

Study of Employability Skills of Secondary Schools Teachers in Punjab

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Abstract: The study was designed to examine the various dimensions of Employability Skills among male (352) and female (608) teachers of Secondary Schools of Punjab. The descriptive survey method was used in the present study. The sample consisted of 960 secondary school teachers teaching in various government (480) and private (480) schools of rural and urban areas of Punjab. Teacher Employability Assessment Scale (TEAS - Mukhopadhyay, Pal, Parhar & Aggarwal; 2015) was used. For the analysis of data Mean, S.D. and t-value were calculated. The finding of the study revealed a significant difference between male and female secondary schools teachers on Employability skills scores on nine dimensions viz. Learning, Communication, Problem Solving, Critical and Creative Thinking, Team Work, Self- management, Initiative and Enterprise Planning and Organizing Including Leadership Skills, Emotional Resonance and Empathy of Employability skill. No significant difference was found between male and female secondary schools teachers on two dimensions, viz. Interpersonal skill and ICT dimension of Employability skills.

INTRODUCTION

The state (Punjab) has a large network of secondary schools consisting of government and other recognised institutions. In spite of increase in the number of students, there has been decrease in the number of teachers, due to poor policies of the state government. The plight of the state is that teachers here do not possess the requisite qualities for employability skills like communication skills, deep knowledge and passion of the subject matter, critical and creative thinking, ability to build caring relationship, good organisation, planning and management skills, emotional resonance, stronger ethics and habit of taking initiative etc. In Punjab, the percentage of female teachers in school (primary, middle & secondary level) is higher than male teachers. The number of female teachers in Punjab, per hundred male teachers is 193 at higher secondary level and 190 at high school level (Statistics; 2010-2011). In Punjab, the percentage of female teachers in school (primary, middle & secondary level) is higher than male teachers. The number of female teachers in Punjab, per hundred male teachers is 193 at higher secondary level and 190 at high school level (Statistics; 2010-2011). The teaching of employability skills belongs to the school curriculum (Poole & Zahn; 1993) Faculty, therefore, struggles to succeed in a variety of ways in order to meet the challenges they face in the classroom. Both men and women teachers exhibit these traits in their lesson delivery; however, research evidence (Laird, Garver & Niskode, 2007) suggested that they may meet the challenges in different ways. It is, therefore, important to understand how and why men and women teach differently because it is crucial in helping teachers in their efforts to improve upon their teaching skills. Gender mainstreaming according to Booth and Bennett, (2002) is the public policy concept of assessing the different implications for women and men of any planned policy action, including legislation and programmes, in all areas and levels.

Employment means getting a job. Employability is the skills, qualities and attitudes needed to perform on a particular job – fulfil the role expectations and job demands. To become secondary school teachers, the basic education is at least to be a graduate in any stream. The role of secondary school teacher demands a change. Moreover the nature of work has also changed dramatically, so the demand of expert teachers has increased. It requires a highly skilled graduate with proficient in more language, mathematics, technological literacy, and problem-solving skills (Zargari, 1997). Employees capable of expert thinking and advanced communication skills are in great demand (Jerald, 2009). Embedding 21st century skills into educational systems becomes necessary, to update the education system and to increase students' critical thinking skills, foster their creative drive, stimulate innovative thinking and generate new implementable ideas that are vital if a nation is to succeed in the long-run (Ruppert, 2010). The employability skills development for effective teaching include the use of multiple teaching and learning strategies, use of active learning techniques, provision of prompt feedback and respect for diverse talents and ways of learning (Cameron, 1993; Chickering & Ehrmann, 1996; Chickering & Gamson, 1987). As well, a positive classroom environment, promotion of critical thinking skills and use of higher-order thinking skills such as synthesis and analysis (Bloom, 1956) are other ways to maximize student learning and enhancement of job preparation skills (Chickering & Gamson, 1987).

Employability skills include personal image, interpersonal skills, and good habits and attitudes (Lankard, 1990). Employability is the capability to move self-sufficiently within the labour market to realise potential through sustainable employment (Hillage, 1998). Sattar (2010) explained that employability skills are important in helping people adapting with changes and improve career opportunities in the workplace. In short employability means individuals capability, ability, success, chance, adaptability, and competency to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations.

Review of the Related Literature

Review of related literature is an essential part of research it implies a survey of accumulated knowledge of the past and helps the investigator in avoiding wastage and duplication. This study is done in the light of the earlier done work on gender differences.

Singer (1996) indicated gender as a significant predictor of teachers' attitudes and behaviour in teaching. Lacey, Saleh and Gorman (1998) found difference in the teaching styles of male and female teachers, they further investigated that male teachers were found to be more dominant and exacting in their teaching style, while female teachers tended to be more informal and open toward students. The National Survey of Student Engagement (2005) revealed that women faculty members emphasize higher order thinking skills, active and collaborative learning, and diversity experiences more than men. Paulrajan (2011) found that employers in retail industry are looking for people for managerial jobs with different skill set such as academic qualifications, communication skills, leadership skills, teamwork skills and work experience. Warraich and Ameen (2011) explored Employability skills of LIS graduates

and found that analytical capabilities, decision-making skills, technological skills, and communication skills are indispensable to enhance the employability of Library and Information Science professionals. Onabamiro, Onuka and Oyekanmi (2014) found no significant difference between male and female teachers' perceptions about the ways of teaching soft skills. Rana, Shafqat and Shafiq (2015) found that female teachers have higher self-efficacy than male teachers on efficacy to influence classroom management, instructional strategies students, engagement subscales. The female teachers were found to be better performers, as they have high perception of self-efficacy as compare to male teachers. Singh (2016) found no significant difference in the teaching skills of male and female teachers. Ahiatrogah (2017) found a statistically significant difference between the teaching skills acquired by male and female Distance Education students. Esther and Emek (2017) found that there was no significant difference between the mean scores of the male and female model primary school teachers in the use of ICT. Isa and Khairani (2018) found female student teachers possess higher mean score for all skills with significant differences for Critical Thinking, ICT, Leadership, Moral and social skills.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

There exists no significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers of Punjab on the various dimensions of employability skills.

RESEARCH DESIGN In the present study Descriptive Survey method was used

Tool Used Teacher Employability Assessment Scale (TEAS- Mukhopadhyay, Pal, Parhar & Aggarwal; 2015.) The present study attempts to assess the employability skills of the teachers on the basis of 11 employability skills viz Learning, Communication, Problem Solving, Critical and Creative Thinking, Team Work, Self- management, Interpersonal skills (Human Relations), ICT Skills, Initiative & Enterprise Planning and Organizing Including Leadership Skills, Emotional Resonance or Empathy.

Statistical Techniques: Mean, S.D. and t-value were calculated.

Table 1: Mean, S.D and t-value on various dimensions of employability skills among male and female school teachers

SKILL	Male (N=352)			Female (N=608)			t-value	Level of significance
	Range	Mean	S.D.	Range	Mean	S.D.		
Learning	14-50	31.11	8.37	13-50	33.51	7.32	4.65**	Significant
Communication	15-50	32.11	8.33	15-50	34.10	8.62	3.48**	Significant
Problem Solving	15-50	31.33	7.76	15-50	32.75	8.28	2.62**	Significant

Critical and Creative Thinking	13-50	32.20	8.43	10-50	33.70	8.46	2.66**	Significant
Team Work	11-50	31.61	7.54	11-50	33.43	6.95	3.78**	Significant
Self Management	11-50	30.91	7.75	11-50	32.91	7.66	3.88**	Significant
Interpersonal	14-50	32.20	7.767	13-50	33.11	7.27	1.83	Insignificant
ICT	12-50	31.17	8.60	13-50	31.60	7.93	0.78	Insignificant
Planning and Organizing	13-50	31.88	8.13	12-50	33.56	7.47	3.24**	Significant
Emotional Resonance	12-50	31.80	7.49	11-50	33.19	6.65	2.98**	Significant
Initiative & Enter prise	12-50	30.84	8.54	14-50	34.77	7.35	7.53**	Significant
TOTAL	190-516	347.13	57.63	186-546	366.64	54.80	5.21**	Significant

** Significant at 0.01 level of confidence

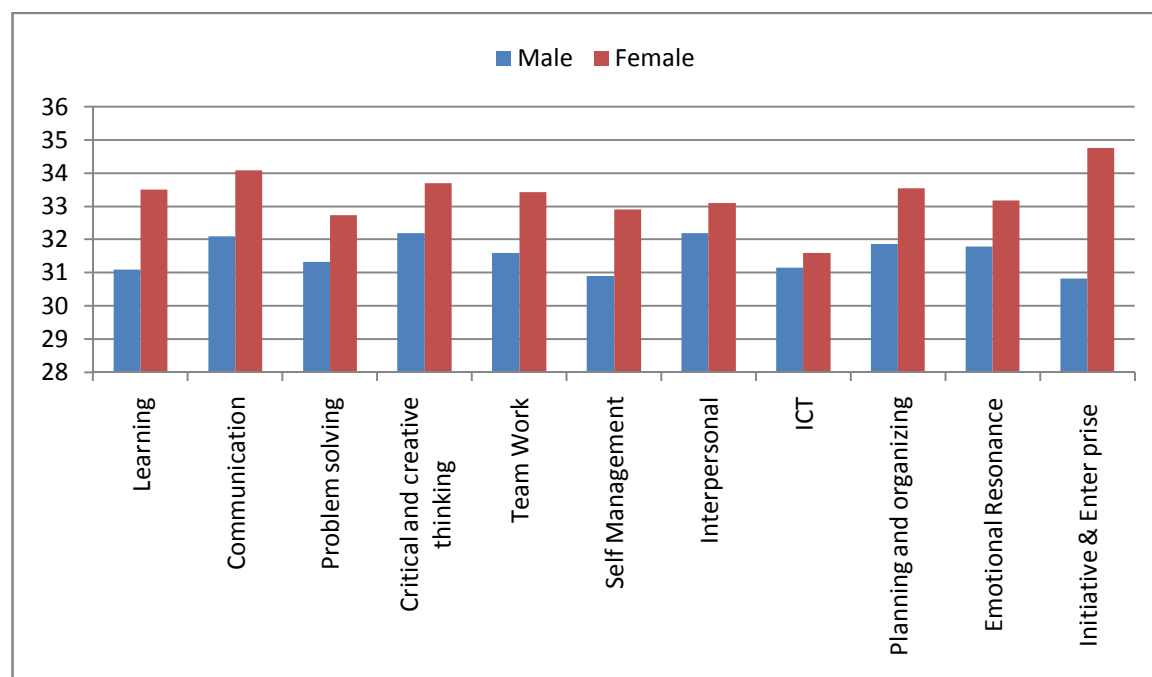


Fig.1: Bar graph showing difference in mean scores of various dimensions of employability skills

Result and Discussion: It may be observed from the Table 1 that the total mean scores on employability skills of female teachers lie in the range of 186 to 546, while among male teachers are in the range of 190 to 516. The mean scores of female teachers (366.64) are higher than that of male teachers (347.14) with S.D 54.80 and 57.63 respectively (Table1).

The t-ratio was found to be 5.21 against df (958), which was significant at the 0.01 level of confidence. This clearly reflects that there exists a significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers on employability skills. The review of means suggest that female secondary school teachers have higher average mean than male secondary school teachers meaning thereby, female secondary schools teachers have better employability skills than male secondary school teachers.

Further dimension-wise review depicts that the t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers on the various dimensions of employability skills were i.e on 'Learning' dimension, t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was found to be 4.65 with means 31.11 and 33.51 and S.D. 8.37 and 7.32 respectively, on 'Communication' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was 3.48 with means 33.51 and 32.11 and S.D 7.32 and 8.33 respectively, on 'Problem Solving' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was 2.62 with means 31.33 and 32.75 and S.D. 7.76 and 8.28 respectively, on 'Critical and creative thinking' t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was 2.66 with mean scores of male teachers 32.20 is less than female teachers 33.70 with S.D 8.43 and 8.46 respectively, on 'Team Work' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was of 3.78 with the mean scores of male teachers 31.61 and female teachers 33.43 and S. D. 7.54 and 6.95 respectively, on 'Self Management' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was 3.88 with the mean scores of male teachers 30.91 and female teachers 32.91 and S. D. 7.75 and 7.66 respectively, on 'Planning and Organizing' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was of 3.24 with the mean scores of male teachers 31.88 and female teachers 33.56 and S. D. 8.13 and 7.47 respectively, on 'Emotional Resonance' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was of 2.98 with the mean scores of male teachers 31.80 and female teachers 33.19 and S. D. 7.49 and 6.65 respectively and on 'Initiative and Enterprise' dimension t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers was of 7.57 with the mean scores of male teachers 30.84 and female teachers 34.77 and S. D. 8.54 and 7.35 respectively. On all these nine dimensions of Employability skill t- ratio was found to be significant at the 0.01 level of confidence. Whereas t-ratio for the difference between male and female secondary school teachers on two dimensions i.e. on 'Interpersonal' t-ratio was 1.83 (Mean for male = 32.20 and female = 33.11 and S. D. For Male = 7.76 and Female = 7.27) and on 'ICT' t-ratio was 0.78 (Mean for male = 31.17 and female = 31.60 and S. D. For Male = 8.60 and Female = 7.93) were found not to be significant at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Hence the Hypothesis (H_1) "There exists no significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers of Punjab on the various dimensions of employability skills" is rejected in case of two dimensions of Employability skills i.e 'Interpersonal' skill and "ICT" skill, meaning by male and female secondary school teachers possess equal employability skills, as the means are approximately very near, whereas it is not rejected on

nine dimensions viz. Learning, Communication, Problem Solving, Critical and Creative Thinking, Team Work, Self- management, Initiative and Enterprise, Planning and Organizing, Leadership Skills and Emotional Resonance, similarly there exists a significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers on total mean scores of Employability skills of male and female teachers and results are in favour of female secondary school teachers and they were found as possessing better employability skills than male secondary school teachers.

Discussion on findings

There existed a significant difference between male and female secondary school teachers on Employability scores and was in favour of female teachers. In the present study, out of eleven dimensions, significant difference was found, on nine dimensions, while no difference was found on two dimensions. The finding coincided with the earlier done studies by Isa and Khairani (2018), who found that female student teachers demonstrate higher mean score for all skills. “The gender differences persisted even after controlling for course level, class size, professor’s rank, and the gender ratio of the faculty in gender gaps in Teaching. Further, women professors were found to be spending significantly greater proportion of time, as well as encouraging and allowing student participation in comparison to men professors” (Statham, Richardson & Cook; 1991). Ahmad, Shafqat and Shafiq (2015) also revealed that female teachers performed better due to their high perception in their self-efficacy than male teachers in the public elementary schools in district Attock. Singer (1996) indicated gender as a significant predictor of teachers’ attitudes and behaviour in teaching. Lacey, Saleh and Gorman (1998) found difference in the teaching styles of male and female teachers. The women faculty members tend toward active and interactive activities to a greater degree than men (Grasha, 1994; Kuh, Laird, Umbach; 2004). Bella and Toutkoushian (1993), Job activities differ by gender faculty are more involved in teaching. Tannen (1992) explored fundamental differences between men’s and women’s ways of communicating, where a man’s world focuses on competition, status, and independence, a woman’s world focuses on intimacy, consensus, and interdependence. As for as the effective communication is concerned, it includes clarity and completeness of the message, facial expressions, gestures, eye contact and external physical appearance. Malmqvist, Gunnarsson and Vigild (2008) pointed out that communication skills plays a significant role in the professional competence development and suggested that programs for professional competence development for academics has to be made practical in nature and provided to the whole faculty. Even Tolstykh and Khomutova (2012) in their study found that teachers had improved their communication skills by attending training and development programme. The work done by Anand (2013) is coinsides with the present study, who found that female teachers are effective communication skills rather than male counterparts, and Mathur found, no significance difference between male and female students, in using ICT technology. So the study is not in tune with the research done by Thakur (2014), who revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of ICT awareness among the male and female trained teachers. Similarly, the results differ from the studies done by Pratik (2013), and (Philomina

& Amutha; 2016) concluded that male and female B.Ed. students have similar attitude towards computer as there is no significance difference towards computer in relation to the students' gender. The almost higher mean in favour of female secondary schools teachers shows that female secondary school teachers possess higher skills than male secondary school teachers except on communication. Teamwork skill means the capacity to graft and collaborate with individuals from numerous social and cultural experiences in order to accomplish a collective objective. Teachers' adjustability and spirit of team work plays a vital role in the performance of institution. Manju and Sheetal, (2013) found no significant difference between male and female teachers in their work culture including team work. Al-Hattami, Muammar and Elmahdi (2013) found out that high quality programs regarding professional training for faculty members able to develop their generic skills like communication, responsibility and interpersonal, information technology, team work, critical thinking and so on and align assessment with learning results and methods for teaching. Broad and Evans (2006) explored that professional training could boost collaborative expert and peer support and problem solving skills with respect to education context and teaching learning. Sasi and Anna (2011) mentioned that prospective teachers have major responsibility to develop the society with good values and culture, and to change it, the training of soft skills is necessary. It was added that problem solving skills are also essential in the soft skills. Subramaniam (2013) suggested for the acquisition of soft skills teachers must be provided a training to be more effective in the process of teaching and learning as well as for acquisition of thinking skills, problem solving skills and other skills. Attakorna, Attakorna and Kanokorna (2013) results of this study were informed that new teachers have all of soft skills at high level totally. Communicative skills were highest among seven of soft skills and next Life-long learning and information management skills, Critical and problem solving skills, Team work skills, Ethics, moral and professional skills. Megadalene, (2015) found female students teachers better on computer literacy, critical analysis and problem solving skills and male students better on oral communication, planning and written communication while on team work both gender performed equal. Ngang, Yie and Shahid (2015) explored the critical thinking and problem solving skills, teamwork/collective work skills as significant predictors of quality teaching. In conclusion, soft skills must be imparted to the teachers in order to create quality and effective teaching practice. Ahmed (2018) explored that female teachers exhibited more classroom management skills than men.

CONCLUSION

Today's global economy demands highly educated citizens who possess many necessary skills such as critical thinking, adaptability and communication (Velez, 2012). The employability skills are the hot issues attracting the concern of stakeholders in the field of education, resulting into the demand of new reforms. The quality is becoming a haunting issue as compare to quantity in employment of teachers. No doubt qualified employees are entering in the educational sector; still a number of issues like employability skills, achievement of students, behaviour and attitude of the teacher, required managerial and organizing expertness are the issue of concern. The development of technology and

globalization has changed the nature of work and compelled the developing countries to compete in the global arena. The growing expectation from universities and higher education institutions is to produce human capital with the right kind of capabilities and skills to meet the rapidly changing needs of the educational markets (Foray & Lundvall; 1996). Universities are also expected to facilitate the shift to the new knowledge-based economies and high technologies through effective connections between research and the educational markets (UNESCO, 2009). Robinson (2000) found “Employability skills as coachable skills and may be trained in both schools and employment settings. Therefore, the authority should set aims and objectives for teaching employability skills and instructions should be designed to ensure goals and objectives are attainable.

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