

## **Relationship between Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Professionalism: An Empirical Study at the Secondary Level**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study examined the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and professionalism. Emotional intelligence represents the capability to observe internal feelings along with recognizing emotions in others before deciding on activities and display behaviors. Professionalism stands as an open declaration which verifies that someone will support their assigned duties through dedication to the position. The correlational design was adopted to conduct the study. A multistage sampling method was used to randomly select 395 teachers from public secondary schools in the Lahore district. The research data collection relied on Teachers' Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire ( $\alpha=.82$ ) alongside Teaching Professionalism Questionnaire ( $\alpha=.92$ ). The correlation analysis showed that teachers' emotional intelligence had strong and positive correlation with professionalism. The study's result indicated that there was a positive significant effect of teachers' emotional intelligence on professionalism. Furthermore, teachers were having significant difference with regard to gender. Educational institutions should train teachers through ongoing professional development programs by adding emotional intelligence courses which develop teachers' self-reflective abilities and empathetic capacities alongside emotional control competencies. These results underscore the importance of enhancing all dimensions of professional behavior, including classroom management and interpersonal interactions, and highlight the need for strategies that foster effective teaching environments.*

**Key Words:** Emotional Intelligence, Professionalism, and Secondary School Teachers

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teachers in educational institutions serve dual functions since they transmit academic information while creating the classroom's interpersonal environment. A teaching professional needs emotional intelligence which means understanding and controlling emotions for self and for others effectively (Goleman, 2001). Emotional intelligence demands the combination of self-awareness abilities with self-regulation practices and motivation management as well as empathetic and social skill abilities which help teachers deliver effective communication and resolve conflicts and create supportive educational settings.

According to Robins and Judge (2009), Salami (2010) teachers who possess strong emotional intelligence demonstrate better stress management skills together with enhanced empathy and improved interpersonal capabilities. The emotional intelligence competencies allow teachers to keep their composure in difficult moments and develop healthy connections with students and participate effectively with parents and school

personnel. Hargreaves considers postmodern professionalism as the current manifestation of teaching professional behavior which displays contrasting features according to his definition. Hargreaves (2000) describes two opposite directions of professionalism which bring both protective advancement and broad social movement learning for teachers alongside de-professionalization that weakens teaching through excessive demands.

Throughout history the question about teaching serving as a professional occupation has received prolonged academic debate. A few writers including Leiter (1978) and Samuels (1970) denote teaching as semi-professional work which requires supervisors to set particular performance standards. Teachers experience restricted independent decision-making powers and personal autonomy due to this result. According to Stevenson, Carter, and Passy (2007) and Ozga (1981), professionalism is better described as an ideological construct, given its role in maintaining professional hierarchies among teachers. This positive view of teacher professionalism defines the concept as highest professional standards which teachers should exhibit (Phelps, 2006).

Emotional intelligence encompassing an understanding of oneself, compassion for others, and control over one's emotions is closely linked to professional attitude. Research already established that those who assess their emotional intelligence as high can address different stressful conditions while developing appropriate interactions with their workmates. Professionalism increases the quality of teamwork and leadership capabilities and decision-making effectiveness. The three main elements of professional competence receive enhancement from emotional intelligence practice. Workplace conflict decreases when emotional intelligence levels rise because the improvement leads organizations toward better life-work balance (Day & Carroll, 2009).

### **Research Objectives**

Following were research objectives of the study to:

1. explore the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and professionalism at secondary level.
2. find out the effect of teachers' emotional intelligence on professionalism at secondary level.

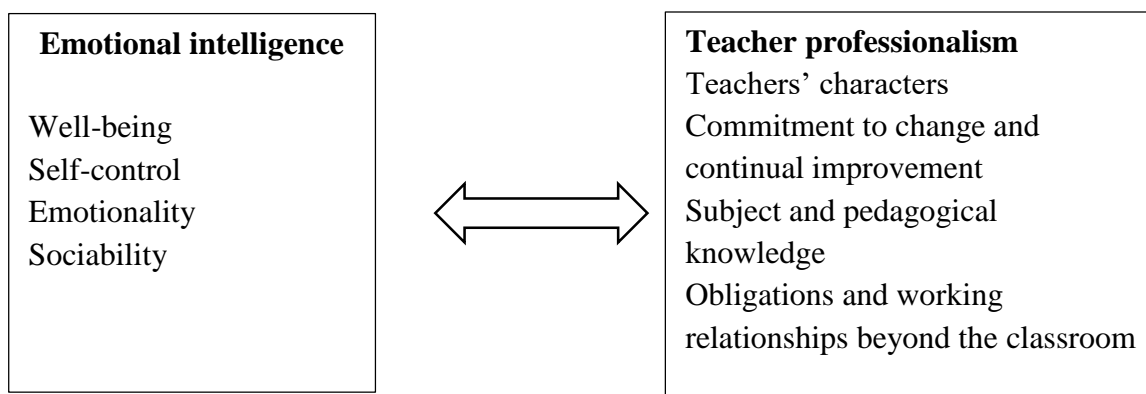
### **Research Questions**

Following were research questions of the study:

1. What is the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and professionalism at secondary level?
2. What is the effect of teachers' emotional intelligence on their professionalism at secondary level?

### **Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The conceptual framework is composed of interconnected concepts that depict the relationships among various factors. Emotional intelligence is characterized by four key elements: Wellbeing, Self-control, Emotionality, and Sociability. Likewise, teacher professionalism encompasses four components: Teachers' character, Commitment to change and continuous improvement, Subject and pedagogical expertise, and Responsibilities and relationships beyond the classroom. This study hypothesizes that the dimensions of emotional intelligence are significantly correlated with the dimensions of teacher professionalism.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study**

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The concept of emotional intelligence emerged through Goleman's research works during the 1990s. According to him emotional intelligence surpasses IQ measurements because it delivers superior predictions about personal life achievements. The authors Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence through monitoring emotional states of oneself and others. Human beings acquire emotional intelligence by gaining the ability to both comprehend emotions as well as learn appropriate emotional regulation methods for meetings with others. Through the common understanding we identify this ability as one which teaches teachers to comprehend both their personal feelings and those of others when interacting among beneficiaries and stakeholders.

### **Theories and Models of Emotional Intelligence**

The scholarly debate around emotional intelligence theories produced three central models which serve as the foundation of most empirical research and gained widespread public recognition according to Mayer (2006). The first emotional intelligence definition comes from Mayer and Salovey (1997). Emotional Intelligence model of emotional intelligence by Bar-On (1997) served as a second theory while Goldman's (1995) model of emotional intelligence provided the third theory. Different emotional intelligence theories present distinct understanding of what emotional intelligence means while producing separate forecasts about who possesses emotional intelligence. An overview of the three major theories of emotional intelligence is presented here.

### **Mayer and Salovey's Emotional Intelligence Theory**

Mayer and Salovey (1997) explain emotional intelligence as a collection of skills that influence how individuals vary in perceiving and interpreting emotions. The emotional intelligence capabilities are organized into four separate domains as per this theory (Mayer et al., 2000). The initial division in this theory called 'perception and expression of emotion' comprises the first element of emotional intelligence abilities. Within this branch identify and express both personal emotions and emotions of others which represent examples of specific abilities. The second division of the framework involves integrating emotion into cognition'. The skills within this domain enable individuals to set emotional priorities for their thinking and create emotional states that boost their judgment and memory effectiveness.

The third domain is understanding and analyzing emotion. Within this branch students demonstrate proficiency in two abilities which consist of emotion naming and tracking emotional fluctuations together with their associated emotional states. The fourth skill is referred to as managing emotions in oneself and others. The capabilities for this domain entail keeping an open mindset toward feelings as well as observing and managing emotional states to help both personal and cognitive development. According to the

developers of this model, their emotional intelligence theory uses evidence to show that emotional intelligence satisfies three similar intelligence standards (Mayer et al., 2000). Nearly all questions related to emotional intelligence reveal correct or incorrect solutions. Mental ability measures should link strongly with the skills comprising Emotional Intelligence. Emotional intelligence ability develops through greater extent as individuals reach higher age levels. Based on their emotional intelligence model the researchers predict that emotionally intelligent people demonstrate particular characteristics including experience with emotionally sensitive parenting and selecting appropriate emotional role models and show reduced defensiveness while gaining expert knowledge about emotions and mastering appropriate emotional communication and successful emotional reframing.

### **Bar-On Emotional Quotient Theory and Model of EI**

The concept originated from Bar-On's work in 1997. According to him emotional intelligence refers to a collection of non-cognitive skills together with capacities which enable individuals to handle difficulties that emerge while performing their jobs. emotional intelligence consists of 5 main elements as identified by Bar-on which serve as effective identifiers of employee achievement.

### **Goldman's Theory of EI**

According to Goldman's emotional intelligence encompasses five different domains which begin with emotion recognition followed by emotional regulation and continue with self-motivation and emotional perception in others. The third component, referred to as motivating oneself, emphasizes key skills like delaying gratification and controlling impulses. The fourth component, recognizing emotions in others, focuses on the ability to perceive others' needs and demonstrate empathy. The fifth domain of 'handling relationships' includes two essential competencies relating to interaction and management of other emotions. According to Goleman (1995) his model effectively predicts what leads to individual life success.

### **Petrides Model**

Petrides (2009) established his emotional intelligence model by explaining that emotional intelligence exists beyond abilities to operate through the combination of personal emotional traits and self-evaluations. The model consists of four elements which include Wellbeing, Self-control, Emotionality, and Sociability. To explore teacher perceptions of emotional intelligence, the researchers employed Petrides' model.

### **Teacher Professionalism**

The definition of teacher professionalism in different educational settings includes professional qualifications that require a teacher to excel at their work while meeting high expectations and achieving outstanding results. Modern teachers understand their professionalism through two dimensions according to Baggini (2005): their ability to cope with their professional challenges and the effective usage of their expertise in teaching. Professionalism in teaching starts as the employment status of individuals who teach for payment yet progresses to designate the best representatives who establish benchmarks for their field (Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). The evaluation of teaching conduct becomes more professional as teachers incorporate excellence standards to judge their performance and conduct respectively. The level at which one demonstrates professionalism depends on the absolute best standards (Phelps, 2006).

### **Trait-Based Model**

The Five-Factor Model (FFM) represented by Big Five Personality Traits has gained widespread acceptance as a trait theory framework according to McCrae and Costa (2003). This model stands among the initial academic models studying professionalism. The professional model examines fixed attributes which distinguish someone as a professional. Most people identify these characteristics as permanent elements

which establish their professional status. The first relevant trait among professionals is ‘Conscientiousness’ which demonstrates itself through behavioral elements such as punctuality and organizational skills and ethical teaching practice commitment. The second trait is ‘Emotional stability’ provides opposite characteristics of neuroticism while also enabling teachers to maintain control of their emotions as well as stress tolerance and classroom management skills. Agreeableness helps educational professionals develop positive bonds which become essential for creating respectful student and colleague relationships. The openness to experience trait within teachers enables both flexibility and willingness to adopt new innovative pedagogical methods.

### **Standards for the Teacher Leader Model**

The NEA (National Education Association, 2020) introduced the Teacher Leader Model Standards to define the essential competencies required of education leaders to enhance student learning and improve school success. Teachers as leaders function in two capacities according to these established standards while they promote instructional quality while contributing to whole-school development. This model contains seven distinct elements that make up its organizational structure.

1. In order to foster teacher development and improve student results, teacher leaders establish a cooperative framework.
2. The process of accessing research materials allows practitioners to improve their educational methods and academic outcomes for students.
3. Promoting professional learning for continuous improvement.
4. The model serves as a foundation for delivering better teaching methods that enhance student academic progress.
5. Encouraging the utilization of assessments and data to support schools and student growth.
6. A system to enhance family and community outreach activities and collaboration exists.
7. The professional advocate ensures student learning and supports the teaching profession.

These areas underline professional standards because they confirm that leader-teachers need to demonstrate both moral conduct and teamwork skills alongside the use of research evidence and ongoing professional development. The Teacher Leader Model Standards function as developmental tools to build leadership skills in educators which advance the wider definition of teacher professionalism in contemporary learning institutions.

## **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

### **Research Design**

A positivist paradigm structured this study (Kumatongo & Muzata, 2021; Phillips et al., 2000). This research adopted a descriptive-correlational non-experimental quantitative approach.

### **Population and Sampling Procedure**

The population consists of all participants from whom researchers select their desired sample (Hutchings, 2021; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2013). The research population consisted of all secondary school teachers in Lahore division. The population was used to select the study’s sample at random (Siddique et al., 2021; Siddique et al., 2023). The Lahore division was divided into four districts based on administrative criteria. A representative number of the entire population (Lodico et al., 2010) consisted of 8911 secondary school teachers within the Lahore division. The Lahore division consists of four distinct districts. The target group

was selected through a multi-stage random sampling process. The research selected two random districts from the four districts of Lahore division for its first-stage sampling. Random samples were used in one district to select two tehsils as the second step of the research design. Each selected tehsil contained thirty secondary schools for boys and thirty secondary schools for girls in the third round of selection. At the fourth stage seven Secondary School Teachers from each selected school were included in the research based on the four districts composing the Lahore division. The enrollment of SSTs in high schools typically reaches a minimum of seven or eight people and thereby seven instructors were selected from each educational institution. The research study included 395 secondary school teachers based in selected schools in Lahore division.

### **Research Instruments**

The proposed study utilized two questionnaires. The first instrument was the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF), created by Petrides (2009). Besides demographic information, the survey contained 30 items in total. The overall reliability of the questionnaire was strong (.82), covering four factors: well-being (7 items), self-control (8 items), emotionality (7 items), and sociability (8 items).

The second instrument was the Teacher Professionalism (TP) practice questionnaire, adapted from the works of Tichenor and Tichenor (2009) and Hasan (2015). Including demographic questions, this survey comprised 51 items. The overall reliability for measuring teachers' professionalism was high (.92), encompassing teachers' character (15 items), commitment to change and continuous improvement (11 items), subject and pedagogical knowledge (13 items), and obligations and relationships beyond the classroom (12 items).

Data collection occurred through postal mail and onsite school visits. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, including Pearson correlation coefficients, one-way ANOVA, and linear regression, were used by the researchers to analyze the data

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

According to the research questions, the relevant statistics have also been mentioned, and the researchers have presented the analyzed data in several tables along with data interpretation.

**Table 1**

#### ***Descriptive Analysis of Emotional Intelligence of Teachers (Factor-wise)***

Factors	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Well being	27.63	2.227
Self-control	26.83	2.933
Emotionality	25.60	2.405
Sociability	29.97	2.481
Overall	110.05	8.092

Table 1 presents the minimum, maximum, and means scores, along with the standard deviations. Among the emotional intelligence dimensions, Sociability recorded the highest mean score at 29.97 (SD = 2.481), while Emotionality showed the lowest mean score at 25.60 (SD = 2.405).

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics for Professionalism in secondary level teachers*

FACTORS	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
TEACHERS' CHARACTER	66.70	6.282
COMMITMENT TO CHANGE & CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT	48.70	4.995
SUBJECT AND PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE	57.55	5.690
OBLIGATIONS & WORKING RELATIONSHIPS	53.20	5.308
OVERALL	226.17	21.415

Table 2 reveals that teachers rated themselves highest in terms of their character ( $M = 66.70$ ,  $SD = 6.282$ ), followed by their commitment to change and continual improvement, as well as obligations and working relationships ( $M = 53.20$ ,  $SD = 4.274$ ). The lowest self-rating was given for their commitment to change and continual improvement ( $M = 48.70$ ,  $SD = 4.995$ ).

**Table 3**  
*Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Teacher Professionalism*

Variables	<i>N</i>	<i>r-value</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Professionalism	395	.605**	.000

\*\*  $p < .01$  (2-tailed)

Table 3 demonstrates a moderate positive correlation among teachers' emotional intelligence and professionalism, with a correlation coefficient of ( $r = .605^{**}$ ,  $n = 395$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

**Table 4**  
*Effect of Teachers' Emotional Intelligence on Professionalism*

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	Model <i>R</i> Square
Emotional Intelligence & Well-being	.657	14.234	.001	.432

As presented in Table 4, the linear regression analysis demonstrates an  $R^2$  value of .432, suggesting that Emotional Intelligence explains 43.2% of the variance in Teacher Professionalism (TP). The beta coefficient (.657) is statistically significant ( $p = .001$ ). These results highlight a significant effect of Emotional Intelligence on Teacher Professionalism, with a  $\beta$  value of .657 at  $p = .001$ .

## DISCUSSION

Emotional Intelligence directly impacts teaching professionalism because it shapes how teachers maintain their ethical practices and control classrooms and handle emotional situations. Teachers with strong emotional intelligence through their self-awareness and emotional competence and empathy capabilities maintain superior abilities to minimize stress and solve conflicts while building nurturing learning

environments. Goleman (1995) together with Ward (2008) demonstrated how emotional intelligence develops strong bonds between educators and their students. Educators who possess emotional intelligence handle occupational stress better since they prevent burnout while keeping their professional demeanors under demanding situations (Racket et al., 2010; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Beyond one's own traits, emotional intelligence influences how teachers work with one another and the culture of the school as entire. People with high emotional intelligence achieve better teamwork results as well as improved communication while mastering feedback processes (Mayer et al., 2004). Strong emotional capabilities within teachers enable them to reflect deeply while seeking personal development and dedicated improvement (Zeindner et al., 2009). Through building trust relations with students they help motivate students while establishing a professional environment of positive content. The ability to handle emotional situations as well as work-life management and job satisfaction arises from emotional intelligence which serves as a vital professional requirement in education (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

## CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence acts as a vital connection to teaching professionalism because it advances both teaching effectiveness and academic student welfare. Teachers who demonstrate high emotional intelligence abilities maintain control of their emotions and comprehend emotions in others together with the ability to maintain professional conduct across different types of interpersonal situations. Emotional intelligence increases classroom management and stress resilience, which strengthens the bonds between teachers and students while also increasing student learning outcomes and teacher efficiency. The practice of emotional intelligence produces positive relationships within schools since it promotes teamwork between colleagues and generates a constructive educational environment. Professional development programs that teach Emotional Intelligence help teachers handle emotional and professional obstacles which results in prolonged professional dedication and improved educational outcomes.

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