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# Professional Ethics Of Private And Government Secondary School Teachers Of Kashmir- A Comparative Study

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## Abstract

The research article's purpose was to examine the Professional Ethics of secondary school teachers of Kashmir. In this study, a descriptive-comparative survey research design via quantitative approach was utilised. 600 secondary school teachers (347 Private and 253 Government) were selected as sample. The sample was selected by using stratified proportionate random sampling technique from 2 districts of Kashmir viz. Baramulla (Rural) and Srinagar (Urban). For data collection, Professional Ethics Scale developed and standardized by Thoker and Mattoo (2017) was utilized. The data analysis was done by using descriptive statistics viz. percentage, mean, S.D., and inferential statistics viz. Independent Sample's t-test. The findings showed that 4.3% of Private secondary school teachers have low, 76.7% have moderate and 19% have high professional ethics, whereas, in case of Government secondary school teachers 15.8% have low, 62.1% have moderate and 22.1% have high level of Professional Ethics. A significant difference was found between Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics.

**Key Words:** Professional Ethics, Private, Government, Secondary school teachers.

## Introduction

Our society has established a set of rules and standards that must be followed by all of us in order for society to flourish and develop in a harmonious manner. These sets of standards and rules are known as ethics. Ethics, in general, can be described as the moral principles that govern or influences our lives and actions. It enables us to conduct ourselves in a manner that is appropriate and acceptable to others in society. Every occupation has its own set of rules and standards that all members must adhere to. These sets of principles and conducts that are specific to a certain job or occupation are referred as professional ethics. For proper functioning and smooth running of an organization, professional ethics is very essential.

Thus, “Professional ethics can be defined as a collection of ethical norms and principles that professional is required to adhere to while performing or practising their job. It is a professionally approved code of conduct for professional and personal behaviour. These ethical norms and principles are also known as code of ethics **(Sultana, 2014).**”

Professional ethics, in technical terms means knowing what is good and bad in one's profession and then practicing only what is good. “The code of professional ethics may be defined as a set of self-imposed professional ideals & principles necessary for the attainment of professional excellence & self-satisfaction **(Arora & Chopra, 2004).**”

“Professionalism refers to a collection of abilities and ideals that define the essence of humanism in the workplace. It is a status that is earned, maintained, and developed by people who adhere to the human principles and values that make it up. The term is closely related with excellence, duty, obligation, respect, altruism, compassion, accountability, integrity, empathy, and honor **(Vivanco & Delgado, 2015).**”

To ensure its integrity and dignity, the teaching profession, like all other professions, should adhere to its own “Code of Professional Ethics”. “**The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009**” imposes some arduous professional obligations which they must fulfill in the course of their work. Teacher’s “Code of Professional Ethics” offers a set of guidelines to assist teachers in fulfilling their duties to children, pupils, colleagues, parents and the community. To ensure ‘professionalism’ among teachers, a better understanding of the ethical norms that govern the teaching profession is required.

As a result, it is considered important for the teaching community to grow and embrace the Code of Professional Ethics. When effectively implemented, a Code of Professional Ethics increases particularly the prestige, authority and status, as well as the teaching profession as a whole. A charter of rights and responsibilities designed to promote professional independence and autonomy is known as Code of Professional Ethics. In the teaching profession, professional ethics refers to a set of specific behavioral standards. Members of any profession must have and uphold these standards in order to be respected and have self-esteem. A profession can only develop in prominence if its members appreciate themselves and their profession's contribution to society.

The job of a teacher is difficult unless high professional ethics is created. It fosters moral awareness, which aids a teacher in promoting academic integrity and excellence among students. Professional ethics serves as a guiding concept in the teacher's instructional behaviour. It establishes a moral commitment on the part of the teacher to uphold the profession's fundamental ideals. Professional ethics aids a teacher in upholding transparency and confidentiality in the educational system. Professional ethics fosters mutual respect and trust in the teaching and learning process, allowing student’s confidence-building strategies to be implemented in a positive manner, Every field thinks about creating and enforcing a Professional Code of Ethics and Conduct as a way to keep professional standards on track. Teachers are expected to demonstrate a high degree of professionalism,

integrity, responsibility, character, competence, honesty and respect in order to stand on their professional ideals, and such moral attributes are required for teachers.

A profession's ethical requirements must be congruent with and go beyond our common morality. The "code of ethics" outlines appropriate behaviour and encourages the use of high ethical standards. It establishes a framework for professional behaviour and obligations and serves as a baseline for member's self-evaluation. In every field, it serves as a sign of professional maturity. We may aspire for great school education if remedial measures are taken properly, which will help in developing a successful nation.

### **Significance/Rationale of the Study**

The current study is very important because secondary school teachers play such an important role in developing among students the teaching ethics and enhancing educational environment for them. It helps teachers remain firm on the most important teaching ideals, which should be ingrained in them. It proposes a "code of ethics" for teachers. Professional ethics is an endeavour to guide and direct teaching personnel's in the restoration of their dignity to ensure professional work. To maintain dignity and integrity, it is universally needed that teaching profession, like other professions should follow a code of professional ethics.

In the modern global village, scientific and technological advancements are seen to be unimaginatively developing. "People have become victims of materialistic ambitions and attitudes in this period of fast globalisation and industrialization, leading to a loss of core values. The similar movement may be seen in the teaching community. Recently, there has been an abrupt increase in the number of educational institutions in various Indian states which has undoubtedly resulted in a number of educational options in remote areas for all; however, it has also resulted in dilution of quality, infrastructure, human resources, and so on, as well as an absence of professional ethics and commitment (**Prakasha & Jayamma, 2011**)." With some terrible events recorded in many regions of India and particularly in Kashmir, the individual's, society's, student's and teaching personnel's character and conduct have reached an all-time low. This necessitates a review of professional ethics in Kashmir and the implementation of measures to ensure their observance. As a result of the foregoing observations, it is clear that professional ethics in the teaching profession is urgently needed. As a result, the current researcher has made efforts to explore the research problem "**Professional Ethics of Private and Government Secondary School Teachers of Kashmir –A Comparative Study**" while keeping this in mind.

### **Objectives**

1. To study Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir.

2. To compare Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir.

### **Hypothesis**

There is significant difference between Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir.

### **Review of Related Literature**

**Sheenam & Taneja (2021)** conducted study on “Professional ethics among school teachers in relation to job satisfaction.” The findings displayed a significant relationship between job satisfaction & professional ethics of female & male teachers of secondary schools. The relationship of job satisfaction & professional ethics in case of female secondary school teachers is slightly higher than males. **Bajar et al. (2020)** conducted a study on “Extent of professional ethics observance among secondary schools teachers: Private versus Public.” The goal of this investigation was to determine the level of professional ethics observance among public and private secondary school teachers. The findings indicate that private school teachers adhere to professional ethics more likely than public school teachers to their daily lives. Inferential statistical analyses further demonstrated that private school teachers were more likely to observe professional ethics compliance than public school teachers ( $U=833.0, p>0.0$ ). Despite this finding, the study contends that professional ethics is inextricably linked to teaching since teachers are required to adhere to higher ethical and moral standards. As a result, ethical standards must be met. **Najar & Pathak (2020)** conducted a study on “Professional ethics of physical education and general line teachers of Kashmir division.” The study’s findings showed that between general-line teachers and physical education teachers, no significant difference on professional ethics was found. Hence, the type of profession was reported not significant on respondent’s professional ethics level. Violations of professional ethics were reported to be arising occasionally. **Daniel & Sapo (2020)** conducted study on “Teacher’s perception of professional ethics and its impact on their professionalism.” The study’s purpose was to look at teachers’ perceptions of professional ethics and how they affect their professionalism. According to the findings, many teachers believe they are totally compliant with professional ethics, and adherence to professional ethics stems from their conscience. Furthermore, the findings showed that teachers who ascribe moral obligation as the root of their professional attitude have a significant impact on their professionalism. No significant gender difference in teacher’s professional ethical stance was found, according to an independent samples t-test. Likewise, no significant difference on professional ethical perceptions between secondary and elementary school teachers was discovered. **Ahmed & Ansari (2019)** conducted research on the “Level of professional ethics among secondary school teachers in Kolkata: A study.” Results revealed that professional ethics scores of male teachers are slightly higher than female teachers. Professional ethics scores of full-time teachers are slightly higher than part-

time teachers. Professional ethics scores of urban school teachers are slightly higher than rural and semi-urban school teachers. Professional ethics scores of government school teachers were slightly higher than scores of private aided and un-aided teachers. Professional ethics scores of school teachers greater than ten years of teaching experience is marginally better than teachers with less than ten years of teaching experience. **Borghain & Sahoo (2019)** conducted “A study on professional ethics of secondary school teachers of Assam.” The findings showed that majority of secondary school teachers i.e. 68% showed moderate professional ethics, 15% showed high professional ethics and 17% showed low professional ethics. The findings of the survey showed that male & female secondary school teachers have significantly different professional ethics. **Habib (2019)** conducted study on “Professional Ethics among college teachers in relation to social intelligence.” The research’s results showed that between professional ethics of female and male teachers, no significant difference was found. Further, a significant correlation exists between social intelligence and professional ethics of college teacher’s i.e. higher the social intelligence, higher will be professional ethics and vice- versa. **Thoker (2017)** conducted a survey on “Professional ethics of secondary school teachers with special reference to the type of school.” The study’s findings showed that type of school seemed to have a significant influence on the teacher’s professional ethics level. However, teachers of private secondary schools were discovered to have a higher professional ethics level than public school teachers. **Naaz (2017)** conducted “A comparative study of professional ethics perceived by student-teachers in government and private institutions.” The study focused on the comparison of perception regarding professional ethics understood by student- teachers in private & government institutions of Delhi and NCR region. The results demonstrated that student- teachers in government institutions have slightly better or higher perception than student- teachers in private institutions towards professional ethics. The findings therefore revealed that professional ethics as viewed by student-teachers in private & government institutions differ significantly. **Kumar (2015)** conducted a study on “An approach to professional ethics education for pre service teachers.” The study aimed to investigate professional ethics, its early habituation and propose a better case analysis as a viable method for delivering professional ethics training that is adapted to teaching practices. The findings of the study reveal unprofessional behavior among teachers because of lack of emphasis paid to ethics in teacher education programs. Findings showed that most respondents have a positive perception about teacher’s professional ethical practices. According to the findings of the study, teachers had a more positive view or perception about professional ethical procedures than students and community people. Gender differences in perceptions of professional ethics practices across all stakeholders (teachers, students and community people) were not reported. **Nejad et al. (2015)** conducted a study on “Teaching professional ethics components from the viewpoint of students; Qom University of Medical Sciences.” The study’s purpose was to explore how Qom University of Medical Science students perceive the characteristics of teaching professional ethics. The study’s findings discovered that from

the student's viewpoint the teaching professional ethics total mean score was found to be  $3.54 \pm 0.68$ . As compared to average level, mean difference was significant. As a result of the findings, students at Qom university of Medical Sciences regard professional ethics and its components in teachers favorably. **Salehnia & Ashraf (2015)** conducted study "On the relationship between Iranian EFL Teacher's commitment to professional ethics & their student's self-esteem." The study findings showed that EFL teacher's dedication or commitment to professional ethics is closely related to their student's self esteem. There is moderate and significant correlation between most professional ethical principles or standards and self-esteem of students. The higher the commitment of teachers on professional ethics, the higher is the student's self-esteem. **Dhinakaran & Sivakumar (2014)** carried out "A study on morality and professional ethics of high school teachers." The study's purpose was to determine the degree of morality & professional ethics in high school teachers in relation to types of management, years of experience & monthly income. The study's findings showed that a high level of morality and positive attitude towards professional ethics was found among high school teachers. The study's findings also revealed that an insignificant difference was found between management types, monthly income and years of experience in reference to professional ethics & morality of secondary school teachers. **Kumar & Kaur (2014)** conducted a study on "Professional ethics grow with teaching experience: A study of women teachers in higher educational institutions of Punjab." The study's purpose was to determine the degree of morality & professional ethics in high school teachers in relation to types of management, years of experience & monthly income. The study's findings revealed that among female teachers, there is a very low positive coefficient of correlation between teaching experience & professional ethics, indicating that ethics are learned at different ages & age promotes experience. In terms of professional ethics, female university teachers were found to be inconsistent. The findings further revealed a weak positive correlation between female university teachers teaching experience & professional ethics. This reveals that teaching experience has a minor positive impact on professional ethics of teachers. **Vera & Macedonia (2013)** carried out a study on "Students opinion about professional ethics relation of the teachers." The findings showed that while most teachers adhere to moral norms of conduct with their students, not all teachers do so.

## **Methodology**

- 1. Population & Sample:** The current study's population consists of all the teachers who work in various secondary schools in Kashmir's districts of Baramulla and Srinagar. As per the records available in 2021-2022, in the Chief Education Office, Baramulla and Srinagar, there are 518 secondary schools (285 Private and 233 Government) located in these districts, with teaching staff strength of 6052 teachers (2632 in Baramulla District and 3420 in Srinagar District). With regard to Private and

Government schools, district-wise, there are 161 Government and 96 Private schools in Baramulla District and 72 Government schools and 189 Private schools in Srinagar District.

A sample of 600 secondary school teachers was selected from two districts in Kashmir, viz., Baramulla and Srinagar. The sample was selected using the stratified proportionate random sampling technique.

2. **Design of the study:** Descriptive-comparative survey research design via quantitative approach was used in this study.
3. **Tools Used:** Professional Ethics Scale developed and standardized by Thoker and Mattoo (2017) was used to study the variable under investigation. The scale has 30 items with 4 dimensions.
4. **Statistical Treatment/ Data Analysis:** The data analysis was done by using descriptive statistics viz. percentage, mean, and S.D., and inferential statistics viz. Independent Sample's t-test.

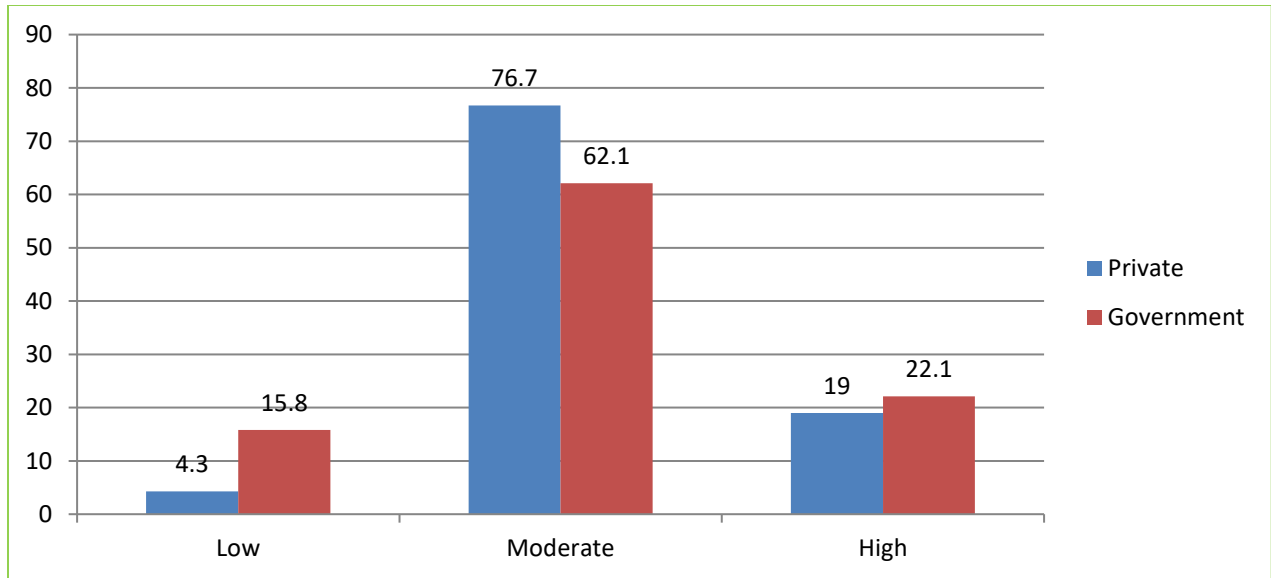
## Analysis and Interpretation

### I. Descriptive Analysis

The Objective No. 1 which reads as “To study the Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir”. To achieve this objective, data was analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics viz. percentage and the obtained results are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Showing the Professional Ethics Level of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir**

Level of Professional Ethics	Range of Raw Scores	Private secondary school teachers		Government secondary school teachers	
		Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Low	30-70	15	4.3	40	15.8
Moderate	71-111	266	76.7	157	62.1
High	112-150	66	19.0	56	22.1
Total		N=347	100.0	N=253	100.0



**Fig. 1: Professional Ethics Level of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir**

The Table 1 shows the Professional Ethics level of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir. From table 1, it is evident that out of 347 Private secondary school teachers; 15 i.e., 4.3% have low level of Professional Ethics, 266 (76.7%) have moderate level of Professional Ethics and 66 (19%) have high level of Professional ethics. While, in the case of Government secondary school teachers out of 253; 40 (15.8%) have low level of Professional Ethics, 157(62.1%) have moderate level of Professional Ethics and 56(22.1%) have high level of Professional Ethics. Hence, the Objective No. 3 which reads as “To study Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir” has been accomplished.

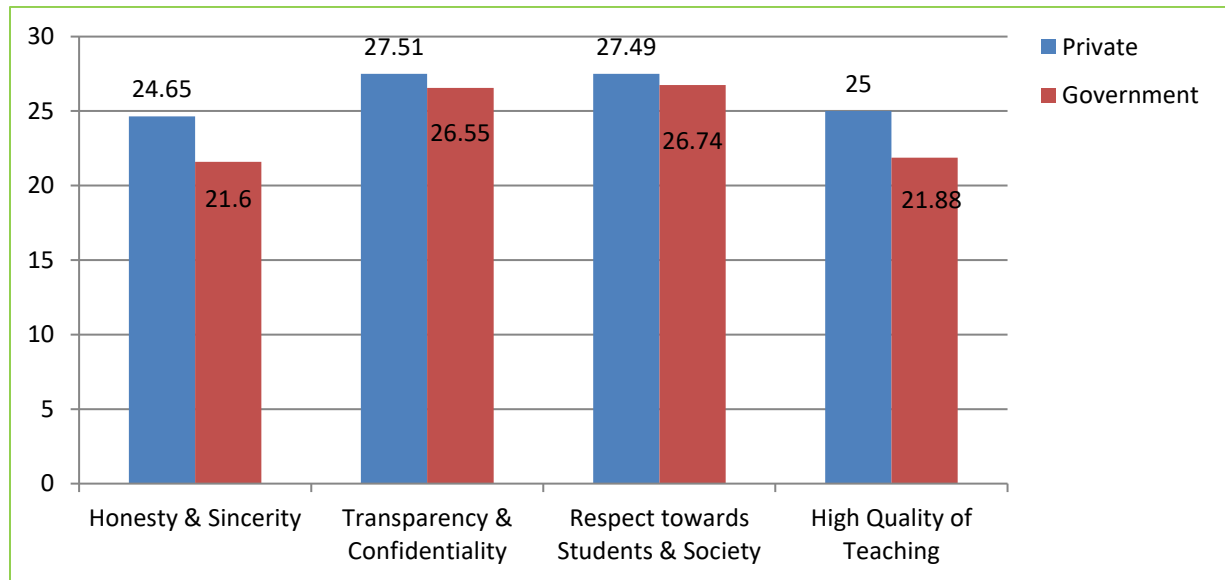
## II. Comparative Analysis

The Objective No. 2 which reads as “To compare Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir”. To achieve this objective, data was analyzed with the help of Independent Sample’s t-test and the findings are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 2: Showing the dimension-wise mean comparison between Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics**



Criterion Variable	Dimension	Independent Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Level of Significance
Professional Ethics	Honesty and Sincerity	Private	347	24.65	3.67	8.40	598	Significant at 0.01 Level
		Govt.	253	21.60	4.83			
	Transparency and Confidentiality	Private	347	27.51	3.95	2.61	598	Significant at 0.01 Level
		Govt.	253	26.55	4.77			
	Respect towards Students and Society	Private	347	27.49	4.03	1.83	598	Not Significant
		Govt.	253	26.74	5.54			
	High Quality of Teaching	Private	347	25.00	3.49	9.66	598	Significant at 0.01 Level
		Govt.	253	21.88	4.18			



**Fig.2: Dimension-wise mean comparison between Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics**

Table 2 shows the dimension-wise mean comparison between Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics. With respect to 1<sup>st</sup> dimension (Honesty and Sincerity), higher mean has been found in Private secondary school teachers

(M= 24.65) than Government secondary school teachers (M= 21.60). Further, the calculated t- value 8.40 is higher than critical t- value 2.58 at 0.01 level with df=598 which means that there is significant difference on “Honesty and Sincerity” dimension of Professional Ethics between Private and Government secondary school teachers.

With regard to 2<sup>nd</sup> dimension (Transparency and Confidentiality), from Table 2, it is evident that t- value is 2.61 which is significant at 0.01 level with df =598. The mean score of Private secondary school teachers (M= 27.51) is greater than Government secondary school teachers mean score (M=26.55) which depicts that mean scores of teachers of Private and Government secondary schools differ significantly on “Transparency and Confidentiality” dimension of Professional Ethics.

With regard to 3<sup>rd</sup> dimension (Respect towards Students and Society), from Table 3, it is evident that the t-value is 1.83 which is not significant at 0.05 or 0.01 level with df =598 which depicts that mean scores of Private and Government secondary schools teachers do not differ significantly on “Respect towards Students and Society” dimension of Professional Ethics. It reveals that both Private and Government secondary school teachers seem to appear almost equal on “Respect towards Students and Society” dimension of Professional Ethics.

With regard to last and 4<sup>th</sup> dimension (High Quality of Teaching) on Table 3, it is shown that Private secondary school teachers were found to have a greater mean (M = 25.00) than Government secondary school teachers (M = 21.88). The calculated t-value 9.66 is significant at 0.01 level. It means that on “High Quality of Teaching” dimension, the mean scores of Private and Government secondary school teachers differ significantly.

**Table 3: Showing the over-all mean comparison between Private and Government Secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics**

Criterion Variable	Independent Groups	N	Mean	S. D	t- value	df	Level of significance
Professional Ethics	Private	347	104.65	11.16	6.70	598	Significant at 0.01 level
	Government	253	96.78	16.05			



**Fig.3: Overall mean comparison between Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics**

Table 3 shows the overall comparison between Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir on Professional Ethics. From table 3, it is evident that the t-value is 6.70 which is higher than critical t-value 2.58 at 0.01 level with  $df = 598$ . It depicts that the mean scores of Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers differ significantly. Thus the alternate hypothesis that “There is significant difference between Professional Ethics of Private and Government secondary school teachers of Kashmir” stands accepted. Further the mean of Private secondary school teachers is 104.65 which is significantly higher than that of Government secondary school teachers whose mean of Professional Ethics is 96.78. Therefore, it may be said that teachers of Private secondary schools were found to be more professionally ethical than teachers of Government secondary schools.

### Major Findings

4.3% of Private secondary school teachers have low Professional Ethics, 76.7% have moderate Professional Ethics and 19% have high professional ethics, whereas, in case of Government secondary school teachers 15.8% have low Professional Ethics, 62.1% have moderate Professional Ethics and 22.1% have high level of Professional Ethics.

The mean scores of Professional Ethics of teachers between Private and Government secondary schools differ significantly.

### **Conclusions**

On the basis of findings of the study, it may be concluded that Private secondary schools teachers have better professional ethics than teachers in Government secondary schools. This is because of the reason that Private secondary school teachers seem to appear sincere, responsible, accountable and honest than teachers of Government secondary schools. They have a keen tendency in shaping the character and psychological makeup of their students and consider it as their prime duty. Also, Private secondary school teachers respect and obey higher authorities and realize the ethical principles of teaching. They may be successful in maintaining the confidentiality and transparency in their profession. Further, they seem to be more committed to high quality teaching than those in Government secondary schools, and they appear to have a strong conviction in the principles of self-direction and self-discipline. These educators appear to favour a positive approach in teaching.

### **Educational Implications**

1. "Code of Professional Ethics" for educators in all educational institutions should be implemented and particularly in Government secondary schools. Defaulters should be given disciplinary action if they violate the code of conduct or do not adhere to it.
2. Teachers should be commended for their dedication to their work. They should be recognized and awarded a merit certificate for upholding Professional Ethics. Others will be encouraged to follow them as a result of this.
3. Institutions must provide enrichment programs for secondary school teachers in order to support their professional development and excellence. Furthermore, such gatherings will provide them with a rare opportunity to internalize the proper codes of the profession.
4. Teacher-educators must choose activities and approaches with care that engage students in moral/ethical thought.

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