

# A Study of Cultural Competence of Male & Female Pre-Service Teachers

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## **Abstract**

The present study was designed to compare male and female cultural competence of pre-service teachers. The main objective of the investigation was to know the Cultural Competence of pre-service teachers in relation to their gender. The sample for the present study consisted of 100 pre-service teachers (50 male pre-service teachers and 50 female pre-service teachers) selected purposely from Varanasi district. Descriptive survey methodology has been used for this study. In order to assess the cultural competence of male and female pre-service teachers Cultural Competence Scale constructed by the investigator was used. The results revealed that there is little significant difference between Cultural Competence of male and female pre-service teachers.

**Keywords:** Cultural Competence, Pre-Service Teachers, Gender

## **Introduction**

In India, there are a lot of differences in the living standards, dress, food habits, music, dance forms, customs, religions, castes, and languages among people living in different parts of the country. People very naturally tend to overvalue their own qualities and those of their group and to harbor prejudices against others. Teachers cannot hope to begin to understand who sits before them unless they can connect with the families and communities from which their children come. Teachers who share their student's culture can minimize some of the differences between home and school. Beginning the journey toward increased cultural competence requires teachers to rethink their assumptions and consider life's issue through the lenses of people who come from cultural backgrounds different from their own. For improving quality in education the most significant factor is the cultural competence of the teacher. These days, the role of teachers in schools is crucial for child development. Various demographic and psychological variables affect the cultural competence of pre-service teachers such as self-esteem, gender, age, teaching experience, mother tongue, and habitat. Here we focused on how gender affects the cultural competence of the pre-service teacher.

Cultural competence is the ability to effectively respond to students from different cultures and classes while valuing and preserving the dignity of cultural differences and similarities between individuals, families, and communities. According to the National Association of School Psychologists, "Culturally competent educators are aware and respectful of the importance of the values, beliefs, traditions, customs, and parenting styles of the children and families they serve. They are also aware of the impact of their own culture on their interactions with others and take all of these factors into account when planning and delivering services to children and their families. Teel and Obidah (2008) provided a more comprehensive definition of cultural competence as it relates to teachers. They used the term racial and

cultural competence and defined it as an ability to see differences among students as assets. They create learning communities where individual and cultural heritage, including languages, are expressed and valued. They use cultural and individual knowledge about their students to design instructional strategies that build upon and link home experiences.

In the rapidly transforming educational landscape, the ability of pre-service teachers to meet the demands of 21st century classrooms is critical. With shifts toward learner-centered pedagogies, digital integration, and globalization, teacher education must now prioritize the development and assessment of competencies that transcend basic content knowledge. This paper explores the essential cultural competencies required for pre-service teachers in the modern era and examines how these competencies are assessed in diverse educational contexts.

### **Basic Skills of Cultural Competence**

**Valuing Diversity:** Accepting and respecting difference of different cultural backgrounds and customs, different ways of communicating, and different traditions and values.

**Being Culturally Self-Aware:** Culture—the sum total of an individual’s experiences, knowledge, skills, beliefs, values, and interests—shapes educators’ sense of who they are and where they fit in their family, school, community, and society.

**Dynamics of Difference:** Knowing what can go wrong in cross-cultural communication and how to respond to these situations.

**Knowledge of Students’ Culture:** Educators must have some base knowledge of their students’ culture so that student behaviors can be understood in their proper cultural context.

**Institutionalizing Cultural Knowledge and Adapting to Diversity:** Culturally competent educators, and the institutions they work in, can take a step further by institutionalizing cultural knowledge so they can adapt to diversity and better serve diverse populations.

### **Rationale of the Study**

According to National Council for Teacher Education (1998) to sustain commitment, every teacher requires the acquisition of certain competencies and the willingness to perform with a sense of devotion and dedication for the benefit of the learner. Bibi (2005) conducted an evaluation study of competence of secondary school teachers in Punjab and found demographic variables had no significant influence on teaching competence. Tyagi (2013) conducted a study on teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers in relation to their demographic characteristics and found that qualification, stream, teaching experience and locality of the school had a significant impact on the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers. Sharadha & Paremshwaram (2008) in their study on teacher characteristics and learning in the classroom make an attempt to examine the role of some behavioral variations among teachers and their possible implications for effective classroom teaching and learning and found that the gender and locality of the institution had significant impact on the behavior variations in the level of their teaching effectiveness. Prakasham (1986) studied teacher effectiveness as a function of school organizational climate and found that secondary school teachers and teachers working in industrial areas were better in terms of teaching competence than those teachers working in semi-urban and rural areas.

Babu & Shelvaraj (1997), from their research on teacher effectiveness and involvement in the teaching reported that the sex and locality of higher secondary school teachers had no effect on teacher effectiveness. Also, they found that teachers with research degrees possessed greater effectiveness and

competence. Gupta (1985) undertook a comparative research work with the objective to study the value pattern of the male and female teachers of primary and secondary schools of Kanpur city. The findings of the study revealed that teachers in general preferred highest values in political areas followed by economic areas and occupied the lowest position on aesthetic and religious values. Further, he reported that social values occupy the highest position in male teachers and the political values in female teachers. But Aesthetic values are the least developed values in both male and female teachers. Few studies have been conducted on multicultural education and teaching competency but no studies have been conducted on cultural competence possessed by teachers. Also, cultural competence is not treated as an essential skill where the teacher-trainees have to be trained for. As a student at the school, the investigator can very vividly remember facing several problems associated with cultural differences because of their gender. Also, as a teacher at the school, the investigator observed many students suffering psychologically and academically because of gender biasness in a different culture and school environment. Also, what happens to the self-esteem of students if they are teased by their peer because they look different from others if they cannot perform all activity as others if their teachers are biased and prejudiced towards them. It seems that in few areas male is more competent while in other area female teachers are more competent. So the difference between them totally affects the students also.

### Objectives

- To study the Cultural Competence of male and female pre-service teachers of Varanasi district.
- To compare Cultural Competence of male and female pre-service teachers of Varanasi district

### Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between Cultural Competence of male and female pre-service teachers

### Operational Definitions

#### Cultural Competence

In this study, Cultural Competence of pre-service teachers will refer to the ability of teachers to respond effectively to students from different cultures and classes while valuing and preserving the dignity of cultural differences and similarities between students

#### Pre-Service Teachers

In this study, pre-service teachers refer to those teachers who are studying in BEd, at Institute of Education, SHEPA of Varanasi district during academic session 2023-2025.

### Methodology

**Method:** Descriptive survey method is used for this study.

**Population:** The population constitutes all the pre-service teachers of Varanasi District.

**Sample:** The sample for the present study consisted of 100 pre-service teachers (50 male pre-service teachers and 50 female pre-service teachers) selected purposely from the different schools of Varanasi district.

**Tools:** The data for the present study was collected with the help of Cultural Competence Scale developed by investigator

**Analysis and Interpretation**

**Table 1: Showing Comparison between Cultural Competence of Male and Female Pre-Service Teachers**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	Df	t- value	Significance
Male	50	79.27	7.087	3.473	98	1.857	Accepted at 0.05 level
Female	50	83.26	10.921				

Table 1 shows that at 98 df, and at 0.05 level of significant, the calculated t-value ( $t = 1.857$ ) was not significance so null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore it was inferred that there was no significant difference found between the cultural competence of male and female Pre-service teachers. The mean score of cultural competence of female Pre-service teachers is ( $M = 83.26$ ) and male Pre-service teachers are ( $M = 79.27$ ).

**CONCLUSIONS**

Based on analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the results certain meaningful conclusion have been drawn that little significant difference was found between the cultural competence of male and female pre-service teachers. Various stereotypes such as male perform certain activities good while female perform certain activities good may affect the cultural competence of pre-service teachers. Limited access to training programs is provided which may be a reason. Teachers therefore, need to be culturally competent to deal with a diverse group of students effectively. Female teachers are more capable of embracing families and communities to create an environment that is supportive of multiple perspectives and experiences. Female are more serious toward teachers training may be reason for more culturally competent than male. pre-service teacher should be sent for internship in good school for exposure. So that they can be updated their knowledge and skill and can excel in teaching. Cultural competence runs a set of skills that professionals need to maintain the practice of teaching to serve all students and communicate effectively with their families. These skills enable the educator for developing more cultural and language qualities that young people get in the classroom rather than seeing those qualities as shortfalls.

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