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## Psychological Capital and Professional Commitment among Teachers Working in Rural Areas

**Shilpa Shajil, Justine Joseph**

### Abstract

The study aims to analyze the psychological capital and professional commitment among rural teachers. The sampling frame of the study included 325 teachers (male= 62, female 263) from rural, semi urban and urban institutions. The scale used for the study is the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) developed by Fred Luthans, et al., (2007) and Professional Commitment developed and standardized by Ravinder Kaur et al., (2011). Samples were collected using questionnaire method with the self – prepared socio demographic details. Convenient sampling method is used to collect samples. The result of the study showed that there is a significant difference between male and female teachers in psychological capital, female teachers show high psychological capital. Professional commitment also shows significant difference based on locality, that is, professional commitment is low among rural teachers. The study showed the influence of socio demographic variables in psychological capital and professional commitment, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to enhance psychological capital and commitment among teachers, particularly in certain subgroups. The study contributes to the existing literature on teacher motivation and retention and offers valuable insights for educational policy makers and administrators in devising strategies to promote a positive and dedicated teaching workforce.

**Keywords:** psychological capital, professional commitment, teachers.

### Introduction

Socrates, the father of philosophy postulates that teaching is an instrument for modelling the future of every citizen (Mhire, 2006). Education is among the front pillars in building a nation as it is an engine to every other sector where teachers are found to be the backbone of education (Strauss, 2017) and it is an essential component of overall development a country (Alemayehu, 2013). Therefore, it can be said that teaching is supposed to be a respected profession for it has been the source of every other profession since old times. However, teaching as a profession suffers from high turnover due to low salary disrespect by administration and society, and students conduct (Gonzalez, Brown, & Slate, 2008) and workload, the school situation, salary and personal circumstances (Smithers & Robinson, 2003). Besides these factors, the location of schools, that is, urban or rural areas, has also been found to be related to job satisfaction (Demato, 2002).

In India, most of the areas are rural and remote villages. Even though there are many cities and towns, most of the international educational institutions are situated in rural areas of the country. High quality education is a vital instrument for overcoming obstacles and advancing economically and socially backward and isolated areas (Elysium Foundations, 2021). Residential schools and colleges are often placed in rural areas for several specific reasons. The peace and beauty of rural areas, its natural support, pollution less areas, etc. may contribute to the enhancement of intelligence and mental energy of the children. Improving education standards in rural areas can have a big impact on creation of quality in living standards of rural people. Rural areas provide a peaceful and serene atmosphere that is conducive to focused learning. The absence of urban distractions and noise can enhance students' concentration and academic performance.

Residential schools offer students a break from the hustle and bustle of urban life. The rural setting allows students to disconnect from the urban environment and experience a more natural and tranquil lifestyle. The isolation of rural areas can foster a strong sense of community and camaraderie among students. With limited external distractions, students often form close bonds with their peers and build lasting relationships. Rural locations often offer access to natural landscapes, green spaces, and outdoor activities. This connection with nature can have positive effects on students' mental and physical well-being. Living away from home in a rural residential setting encourages students to develop independence, self-reliance, and life skills. They learn to manage their daily routines, responsibilities, and decision-making. The challenges of rural living can contribute to character development, including resilience, adaptability, and problem-solving skills. Students learn to face and overcome challenges in a different environment. Residential schools often emphasize a holistic education approach that encompasses not only academics but also extracurricular activities, sports, arts, and life skills. Rural settings provide space for a diverse range of activities. The quieter and less crowded environment in rural areas allows educators to focus on the individual needs and growth of each student, fostering a more personalized and student-centered approach to education. Residential schools in rural areas can offer an escape from the intense academic competition and social pressures often associated with urban schools. This can lead to reduced stress and a more balanced student life. Rural areas often have more available space, allowing schools to have larger campuses with facilities such as sports fields, outdoor recreation areas, and specialized learning centres.

But another important factor to keep in mind that though institutions are located in rural areas, teachers and staffs are mostly appointed from urban or semi urban areas. Rural and urban teachers often face distinct challenges due to their unique work environments. Urban teachers typically work in more diverse and densely populated environments, facing issues such as overcrowded classrooms and higher prevalence of social economic disparities among students. Urban teachers may have a higher level of resilience and optimism to navigate these complexities (Tadesse, 2019). Income levels in urban areas can influence their perceptions of job security and overall financial stability, which in turn could affect their psychological capital components. Urban teachers might find job satisfaction in the diversity of experiences their environment offers even though income disparities may be apparent. Also, urban teachers show more professional commitment than rural teachers (Ravindra Kumar, 2014). But in rural areas, lower income levels could potentially impact the psychological capital by affecting their self- confidence in overcoming challenges (self – efficacy), hope and resilience. This may affect their teaching performance also.

Rural school teachers may have lower levels of abilities due to various factors; limited resources, isolation, teachers' shortages, limited professional growth, limited exposure, limited access to support services such as counselling or mentoring programs, etc. Educational opportunities and exposures might be limited for teachers having rural background. This may affect their

psychological capital which leads to less performance in job. This can be overcome by experience. Psychological capital is among experienced teachers (Tadesse, 2019). Another problem faced by rural teachers is lack of resources for teaching. Rural schools often have fewer resources compared to urban schools, including outdated teaching materials, inadequate facilities, and limited access to technology. This lack of resources can hinder a teacher's ability to provide high-quality education, leading to frustration and reduced commitment. According to Kothari Commission Report (1964-66) personal qualities, character, educational qualifications and professional competences of teachers ultimately lead towards success in all educational endeavours. This means that the success of educational pyramid rest on the commitment of teachers. Sometimes, rural institutions were located in remote areas with limited access to professional development opportunities and peer collaboration. This isolation can make teachers feel disconnected from the broader educational community, which can lessen hope and optimism in them. The isolation also impacts their motivation to improve and innovate in their teaching practices, leading to decrease in self - efficacy. The lack of access to workshops, training, and career advancement opportunities in rural areas can hinder professional growth of a teacher and increasing their psychological capital. This limited upward mobility may result in teachers feeling stagnant and less committed to their roles.

The rural areas may struggle with recruiting and retaining qualified teachers, leading to a higher workload for existing staff. This increased workload, coupled with the challenge of teaching multiple grades or subjects, can lead to burnout and diminished commitment. Burnout can negatively impact the psychological capital of teachers (Hazan -Liran, 2023). Rural areas often have higher rates of poverty and socio-economic challenges. Teachers may have to deal with issues such as students' lack of basic resources, health problems, and family difficulties. These additional challenges can contribute to stress and decreased professional commitment. In some cases, rural teachers may feel undervalued and underappreciated, both within the educational system and within their communities. The lack of recognition for their efforts can lead to a sense of disillusionment and reduced commitment to their profession. Commitment closely connect teacher to work performance (Rayo, et. al., 2022) and influence on students' achievement and attitude towards work. Reduction in commitment can affect student's ability to learn effectively (Altun, 2017).

Another important factor that affects psychological capital and professional commitment is gender. Psychological capital and its factors are shaped by a complex interplay of biological, societal, and cultural factors which are different for men and women. It is observed that psychological capital is more among female than male (Garg, 2014). From a young age, individuals are exposed to societal norms and expectations related to their gender roles. These expectations can influence the development of psychological traits. For instance, women may be socialized to be more empathetic and nurturing. On the other hand, men may be encouraged to exhibit confidence and self-assuredness. They concentrate more on work. But

women try to balance personal and work life, which need to face many obstacles. This enhances self – efficacy and resilience. Women, historically underrepresented in leadership positions, may face challenges that affect their psychological capital. Stereotypes and biases creates challenges for women in to prove themselves. However, overcoming these obstacles could foster even greater resilience and determination.

Cultural factors are another important aspect to consider. Cultural norms and expectations about gender can differ widely across societies. Society watch women as an all-rounder. In order to fulfill all the roles, women need to develop psychological capital qualities. In cultures that prioritize communal values and collaboration, women might exhibit higher levels of psychological capital due to their emphasis on interpersonal relationships.

Professional Commitment is also observed more among female teachers (Ravindra Kumar, 2022). Female teachers perceive teaching profession as the most suitable and comfortable wherein they work hard for their own professional growth and handle the professional responsibilities in effective manner. Their proactive behaviour, humility and modesty endear them to their profession which gives them satisfaction and mental peace. This result is in line with the research findings of Ranju Bala (2017) and Ambarish and Azkiya (2016). Sometimes, the job may give an identity and respect to women from family and society. This also can be a reason to show more professional commitment.

Psychological capital and professional commitment are interrelated. Though psychological capital and professional commitment are build up in minds of people, situations and environment can make change in it. Locality factors and gender can affect these two factors, resulting variations in efficiency and effectiveness of people. The study of psychological capital and professional commitment among Rural Teachers focuses on the effect of positive psychological capital and commitment among rural teachers. Overall, investigating psychological capital and professional commitment among rural teachers can provide valuable insights into teacher motivation, well-being, and performance, which are crucial factors in shaping the future of education.

### Objectives

- To study the psychological capital and professional commitment among male and female teachers.
- To study the psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers working in rural areas.
- To study the relationship between psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers.

### Hypotheses

- There will be a significant difference in psychological

capital and professional commitment among teachers on the basis of gender.

- There will be a significant difference in psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers on the basis of locality of the institution.
- There will be a significant relationship between psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers.

### Methods

#### Sample and Sampling

In this study, the researcher used convenient sampling method to select teachers (N=325) for the study from rural, semi urban and urban institutions. Teachers included both males (N=62) and females (N=263).

**Table 1:** Sample distribution based on gender and locality

Locality	Males	Females	Total
Urban	9	71	80
Semi Urban	26	88	114
Rural	27	104	131
Total	62	263	325

### Tools

Socio demographic Data Sheet: A self - prepared demographic data sheet is used to collect relevant socio demographic details.

The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ): The scale is developed by Fred Luthans, et al., (2007). The test contains 24 items that measure an individual's Psychological Capital. It covers four dimensions: self – efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience. A six-point Likert – type scale for rating agreement is used. The overall reliability of the instrument was calculated 0.72 of Cronbach alpha. In the pilot study, the reliability of the instrument was found to be 0.93 of Cronbach alpha, besides, the face validity was checked by measurement and evaluation expertise in Adigrat University.

Professional Commitment Scale: Teachers' Professional commitment scale prepared by Kaur et al., (2011) was a 45-item scale that measure professional commitment of school teachers under 5 dimensions viz; Commitment to Learner, Commitment to Society, Commitment to the Profession, Commitment to Achieve Excellence and Commitment to Basic Human Values. Each dimension possessing nine items. The scale comprised of 45 items. The responses to them were collected on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from (5-1). The reliability and validity of the scale is 0.90 and 0.66 respectively

### Results and Discussion

**Table 2:** Distribution of the samples on the basis of different levels of professional commitment and locality of the institution.

Professional Commitment	Urban	Semi Urban	Rural	Total
High	35 (10.76%)	60 (18.46%)	52 (16.00%)	147 (45.23%)
Average	29 (8.92%)	41 (12.61%)	41 (12.61%)	111 (34.15%)
Low	16 (4.92%)	13 (4.00%)	38 (11.69%)	67 (20.62%)
Total	80(24.62%)	114(35.07%)	131(40.31%)	325(100%)

Majority of the sample have high professional commitment (N=147) and it is 45.23 percentage of the total sample. Among them, 35 teachers were from urban institutions and is 10.76 percentage of the total sample. Also, 60 teachers (18.46%) were from semi urban institutions and 52 teachers (16%) from rural institutions. Professional commitment is average for 111 teachers (34.15%) and among them, 29 were urban teachers (8.92%). From semi urban and rural institutions, 41 teachers (12.61%) each were having

average professional commitment. From the total sample, 67 teachers (20.62%) have low professional commitment. It is low among 16 urban teachers (4.92%), 13 semi urban teachers (4%) and 38 rural teachers (11.69%).

Most of the samples were from rural institutions (N=131) and it was 40.31 percentage. 35.07 percentage of the samples were from semi urban institutions (N=114) and remaining samples (N=80; 24.62%) were from urban institutions.

**Table 3:** Mean, standard deviation and corresponding 't' values obtained by male and female teachers in psychological capital and professional commitment.

Variables	Mean of Male (N=62)	S D	Mean of Female (N=263)	S D	't' Values
Self- efficacy	18.74	9.0	26.1	6.22	7.62**
Hope	29.88	4.37	28.22	4.82	2.47*
Resilience	27.2	3.54	26.53	4.21	1.17
Optimism	26.79	3.49	25.74	3.87	1.93
Psychological Capital	102.62	13.18	106.61	14.62	1.96*
Commitment To Learner	36.16	5.75	37.56	4.63	2.04*
Commitment To Society	34.96	4.75	34.56	4.34	0.64
Commitment To Profession	31.58	6.94	32.1	4.69	0.71
Commitment To Attain Excellence	34.93	4.5	34.16	4.53	1.20
Commitment To Basic Human Values	33.53	4.95	33.09	3.83	0.76
Professional Commitment	171.17	19.94	171.48	15.99	0.13

\*\*significant at 0.01 level, \*significant at 0.05 level

As per the above table, subscale self - efficacy and total psychological capital were more among female teachers than male teachers. But hope is more among male teachers than female teachers. Also, commitment to learner is more among female teachers than male teachers. Other dimensions and total value of professional commitment did not show any difference. This may be due to societal norms and expectations related to teachers' gender roles. These expectations may influence the development of psychological traits. For instance, women may be socialized to be more empathetic and nurturing. The profession teaching is considered as a 'job for women' where it is important to deal with children and their growing stages. Female teachers may see the profession as a role, where male teachers do it as a profession. This may help to increase the psychological capital in female teachers. Also, women try to balance personal and work life, which

need to face many obstacles.

The present findings supported the finding of Garg (2014). According to him, psychological capital of teachers has significant difference. Female teachers showed more psychological capital than male teachers. Tadesse (2019) also found the same.

But in the case of professional commitment, no gender difference was observed. Present findings contradicted to the finding of Shukla (2016). According to him, professional commitment of teachers has significant difference. Female teachers were better than male teachers in professional commitment. Omer Nayci (2021) also found the same and findings of Alam (2018) also supported the findings of Shukla and Nayci.

Hence, the hypothesis, there will be a significant difference in psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers on the basis of gender is partially accepted.

**Table 4:** ANOVA of Psychological capital with respect to locality of the institution.

Variable		Sum of squares	df	Mean Squares	F
Self- Efficacy	Between groups	655.13	2	327.56	6.14**
	Within groups	17172.91	322	53.33	
	Total	17828.04	324		
Hope	Between groups	242.36	2	121.18	5.44**
	Within groups	7172.24	322	22.27	
	Total	7414.6	324		
Resilience	Between groups	90.26	2	45.13	2.71
	Within groups	5356.51	322	16.63	
	Total	5446.76	324		
Optimism	Between groups	82.33	2	41.16	2.84
	Within groups	4659.77	322	14.47	
	Total	4742.11	324		
Psychological capital	Between groups	396.72	2	198.36	0.95

	Within groups	67025.48	322	208.15
	Total	67422.2	324	

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level. \* Significant at 0.05 level.

**Table 5:** ANOVA of professional commitment with respect to locality of the institution.

Variable		Sum of squares	df	Mean Squares	F
Commitment to learner	Between groups	145.72	2	72.86	3.08*
	Within groups	7596.32	322	23.59	
	Total	7742.04	324		
Commitment to society	Between groups	130.54	2	65.27	3.38*
	Within groups	6210.33	322	19.28	
	Total	6340.88	324		
Commitment to profession	Between groups	283.02	2	141.9	5.4**
	Within groups	8459.18	322	26.27	
	Total	8742.99	324		
Commitment to attain excellence	Between groups	230.02	2	115.012	5.76**
	Within groups	6429.58	322	19.96	
	Total	6659.61	324		
Commitment to human values	Between groups	147.31	2	73.65	4.54*
	Within groups	5219.68	322	16.21	
	Total	5367	324		
Professional commitment	Between groups	4298.94	2	2149.47	7.95**
	Within groups	86966.6	322	270.08	
	Total	91265.55	324		

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level. \* Significant at 0.05 level.

Here, the table shows that there is a significant difference in Professional commitment and all its dimensions. Dimensions of psychological capital: self – efficacy and hope also showed significant difference. But there is no significant difference in psychological capital on the basis of locality of the institution. The calculated 'F' value of professional commitment (F=7.95) is higher than the table values.

In case of professional commitment, the present study supported the study of Rev. Fr. Ravindra Kumar (2022). According to his finding, there is a significant difference in professional commitment of teachers in relation to the locality. But in the case of psychological capital, the present study contradicted the study of Samuel Tadesse (2019). He found that the level of psychological capital is influenced by locality.

Hence, the hypothesis, there will be a significant difference in psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers on the basis of locality of the institution is partially accepted. The group mean analysis are given below

**Post Hoc**  
Self- efficacy

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Semi Urban	114	23.08	
Rural	131	24.81	
Urban	80		26.81
Sig.		0.089	1.00

There is group difference in self – efficacy on the basis of locality of the institution. Here, teachers from urban institutions kept a difference with other groups. Teachers from semi urban institutions have low level of self – efficacy and it is high among teachers from urban institutions. The reason for high self – efficacy in urban

teachers can be due to the easy access of opportunities and peer collaboration. It may improve self – confidence within teachers which may positively impact their motivation to improve their innovative teaching practices.

**Post Hoc**  
Hope

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Urban	80	27.88	
Rural	131	27.92	
Semi urban	114		29.71
Sig.		0.956	1.00

There is group difference in hope on the basis of locality of the institution. Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with other groups. Teachers from urban institutions have low level of hope and level of hope is high among teachers from semi urban institutions.

**Post Hoc**  
Commitment to learner

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Rural	131	36.52	
Urban	80	37.48	37.48
Semi Urban	114		38.05
Sig.		0.155	0.403

Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with teachers from rural institutions. Teachers from urban institutions are not differentiated. Teachers from rural institutions have low level of commitment to learner and it is high among teachers from urban institutions.

**Post Hoc**  
Commitment to society

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Rural	131	33.89	
Urban	80	34.90	34.90
Semi urban	114		35.31
Sig.		0.100	0.496

Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with teachers from rural institutions. Teachers from urban institutions are not differentiated. Commitment to society is low among rural teachers and high among semi urban teachers. Sometimes, rural teachers may feel undervalued and underappreciated, both within the educational system and within their communities. The lack of recognition for their efforts may be a reason that lead to lack of commitment to that society.

**Post Hoc**  
Commitment to profession

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Rural	131	31.05	
Urban	80	31.85	31.85
Semi urban	114		33.20
Sig.		0.264	0.058

Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with teachers from rural institutions. Teachers from urban institutions are not differentiated. Commitment to profession is low among rural teachers and high among semi urban teachers.

**Post Hoc**  
Commitment to attain excellence

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Rural	131	33.42	
Urban	80	34.25	34.25
Semi urban	114		35.36
Sig.		0.186	0.072

Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with teachers from rural institutions. Teachers from urban institutions are not differentiated. Commitment

to attain excellence is low among rural teachers and high among semi urban teachers. Most rural institutions were located in remote areas with limited access to professional development opportunities and career advancement opportunities. This can be a reason for rural teachers to lack in commitment to attain excellence.

**Post Hoc**  
Commitment to basic human values

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Urban	80	32.58	
Rural	131	32.74	
Semi urban	114		34.08
Sig.		0.785	1.00

There is group difference on the basis of locality of the institution. Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with other groups. Teachers from semi urban institutions have high level of commitment to basic human values and it is low among urban teachers.

**Post Hoc**  
Professional commitment

Locality	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Rural	131	167.64	
Urban	80	171.07	
Semi urban	114		176.02
Sig.		0.133	1.00

There is group difference on the basis of locality of the institution. Here, teachers from semi urban institutions kept a difference with other groups. Teachers from rural institutions have low level of professional commitment and it is high among semi urban teachers. The reason for lack of professional commitment in rural teachers can be due to area itself. Teachers in rural areas may have to deal with issues such as students' lack of basic resources, health problems, and family difficulties. These additional challenges can contribute to stress and decreased professional commitment. Professional commitment and its components were comparatively lower among teachers working in rural institutions.

**Table 6:** Relationship between Psychological Capital and Professional Commitment  
Correlation between psychological capital and professional commitment.

Professional Commitment	Self efficacy	Hope	Resilience	Optimism	Psychological Capital
Commitment to Learner	0.208**	0.327**	0.315**	0.274**	0.378**
Commitment to Society	0.067	0.368**	0.312**	0.319**	0.330**
Commitment to Profession	0.107	0.269**	0.326**	0.300**	0.316**
Commitment to Attain Excellence	0.084	0.424**	0.432**	0.349**	0.399**
Commitment to basic human values	0.003	0.233**	0.250**	0.213**	0.206**
Professional Commitment	0.135*	0.446**	0.452**	0.403**	0.453**

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed). \*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed).

The table revealed the correlation coefficients of psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers. Psychological capital is positively related with professional commitment, which means as psychological capital increases, professional commitment also increases. It indicated that there is a significant relationship between psychological capital and professional commitment and the relationship is significant at 0.01 level. The present study supported the finding of Lee Hsing-Ming (2017). He found that psychological capital has significantly positive influence on professional commitment of teachers. Hence, the hypothesis, there will be a significant relationship between psychological capital and professional commitment among teachers is accepted.

### Conclusion

Students are the backbone and future masters of our nation and teachers are the sculptors of them. Teachers' psychological capital and professional commitment improve and nourish students' abilities. Geographical area definitely influences the psychological capital and professional commitment of employees. Psychological capital can enhance teachers' dedication and engagement in their professional roles despite the challenges of rural environment. This study can contribute to our understanding of organizational behavior in educational setting. It suggests practical implications for cultivating supportive work environments that promote teachers' well-being and effectiveness in rural schools. The study is relevant among other professionals such as marketing executives, nurses, managers, engineers, etc., but here, did only among teachers. The study helps to design various types of training programs which can help to improve professional commitment and productivity of employees.

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