not significant. The professional self-esteem level of urban teachers with mean ($M = 149.32$, $SD = 18.106$) and rural teachers with mean ($M = 144.97$, $SD = 20.52$). Results show that no significant difference was found in the level of professional self-esteem of rural and urban teachers. It can be inferred that urban and rural teachers are working in the same service structure, institutional environment and administrative setup.

Table 4. Professional self-esteem of rural and urban arts teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Urban arts teachers	93	143.38	21.486	1.533	139	.128
Rural arts teachers	48	149.08	19.846			

Table 4 shows that $t(139) = 1.533, p = .128$ is not significant. The professional self-esteem level of urban arts teachers with mean ($M = 143.38, SD = 21.486$) and rural teachers with mean ($M = 149.08, SD = 19.846$). Results show that no significant difference was found in the level of professional self-esteem of rural and urban arts teachers. It can be inferred that urban and rural teachers are working in the same service structure, institutional environment and administrative setup.

Table 5. Professional self-esteem of urban and rural science teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Urban Science Teachers	36	149.08	17.408	.163	60	.871
Rural Science Teachers	26	149.77	14.714			

Table 5 reflects that $t(60) = .163, p = .871$ is not significant. The professional self-esteem level of urban science teachers with mean ($M = 149.08, SD = 17.408$) and rural science teachers with mean ($M = 149.77, SD = 14.714$) is same. Results show that no significant difference was found in the level of professional self-esteem of rural and urban science teachers. It can be inferred that urban and rural teachers are working in the same service structure, institutional environment and administrative setup.

Table 6. Professional self-esteem of male and female arts teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Male arts teachers	71	140.93	20.405	2.542	139	.012
Female arts teachers	70	149.77	20.890			

Table 6 reflects that $t(139) = 2.542, p = .012$ is significant. The professional self-esteem level of male arts teachers with mean ($M = 140.93, SD = 20.405$) is less than female arts teachers with mean ($M = 149.77, SD = 20.890$). Results show that a significant difference was found in the level of professional self-esteem of male and female arts teachers. Female arts teachers' self esteem was higher than male arts teachers.

Table 7. Professional self-esteem of male and female science teachers

Variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig.
Male Science Teachers	32	149.44	14.615	.033	60	.974
Female Science Teachers	30	149.30	18.008			

Table 7 reflects that $t(60) = .033, p = .974$ is not significant. The professional self-esteem level of male science teachers with mean ($M = 149.44, SD = 14.615$) and female science teachers with mean ($M = 149.30, SD = 18.008$) is same. Results show that no significant difference was found in the level of professional self-esteem of male and female science teachers. It can be inferred that male and female science teachers are working in the same service structure, institutional environment and administrative setup.