



GENDER AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS IN SHAPING TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL COMMITMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW STUDY

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Abstract

The professional commitment of teachers has emerged as a pivotal factor influencing educational outcomes in schools. This comprehensive review explores how gender and types of school (public, private, urban, rural, aided, and unaided) relate to the professional commitment of teachers. Analyzing peer-reviewed research with an emphasis on Indian studies and supported by international literature, this paper critically examines the patterns, determinants, and consequences of professional commitment among teachers. The findings suggest notable gender-based variations in commitment, with female teachers often exhibiting higher emotional and normative commitment, while male teachers report stronger continuance commitment. Additionally, school type significantly affects professional dedication—urban and private school teachers show higher commitment levels due to better infrastructure, recognition, and professional development opportunities. This review draws from 15 key studies and concludes that teacher commitment is multi-dimensional and context-sensitive. The study also emphasizes the role of organizational support, leadership style, and gender-sensitive policies in fostering higher commitment among teachers.

Keywords : Professional Commitment, Gender Differences, School Type, Indian Education, Teacher Motivation

Introduction

Teachers serve as the backbone of any educational system, and their professional commitment is central to ensuring quality education, student achievement, and institutional integrity. Commitment, in this context, refers to a teacher's emotional attachment, sense of obligation, and sustained effort toward teaching and institutional goals. The question of whether this commitment varies based on gender and type of school has intrigued educational researchers for decades, and it has gained renewed importance amid recent educational reforms and pandemic-induced disruptions.

Gender plays a complex role in shaping professional values, emotional labor, and perceptions of job roles. While female teachers are often seen as more nurturing and emotionally invested, male teachers may demonstrate different professional orientations rooted in social expectations and administrative structures. Moreover, the nature of the



school—whether it is public or private, urban or rural—has a profound impact on job satisfaction, autonomy, workload, and professional support systems.

Given the rapid transformation in India's school ecosystem—marked by the New Education Policy (2020), digitization, and increased private sector involvement—this paper seeks to compile and synthesize recent studies that illuminate the interplay between gender, school type, and teacher commitment.

Review of Related Literature

Pradhan & Jena (2021) focused on psychological empowerment and its effects on the professional commitment of schoolteachers in Odisha. Results showed that female teachers exhibited higher levels of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and long-term organizational commitment, particularly in well-funded schools. The researchers concluded that psychological empowerment enhances affective and normative commitment more significantly in women than men.

Das & Tiwari (2021) conducted in Madhya Pradesh, this research analyzed gender equity and its influence on teacher motivation and commitment. Female teachers were more professionally loyal when working under inclusive leadership and equitable policies. The study emphasized that participatory decision-making and recognition play a key role in sustaining teacher engagement, especially for women.

Sen & Rajput (2021) investigated job satisfaction and its connection to professional commitment among teachers in government-aided girls' schools. Findings indicated the highest levels of affective commitment were seen among teachers in female-only institutions. Supportive environments, shared gender identity, and a mission-driven culture contributed to stronger teacher loyalty.

Kumar & Singh (2022) examined government schoolteachers' professional commitment through a gendered lens. Women teachers in rural areas reported greater emotional and moral commitment, often rooted in community bonding and their perceived role as nurturers. Men showed more instrumental commitment linked to financial needs.

Sharma & Bhattacharya (2022) analyzing teachers in Kendriya Vidyalayas, this study reported overall balanced commitment across genders. However, women educators showed greater concern for student welfare and moral aspects of the job. The research concluded that while gender may not influence commitment levels universally, it does shape the **dimensions** of commitment.

Ali & Farzana (2022) focussed on Islamic schools in Uttar Pradesh, the study found that cultural support and institutional encouragement led to a stronger sense of obligation among female teachers. Long-term service and community-based teaching were tied to normative and affective commitment, reinforcing the influence of religious and cultural ethos on women's professional identity.



Natarajan & Joseph (2022) explored how burnout influenced professional commitment among teachers in Mumbai's urban schools. Male educators were more prone to burnout due to administrative duties, while women coped better through peer support and time management. The study linked emotional support networks with sustained commitment among female teachers.

Subhrajyoti (2023) reviewed how teacher educators in West Bengal adapted to curriculum reforms. Women educators showed higher pedagogical commitment and adaptability. Men leaned more toward career progression roles. The findings revealed gender-specific professional goals influencing commitment levels.

Rodriguez (2023) explored post-pandemic hybrid teaching and its effects on commitment in urban schools. Women teachers demonstrated more professional resilience and were quicker to adapt to digital tools. Their emotional investment in student learning translated into stronger affective and normative commitment during the recovery phase.

Devi (2023) focused on how digital literacy impacts female teachers' commitment in private schools. Women who received ICT training reported enhanced professional confidence and stronger institutional commitment. Recognition from administrators played a crucial role in strengthening engagement, especially in unaided schools.

Pandey & Mishra (2024) reviewed 22 studies across Indian states and confirmed a consistent trend—female teachers showed higher affective commitment, while male teachers leaned toward continuance commitment. The study highlighted infrastructure and institutional climate as major factors mediating gendered professional engagement.

Jayashree, Poornima & Amudhan (2024) focussed on women teachers in CBSE schools in Karnataka, the study found strong levels of moral and emotional commitment. Female educators associated their role with student outcomes and personal values. Structured student success frameworks and peer mentoring enhanced their professional dedication.

Kocherla (2024) examined gender inclusion and sensitivity in B.Ed. colleges in Andhra Pradesh. Female educators were shown to be more committed to inclusive teaching practices and curriculum reforms. The research concluded that gender-sensitive environments promote higher levels of emotional and moral professional attachment.

Chattopadhyay, Parvin & Koner (2025) assessed the effectiveness and commitment of teachers across different localities and streams in West Bengal. Rural women teachers showed higher normative commitment due to community loyalty. Meanwhile, urban male teachers displayed continuance commitment, largely influenced by financial dependency on the profession.

Kaur (2025) conducted in Punjab, this research highlighted that female teachers in urban private schools had higher emotional and institutional commitment. The study attributed



this to better infrastructure, student-centric practices, and performance-based rewards. Male teachers expressed professional engagement but were more focused on promotions and salary.

After go through review of literature, a clear pattern emerges: gender and school type significantly influence the nature and level of professional commitment among teachers. Female educators consistently exhibit stronger affective and normative commitment—particularly in inclusive, student-focused environments like private or aided schools. Male teachers are more aligned with continuance commitment, often motivated by career stability or financial needs. School type also matters: teachers in urban and private settings typically show higher engagement due to access to better infrastructure, professional recognition, and supportive leadership. These insights underline the importance of gender-sensitive policies and institutional support in shaping teacher commitment across India.

Significance of the Study

The professional commitment of teachers is a cornerstone of educational effectiveness. In a rapidly transforming educational landscape—especially within the Indian context—understanding the dynamics of teacher commitment has become increasingly vital. This study gains significance as it addresses an area that directly affects teacher motivation, student outcomes, institutional development, and overall educational equity. In particular, the interplay between gender and type of school (government, private, aided, unaided, rural, urban) offers critical insights into how structural and sociocultural variables shape teacher engagement.

For policymakers, this review offers evidence-based direction for framing inclusive and equitable educational policies. Understanding the differing levels of commitment across gender and institutional types can lead to the creation of more responsive recruitment, training, and retention strategies. For example, if female teachers in rural schools demonstrate high affective commitment but face burnout due to lack of infrastructure, targeted support—such as mentorship programs or flexible policies—can significantly enhance both retention and performance.

For teacher educators, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating emotional resilience, gender sensitivity, and institutional dynamics into pre-service and in-service teacher training curricula. By equipping future teachers with the ability to navigate different school environments and recognize their own commitment profiles, educators can foster a more prepared and dedicated teaching workforce.

For school administrators, this study highlights the practical relevance of leadership styles, school culture, and professional development opportunities. Creating a workplace that values teachers' emotional labor, provides recognition, and addresses gendered challenges can lead to a more committed and motivated staff.



In the Indian context, where gender roles are often rigid and schools are deeply stratified by funding and geography, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on educational reform and social justice. It calls for a nuanced, data-driven approach to human resource planning in education, where diversity in commitment is recognized, respected, and strategically supported.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the concept and dimensions of professional commitment among school teachers.
2. To examine gender-based differences in teacher commitment.
3. To analyze the influence of school type (government/private, rural/urban) on professional commitment.
4. To synthesize recent empirical findings (2020–2025) from Indian and global literature.
5. To recommend practices that can strengthen teacher commitment across demographics.

Methodology

This is a qualitative review-based study using secondary data. Sources include peer-reviewed journals, dissertations, and reports published. The review adopted inclusion criteria based on relevance, empirical rigor, and geographical diversity, with a preference for Indian studies. Online databases such as Frontiers, Springer, and university repositories were utilized. Each study was categorized and analyzed thematically with reference to gender and school type.

Findings and Implications

The analysis of literature reveals several critical findings concerning the professional commitment of teachers in relation to gender and school type. A prominent and recurring theme is the clear gender-based variation in commitment levels and dimensions. Female teachers consistently demonstrated higher levels of affective and normative commitment, indicating a deeper emotional attachment to the profession and a stronger sense of obligation toward students and institutional values. In contrast, male teachers more frequently expressed continuance commitment, where motivation was often influenced by financial necessity, job security, or career status, rather than intrinsic satisfaction or moral alignment.

Another significant finding relates to the type and location of school. Teachers working in urban and private schools generally exhibited higher levels of professional commitment compared to their counterparts in rural or government institutions. This disparity is largely attributed to better access to teaching resources, infrastructure, professional development opportunities, performance-based incentives, and

administrative support. Such enabling environments not only promote teacher satisfaction but also enhance retention and long-term engagement with institutional goals.

The review also highlights the pivotal role of workplace support systems in shaping commitment, particularly for women educators. Schools that adopted gender-sensitive policies, offered flexibility, and actively promoted inclusive work cultures were more successful in fostering higher levels of professional dedication among female staff. These findings align with broader research that underscores the impact of supportive organizational culture on job satisfaction and employee loyalty.

The post-COVID era brought additional layers of insight. Female teachers, in many cases, adapted more quickly and effectively to remote teaching platforms and digital tools, demonstrating remarkable resilience and adaptability. This technological responsiveness, often driven by a commitment to uninterrupted student learning, further validated their emotional investment in the teaching profession.

Cultural context also plays a defining role. In the Indian socio-cultural landscape, gender roles and societal expectations significantly influence women's professional trajectories. While restrictive norms may limit women's mobility and leadership opportunities, they simultaneously deepen their identification with nurturing roles—thus reinforcing emotional engagement with teaching.

The implications of these findings are profound. There is a pressing need for gender-responsive human resource policies that recognize the unique challenges and strengths of teachers across gender lines. Equal and inclusive access to professional development programs, especially for women in under-resourced schools, must be institutionalized. Enhancing support structures in rural and government schools, such as mentoring programs, counseling services, and infrastructure development, can significantly bridge the commitment gap. Lastly, leadership training for school administrators should emphasize equity, emotional intelligence, and inclusive school culture to foster an environment that sustains long-term teacher motivation and excellence.

Discussion of Results

The findings from the reviewed literature illustrate a multifaceted and interlinked relationship between gender, school type, and professional commitment among teachers in the Indian context. The analysis highlights that gender differences are not just statistical but deeply embedded in socio-cultural, institutional, and psychological structures. Across multiple studies, female teachers consistently exhibited stronger affective and normative commitment—demonstrating deep emotional engagement with teaching and a sense of moral obligation toward students and institutional goals (Pradhan & Jena, 2021; Pandey & Mishra, 2024). This emotional dedication was particularly evident in studies conducted in Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Karnataka, where female teachers in both government and private institutions expressed satisfaction and loyalty



when supported by inclusive leadership (Das & Tiwari, 2021; Jayashree, Poornima, & Amudhan, 2024).

On the other hand, male teachers more frequently reported continuance commitment, suggesting a relationship grounded more in job security and economic need than intrinsic satisfaction (Kumar & Singh, 2022; Chattopadhyay, Parvin, & Koner, 2025). These findings are crucial in understanding how economic pressures and traditional gender roles may differently shape men's and women's professional motivations. For instance, in urban regions and aided institutions, men's commitment was often linked to financial responsibilities and career progression, while women were more motivated by student outcomes and interpersonal dynamics (Sharma & Bhattacharya, 2022; Subhrajyoti, 2023).

A critical dimension emerging from the review is the influence of school type and locality on teacher commitment. Teachers in urban and private schools consistently showed higher levels of professional engagement due to better access to infrastructure, leadership support, and professional development opportunities (Kaur, 2025; Devi, 2023). These schools typically offer structured performance incentives, digital resources, and recognition mechanisms that reinforce teacher motivation. For instance, Devi (2023) noted that ICT training and acknowledgment by management led to enhanced commitment among women in unaided schools in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, Kaur (2025) found that private school teachers in Punjab had a higher emotional stake in institutional success, particularly among female educators.

Conversely, rural and government school teachers often face challenges such as limited infrastructure, heavy administrative burdens, and inadequate training opportunities. Yet, interestingly, some studies indicated that rural female teachers exhibit high moral and community-driven commitment, rooted in cultural and social bonds (Sen & Rajput, 2021; Kumar & Singh, 2022). This suggests that commitment is not solely determined by resource availability but also by relational and cultural contexts.

The impact of COVID-19 and post-pandemic recovery further amplified gendered differences in adaptability and resilience. Women educators adapted more efficiently to hybrid learning platforms and displayed professional flexibility (Rodriguez, 2023). Their ability to maintain student engagement during crisis conditions speaks to a deep-seated affective connection to the profession. This aligns with the findings of Natarajan & Joseph (2022), who highlighted that female teachers managed pandemic-induced stress better through emotional coping strategies and peer support systems.

Lastly, institutional culture and leadership emerged as pivotal factors in shaping teacher commitment. Schools with gender-sensitive environments and inclusive practices cultivated stronger affective bonds among female educators (Kocherla, 2024). Studies in Islamic schools and B.Ed. colleges emphasized that cultural affirmation and inclusive



values are instrumental in fostering long-term teacher loyalty (Ali & Farzana, 2022; Kocherla, 2024). Furthermore, the role of mentoring, emotional support networks, and participatory decision-making featured prominently in enhancing women's professional engagement across all types of schools.

In conclusion, the discussion reaffirms that gender and school type are not isolated determinants but interdependent variables deeply influencing teachers' emotional, moral, and pragmatic connection to their profession. Recognizing and addressing these variations is essential for crafting policies and practices that promote equitable, inclusive, and effective educational environments in India.

Conclusion

Professional commitment among teachers is a vital yet under-addressed area in educational reform. This review establishes that both gender and institutional context play significant roles in shaping commitment levels. It emphasizes that improving school conditions, offering emotional and administrative support, and implementing gender-responsive practices can substantially boost teacher motivation and retention. In the Indian context, these changes are urgent and necessary to achieve equitable and quality education for all.

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