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## Demystifying the professional ethics of teachers working in government and private educational institutions of Kashmir division

**Iftikar Ahmad Pall and Dr. Harishchandra Singh**

### Abstract

This study explores and compares the professional ethics of teachers in government and private schools. A sample of 400 teachers, equally divided between the two sectors, was assessed using various dimensions of professional ethics, including honesty and sincerity, transparency and confidentiality, respect towards students and society, and high-quality teaching. The findings indicate that the majority of teachers in both sectors exhibit moderate levels of professional ethics, with marginal differences observed in mean scores across the dimensions. However, none of these differences were statistically significant, suggesting a remarkable similarity in the ethical standards maintained by teachers across both sectors. The study attributes these similarities to standardized training, shared regulatory frameworks, and professional development opportunities available to teachers in both government and private institutions. The results emphasize the need for uniform policy interventions to further promote and maintain high ethical standards across the educational spectrum. This study contributes valuable insights into the ethical practices of educators and underscores the importance of fostering professionalism to ensure quality education and holistic student development. Future research directions include examining institutional and socio-cultural factors that may influence professional ethics in education.

**Keywords:** Professional ethics, government school teachers, private school teachers

### Introduction

Professional ethics form the cornerstone of teaching, shaping the integrity and moral responsibility of educators in both government and private educational institutions. As a profession entrusted with nurturing young minds, teaching demands adherence to ethical principles that foster trust, fairness, and a commitment to students' holistic development. These ethical principles serve as a guiding framework for teachers to maintain professional conduct, promote equity, and contribute to the educational growth of society. The comparison of professional ethics between government and private school teachers has been a topic of interest in educational research due to the distinctive operational environments of these institutions. Government schools, often funded and managed by public resources, operate under strict regulatory frameworks and focus on accessibility, inclusivity, and equity in education. On the other hand, private schools, driven by fee-based models, typically emphasize academic excellence, infrastructure, and personalized learning experiences, sometimes catering to a more economically privileged segment of society. While the structural differences between government and private schools are apparent, the question arises whether these variations significantly impact the professional ethics of teachers. Ethical conduct in teaching encompasses a wide range of practices, including fair treatment of students, maintaining confidentiality, honesty in assessments, impartiality, and fostering a safe and conducive learning environment. Teachers, regardless of the institution they serve, are expected to uphold these principles to ensure the integrity of their profession. The debate around whether there exists a significant difference in professional ethics between government and private school teachers is multifaceted. Factors such as administrative support, work culture, job security, salary structures, and societal expectations may influence teachers' adherence to ethical standards in these two settings. For instance, government school teachers may experience challenges related to resource constraints or bureaucratic

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hurdles, while private school teachers may face pressures related to performance metrics or parental demands. Understanding whether professional ethics differ significantly between these groups of educators is crucial for policymakers, educational leaders, and stakeholders. It can provide insights into the effectiveness of teacher training programs, the need for ethical guidelines, and the importance of fostering a supportive work environment across educational settings. Professional ethics are fundamental to the teaching profession, as they ensure the integrity and moral accountability of educators in fostering students' academic, emotional, and social growth. Teachers, regardless of whether they serve in government or private institutions, are expected to adhere to ethical standards that promote equity, fairness, and respect for all learners. However, the differences in operational structures, resource availability, administrative support, and socio-cultural expectations between government and private schools may lead to variations in how professional ethics are practiced and perceived (Sharma & Gupta, 2020) [17]. Government school teachers often operate under stringent policies and regulations, ensuring standardized practices. They may face challenges such as limited resources, large class sizes, and bureaucratic hurdles, which could influence their ability to consistently uphold ethical standards (Kumar, 2019) [9]. In contrast, private school teachers may benefit from better resources and smaller class sizes but may also encounter pressures to meet performance benchmarks or parental expectations, which could create ethical dilemmas (Rao & Mehta, 2021) [13]. These contrasting environments underscore the importance of investigating whether significant differences in professional ethics exist between these two groups. Addressing this gap is essential for multiple reasons. First, understanding ethical variations can guide the development of tailored teacher training programs that address institution-specific challenges. Second, insights from such studies can help policymakers create uniform ethical guidelines that promote consistency across educational settings (Singh *et al.*, 2022) [18]. Third, fostering a culture of professional ethics is critical for ensuring student welfare, enhancing teacher satisfaction, and building trust in the educational system (Verma & Choudhary, 2018) [20]. This study is particularly relevant in the context of increasing public and governmental scrutiny of educational practices. As education systems worldwide strive for inclusivity and quality, understanding the ethical dimensions of teaching can contribute to policy reforms and capacity-building initiatives aimed at bridging gaps between government and private institutions. Therefore, this research is not only timely but also imperative for strengthening the ethical foundation of the teaching profession.

**Statement of the researcher problem:** The statement of the research problem is as under  
Demystifying the professional ethics of teachers working in government and private educational institutions of Kashmir division

**Objectives:** To evaluate the level of professional ethics among teachers in government and private schools.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference in professional ethics between government and private school teachers.

**Methodology and procedure:** This study has been carried with the help of descriptive research method.

**Sample:** A representative sample of 400 teachers has been selected for the purpose of examination.

**Sampling technique:** This research study has been carried with the help of the random sampling technique.

**Analysis of the data:** The data of this study has been analysed with the help of descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics.

**Analysis and interpretation of the results:** The analysis and interstation of the results re given as under:

**Table 1:** Showing the professional ethics of school teachers working in government and private schools. (N=200 each)

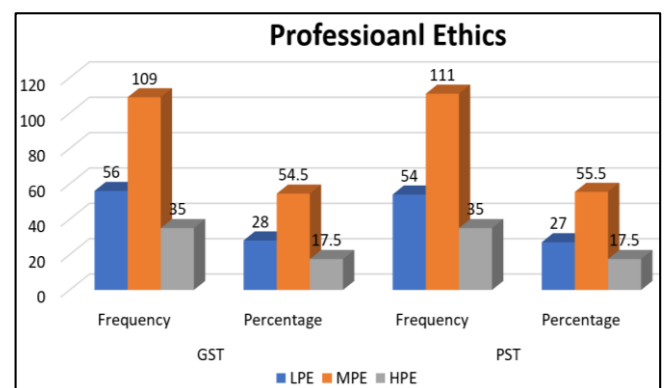
Level of Professional Ethics	GST		PST	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Low Professional Ethics (LPE)	56.00	28.00	54.00	27.00
Moderate Professional Ethics (MPE)	109	54.50	111	55.50
High Professional Ethics (HPE)	35.00	17.50	35.00	17.50
Total	200	100	200	100

Index:

- GST=Government school teachers
- PST= Private school teachers

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- LPE= Low professional ethics
- MPE= Moderate professional ethics
- HPE= High professional ethics



**Fig 1:** Showing the graphical representation of the professional ethics of school teachers working in government and private schools. (N=200 each)

This table provides a comparison of the professional ethics of school teachers working in government schools versus those working in private schools. The data is based on two separate samples, each consisting of 200 teachers, 100 from government schools and the other 100 from private schools. The professional ethics levels are categorized into Low Professional Ethics (LPE), Moderate Professional Ethics (MPE) and High Professional Ethics (HPE), with

frequencies and percentages provided for each category within both government and private schools. In terms of sample size, both government and private schools contributed equally, with 200 teachers each. Regarding low professional ethics (LPE), the data shows a slightly higher proportion of teachers in government schools, constituting 28% of the sample, compared to 27% in private schools. This implies a marginally elevated occurrence of low professional ethics among government school teachers. Moving to moderate professional ethics (MPE), both government and private schools demonstrate a majority of teachers falling into this category, with nearly identical percentages of 54.50% and 55.50% respectively. This suggests a consistent adherence to moderate professional standards across both sectors. In the realm of high professional ethics (HPE), the distribution remains uniform between government and private schools, with 17.50% of teachers in each sector exhibiting exemplary ethical behaviour. This parity underscores a comparable commitment to high ethical standards regardless of school type. The distribution of professional ethics among teachers in government and private schools is relatively similar. Both sectors have a majority of teachers categorized under moderate professional ethics, suggesting that a significant portion of teachers in both government and private schools adhere to acceptable professional standards. The percentages of teachers demonstrating low and high professional ethics are also comparable between government and private schools, indicating no significant disparity in ethical behaviour based on school type. Efforts to promote and maintain high ethical standards should be implemented uniformly across both government and private schools to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for students, regardless of the sector.

**Table 2:** Showing the mean significant difference between the government and private school teachers on the basis of their professional ethics. (N=200 each).

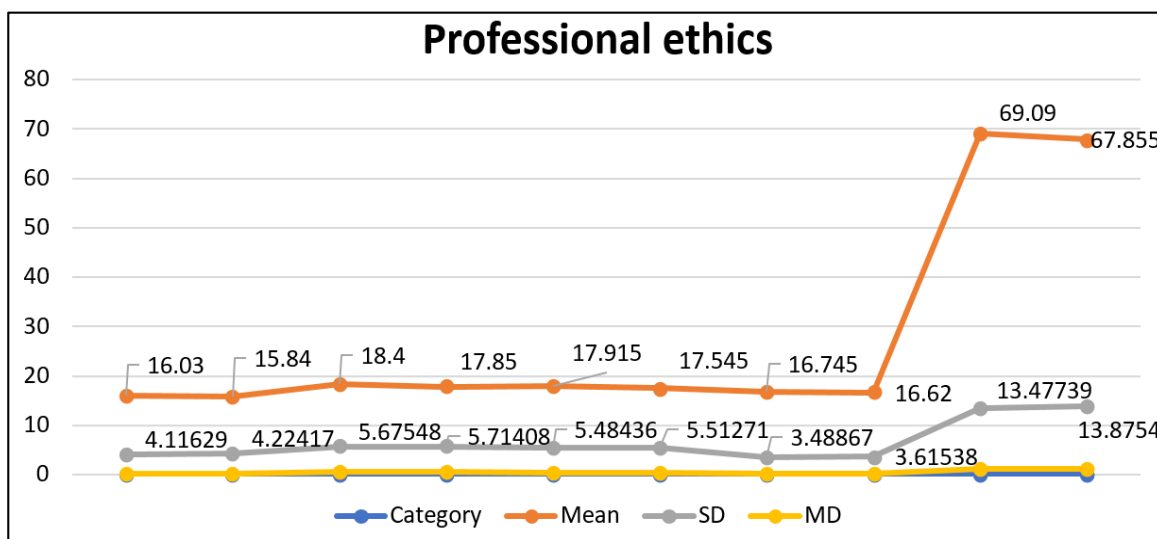
DoPE	Category	N	Mean	SD	MD	t-value
Dimension-I H&S	PST	200	16.0300	4.11629	.19000	.41706
	GST	200	15.8400	4.22417	.19000	
Dimension-II T&C	PST	200	18.4000	5.67548	.55000	.56948
	GST	200	17.8500	5.71408	.55000	
Dimension-III R&S	PST	200	17.9150	5.48436	.37000	.54985
	GST	200	17.5450	5.51271	.37000	
Dimension-IV HQT	PST	200	16.7450	3.48867	.12500	.35526
	GST	200	16.6200	3.61538	.12500	
CS	PST	200	69.0900	13.47739	1.23500	1.36778
	GST	200	67.8550	13.87540	1.23500	

Index:

- DoPE = Dimensions of professional ethics
- GST=Government school teachers
- PST= Private school teachers
- T&C= Transparency and confidentiality
- RTSS=Respect towards students and society
- HQT= High quality of teaching
- CS= Composite Score
- @= Not Significant at 0.1 level of confidence

Index:

- GST=Government school teachers
- PST= Private school teachers
- T&C= Transparency and confidentiality
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**Fig 2:** Showing the graphical representation of mean significant difference between the government and private school teachers on the basis of their professional ethics. (N=200 each).

This table presents the mean significant difference between government (GST) and private school teachers (PST) across various dimensions of professional ethics. The dimensions include honesty and sincerity (H&S), transparency and confidentiality (T&C), respect towards students and society (R&S), High-Quality Teaching (HQT) and overall Composite Score (CS). In examining the dimensions-I (honesty and sincerity H&S), professional ethics between government (GST) and private school teachers (PST),

several key insights emerge. Firstly, concerning honesty and sincerity (H&S), both groups demonstrate a comparable adherence to fundamental provision associated with their ethical behaviour. While private school teachers exhibit a slightly higher mean score of 16.03 compared to government school teachers M= 15.84, the marginal difference is not statistically significant (t=0.41706). This suggests a consistent commitment to health and safety practices among both government and private school

teachers. The attained  $t'$  value indicated that there is no significant difference between the two groups of dependents under discussion on their honesty and sincerity. Moving to the realm of next component transparency and confidentiality (T&C), private school teachers seem to perceive their contractual agreements slightly more positively than their government counterparts. With PST scoring slightly higher at 18.40 compared to government school teachers 17.85, the difference, although moderate, is not statistically significant ( $t = 0.56948$ ). This suggests an overall satisfaction with transparency and confidentiality across both groups, with private school teachers marginally more content. In terms of respect towards student and support (R&S), both government and private school teachers report similar levels of perceived support, with private school teachers scoring slightly higher (17.9150) than government school teachers (17.5450). Again, while the difference is moderate, it is not statistically significant ( $t = 0.54985$ ). This indicates a consistent perception of supportiveness among teachers from both sectors. When evaluating High-Quality Teaching (HQT), both groups seem to view their teaching quality similarly, with negligible differences in mean scores (PST: 16.7450, GST: 16.6200). The minimal variance is not statistically significant ( $t = 0.35526$ ), implying comparable perceptions of teaching quality among government and private school teachers. Lastly, examining the Composite Score (CS), encompassing various dimensions of professional ethics, private school teachers slightly higher mean score (69.0900) compared to government school teachers (67.8550) suggests a marginally more positive overall perception among private school teachers. In the same analysis it has been seen that the moderate difference is not statistically significant ( $t = 1.36778$ ), indicating an overall similarity in perceptions of professional ethics between government and private school teachers. To conclude, while there are slight variations in perceptions across different dimensions of professional ethics, the overall findings suggest a remarkable similarity in the ethical outlooks of government and private school teachers. These nuanced differences, while present, do not significantly impact the overarching perceptions of professional ethics within both educational sectors. The results may attribute to this fact that both government and private schools typically adhere to the same professional standards and regulations established by educational governing bodies. As such, teachers in both sectors are expected to uphold similar levels of professionalism and ethical conduct in their roles. Teachers in both government and private schools undergo similar training and certification processes to become educators. In addition to this the results may attribute to this fact that the standardized training fosters a common understanding of professional ethics and practices among teachers regardless of the sector they work in. In many regions, government and private schools follow a standardized curriculum and educational objectives set by educational authorities. This alignment ensures that teachers in both sectors are guided by the same educational principles and objectives, which may contribute to similar perceptions of professional ethics. Both government and private schools often provide professional development opportunities for their teachers to enhance their skills and knowledge. These opportunities may include workshops, seminars and training sessions focused on ethics and professionalism, fostering a shared understanding and

commitment to ethical standards among educators. The culture and environment within educational institutions play a significant role in shaping teachers' perceptions of professional ethics. Factors such as leadership styles, organizational values and peer interactions can influence how teachers perceive and prioritize ethical considerations in their practice. Meanwhile, the attained results suggesting minimal differences in perceptions of professional ethics between government and private school teachers are plausible and can be justified by considering the commonalities in their professional contexts, training and educational environments. Keeping the above discussion under consideration the status of the hypothesis which reads as that there is no significant difference between government and private school teachers on the basis professional ethics.

### Conclusion

The findings revealed a significant similarity in the professional ethics of teachers in both sectors, with the majority exhibiting moderate adherence to professional standards. Key dimensions, such as honesty and sincerity, transparency and confidentiality, respect towards students and society, high-quality teaching, and composite scores, showed marginal differences, none of which were statistically significant. These results suggest that teachers in government and private schools share a common ethical framework influenced by standardized training, curriculum guidelines, and professional development opportunities. The shared commitment to ethical conduct reflects the influence of uniform regulatory standards and cultural practices across educational institutions in the region. This study highlights the importance of maintaining and enhancing professional ethics uniformly across both sectors to ensure the holistic development of students and the credibility of the education system. The findings underscore the need for consistent policy interventions and professional training programs to further reinforce ethical practices among teachers. Future research could explore other influencing factors such as institutional policies, socio-economic contexts, and leadership styles to gain deeper insights into the dynamics of professional ethics in educational settings.

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