

A STUDY OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY AND PROFESSIONAL ASPIRATION AMONG RURAL AND URBAN SECONDARY LEVEL TEACHERS

Neha Srivastava

Research Scholar, College of Education, IIMT University, Meerut, India

Sarita Goswami

Professor, College of Education, IIMT University, Meerut, India

ABSTRACT

Teacher quality is essential to the effectiveness of education, particularly for adolescents that require higher levels of cognitive activity at the secondary level, and who simultaneously are developing in socio-emotional ways. Emotional maturity is the ability of a teacher to control his/her emotions, manage stress and have positive interpersonal relations and professional aspiration is indicative of motivation for growth, development and long term association with the profession. This study aims to analysis the emotional maturity and professional aspiration among rural and urban secondary school teachers in Meerut district of India. Employing a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 200 respondents (100 rural and 100 urban) through stratified random sampling. Emotional maturity and professional aspiration were assessed through standardized scales. Descriptive and independent-samples t tests were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that there was significant difference in emotional maturity between rural and urban teacher, rural teacher had more emotional maturity than that of urban teachers. But in professional aspiration, there was no significant rural–urban variation. The results indicate that teachers’ emotional adaptation is sensitive to contextual factors, whereas motivation for work-related career seems more consistent across location. Implications for teacher well-being projects and professional development policy are discussed.

Keywords: Emotional maturity; Professional aspiration; Secondary school teachers; Rural–urban comparison.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching in secondary schools is demanding: it requires emotional stability as well as a well-developed professional sense and good knowledge of the subject to be taught. Teachers balance their academic duties with the day to day challenges of interacting with students, school bureaucracy, and shifting curriculum mandates. Emotional regulationreferring to an individual's capacity to appropriately perceive, modulate, and express emotions has been associated with adaptive coping, resilience, and positive relationships within educational contexts. Professional motivation that refers to teachers' career goals and motivation for future professional development plays a significant role in their continued involvement in teaching and quality of instruction. There is a great disparity between rural and urban schools in terms of infrastructure, exposure to professional practice and access to development in India. Such variations in context could ultimately have different implications for teachers’ emotional well-being and professional motivation.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Jain and Mehrotra (2024) reported high teaching efficacy, better classroom management and more positive professional conduct among emotionally mature teachers while teaching in all types of schools. These findings suggest that emotional stability and the ability to work well with others socially are very important for the maintenance of quality teaching during teaching.

Malik and Kapoor (2014) found a significant positive relationship between emotional maturity and teaching effectiveness, indicating that emotionally mature teachers are more capable of creating and sustaining productive learning environments.

Raju and Ramesh (2024) investigated emotional intelligence and professional commitment among secondary school teachers, concluding that higher emotional intelligence served as a powerful predictor of professional commitment. Given that professional commitment and professional aspiration are conceptually interrelated, it is suggested that motivating emotions indirectly support teachers' career-related motivation and long-term professional objectives.

Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2017) demonstrated that emotional intelligence is positively associated with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and motivation; conversely, it bears a negative relationship with turnover intentions.

Li, Liu, and Yang (2024) found that a teacher's emotional intelligence contributes to organizational commitment through the mediation of psychological well-being, wherein leadership style acts as a moderating factor. These findings specifically indicate that emotional resources are essential for sustaining professional aspiration within institutional environments.

Collie, Shapka, & Perry (2011) emphasized that a positive school environment and social-emotional learning support systems serve as strong predictors of teachers' commitment and career path.

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) reported that job satisfaction and motivation to stay in the profession were much influenced by school climate, emotional exhaustion, and feelings of belonging.

3. RESEARCH GAP

Emotional maturity exerts a profound influence on teachers' behavior and their approach to work. Conversely, professional aspiration implies a teacher's desire to advance in their career and engage in self-improvement. International research indicates a correlation between emotional maturity and career-related outcomes; however, in India, the majority of studies have remained confined to areas such as job satisfaction, burnout, or teaching effectiveness. Consequently, very few studies have directly examined professional aspiration. Additionally, there is a scarcity of studies comparing teachers in rural and urban secondary schools despite the significant disparities that exist between these two groups regarding facilities, socio-economic status, and opportunities for professional advancement. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the emotional maturity and professional aspirations of teachers belonging to these two distinct categories. There is also limited application of standardized tools like the Mahesh Bhargava Emotional Maturity Scale and Dr. Kaur Professional Aspiration Scale in the Indian secondary school context. Therefore, the relationship between emotional maturity

and professional aspiration among rural and urban secondary teachers remains underexplored, highlighting a clear gap for investigation.

4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To compare Emotional Maturity between Rural and urban secondary level teachers.
2. To compare Professional Aspiration between Rural and urban secondary level teachers.

5. HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant difference in Emotional Maturity between Rural and urban secondary level teachers.
2. There is no significant difference in Professional Aspiration between Rural and urban secondary level teachers.

6. DELIMITATION

The present study being exploratory in nature has following delimitation.

1. The study was delimited to high school teachers in Meerut in U.P.
2. The study was delimited to 100 rural and 100 urban secondary level teachers only.
3. Secondary school teachers have been selected on Simple random sampling biases.

7. METHODOLOGY

7.1 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was adopted.

7.2 Sample

The sample comprised 200 secondary school teachers (100 rural, 100 urban) from Meerut district, selected through simple random sampling.

7.3 Tools

1. **Emotional Maturity Scale** (Singh & Bhargava).
2. **Professional Aspiration Scale** (Gamze Tuti).

7.4 Statistical Techniques

Data were analyzed using mean(M), standard deviation(SD), and independent samples *t* tests.

8. RESULTS

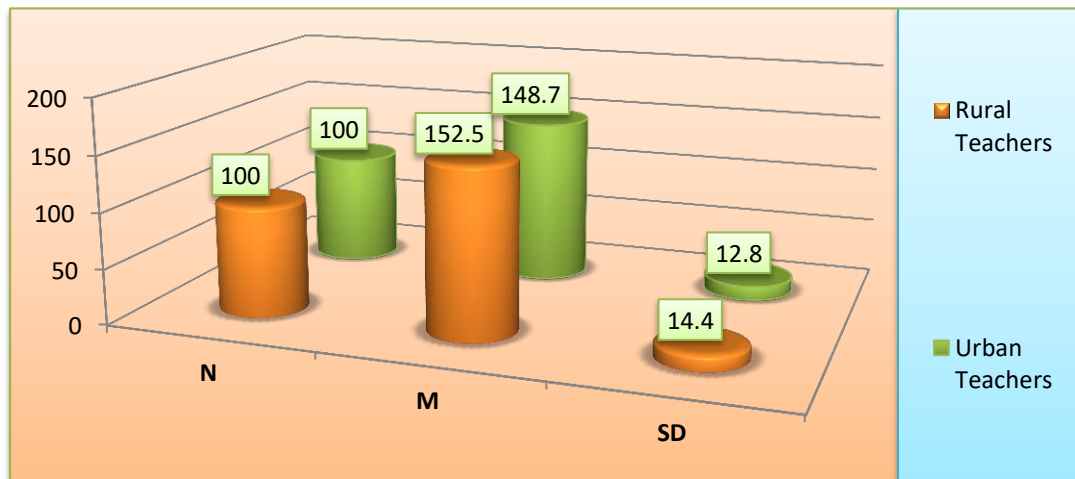
8.1 Emotional Maturity

Hypothesis 1 :There is no significant difference in Emotional Maturity between Rural and urban secondary level teachers.

Table 1: Emotional Maturity between Rural and Urban Secondary School Teachers.

Group	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
Rural Teachers	100	152.5	14.4	1.97	198	< .05
Urban Teachers	100	148.7	12.8			

Graph 1: Showing the Comparison of Emotional Maturity between Rural and Urban Secondary School Teachers.



Interpretation:

This analysis indicates a statistically significant difference in emotional maturity between rural and urban secondary school teachers ($t = 1.97, p < .05$). The average (M) Score of rural teachers were found to be higher, which may suggest that they have a greater capacity to be emotionally stable in professional settings. Conversely, urban teachers are resulting in greater stress. This may affect how they are able to control their own emotions.

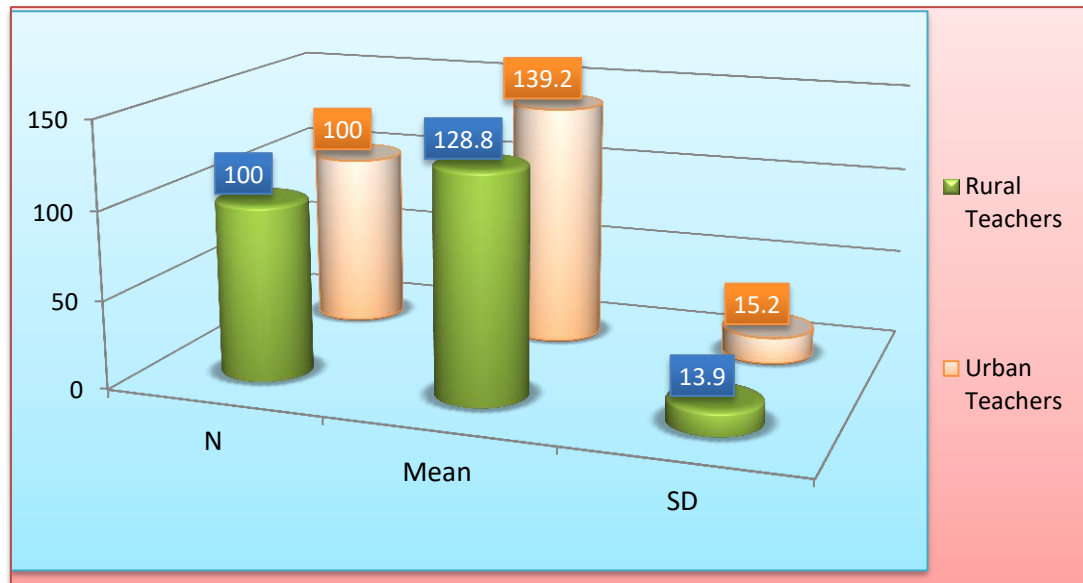
8.2 Professional Aspiration

Hypothesis 2 : There is no significant difference in Professional Aspiration between Rural and urban secondary level teachers.

Table 2: Professional Aspiration between Rural and Urban Secondary School Teachers.

Group	N	M	SD	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
Rural Teachers	100	128.8	13.9	0.89	198	> .05
Urban Teachers	100	139.2	15.2			

Graph 2: Professional Aspiration between rural and urban teachers.



Interpretation:

Showing the result that no significant difference was found in the professional aspirations of teachers in rural and urban secondary schools ($t = 0.89, p > .05$). The null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that the environment of the teacher (rural or urban) does not impact the professional aspirations of the teacher.

9. DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that emotional aspects play a significant role in the work of teachers, which has also been confirmed by recent research. The observed difference of emotional maturity among rural and urban secondary school teachers is in consonance with the findings of the earlier Indian as well as international studies. The studies reveal that environmental and social conditions around affect how the teachers themselves control and balance their emotions (Malik and Kapur, 2014; Jain and Mehrotra, 2024). A possible explanation of this high rate of emotional maturity found in rural teachers might be that they have strong mutual interrelationships within their communities. In rural areas, people feel more connected to their communities, which provides them with emotional support. The cooperation is helpful in relieving the work-related stress. This finding is also consistent with theoretical frameworks which suggest that supportive and positive environments enhance one's emotional flexibility and stability). Skalvik et al. A positive school climate and strong social relations promote greater emotional and professional engagement among teachers (Wang et al., 2011). On the other hand, urban schools tend to have more administrative duties, more pressure to perform, and more competition.

In the context of professional aspirations, the absence of any statistically significant difference between rural and urban teachers suggests that career-related motivations are becoming increasingly uniform across all geographic regions. This finding aligns with contemporary scholarship, which posits that professional aspirations and commitments today are no longer or only to a very limited extent—geographically circumscribed; rather, they are

shaped by standardized qualification requirements, promotion policies, and nationally integrated professional models (Raju & Ramesh, 2024). Although the average level of aspiration was observed to be slightly higher among urban teachers, this difference was not statistically significant. Nevertheless, this trend may reflect the relatively greater availability and transparency of opportunities for career advancement and leadership positions within urban educational environments. This interpretation is further supported by international research, including a meta-analytic study by Miao et al., as well as work by Joseph et al.

10. CONCLUSION

The current study aimed to evaluate emotional maturity and professional aspiration of teachers of rural and urban secondary schools. Following conclusions were drawn on the basis of statistical analysis of collected data: Emotional maturity: The results revealed significant difference in emotional maturity of rural and urban teachers at high level. It was observed that level of emotional maturity of the rural teachers was slightly higher than that of urban teachers. It indicates that the geographical setting influences the teachers' ability to control their own feelings, maintain mental stability, and foster social harmony in day to day interaction with students.

Professional Aspirations: No significant difference was observed between rural and urban teachers in terms of professional aspirations. Both groups showed the same degree of motivation with regard to career advancement, professional development, and future progress. This leads to the conclusion that professional aspirations are influenced more by individual interests, motivation and educational policies rather than simply being from a rural or urban location. It could be argued that while geographical location may, on the one hand, influence the emotional maturity of teachers, it appears to have absolutely no bearing on their professional aspirations. Although certain emotional differences may be observed based on their respective work environments, these distinctions make no difference from an emotional standpoint in the pursuit of professional excellence; indeed, all teachers working in diverse professional contexts demonstrate an equal level of ambition and commitment.

11. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Consolidation of emotional support system
- Professional development
- Stimulating a positive working environment
- Advocacy and policy level interventions
- Partnering with the community
- Emotional Training in Teacher Education
- Mentorship and Support System
- Promoting Work-Life Balance
- Evaluation and Feedback Mechanism
- Digital and Technological Support

- Stress-Free Work Environment
- Motivation and Incentive System

12. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Larger and more diverse samples.
- Inclusion of additional variables.
- Qualitative or Mixed-Method Approach.
- Comparative studies with private school teachers.
- Investigation of Training Programs
- Studies at Different Levels of Education

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