

A Study of Emotional Intelligence of Teachers in Relation to Gender and Teaching Experience

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Received for publication: 06 June 2022.

Accepted for publication: 03 August 2022.

Abstract

The emotional intelligence of teachers has a very significant contribution to the educational field and helps to create a constructive teaching-learning ambiance. Emotionally intelligent persons are found successful in personal and professional life. Teachers' high emotional intelligence directly or indirectly helps to all-around development and success of adolescent students. This article mainly attempted to explore the following objectives: to explore teachers' emotional intelligence concerning gender and to know teachers' emotional intelligence irrespective of different teaching experiences like less, medium, and highly experienced groups. Data were collected from 300 secondary school teachers of randomly selected 15 government-aided schools from five districts of West Bengal state in India. Data were collected using multistage sampling procedures. Data were analyzed using t-test and ANOVA. Major findings were female teachers were significantly more emotionally intelligent in relation to the male. Further, the medium-experienced teachers had more emotional intelligence than the low-experienced teachers. Finally, the robust findings indicated that emotional intelligence can be interrelated with other psychological variables and can be used in further studies in different research areas.

Keywords: Adolescent, Constructive teaching-learning ambiance, Emotional Intelligence, Gender, Professional Life and Teaching Experience

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a very significant construct (Meyers, 2009) in psychology, especially in school education. It has been widely accepted as a weighty factor in cognitive and also social development (Mestre, et al., 2006). Goleman (1995) said that 80% of any success depends on emotional intelligence and the rest on ordinary intelligence. Proper use of emotions as per situations and controlling of negative emotions will help everyone to succeed in life. High emotionally intelligent teachers can inculcate motivation, self-discipline stress reduction capability as a result students achieve high academically (Elliot & Dweck, 2005). Teaching is a very prestigious profession and teachers are the backbone of society. Emotional intelligent teachers have high empathy so they can understand the students in a better way. Empathy is a significant dimension of understanding students.

Teachers can make a positive teaching-learning environment. A classroom consisted of several students from different backgrounds and individual students are different and have different personalities. Teachers' social skills and motivation are important because the classroom is a social laboratory. If teachers can motivate intrinsically then students can learn in any challenging situation and can be successful in personal and professional life. Educational institutions can organize some

seminars and workshops for developing the emotional intelligence of teachers (Brockbank & McGill, 2007). Teachers need to think about emotional intelligence and need to imbibe it in themselves. Teachers' emotional intelligence helps to enhance the same things among students. Teachers always try to focus on academic parts but today emotional intelligence is the need of the hour in the digitalization era. For example, teachers should call students by their names so that students get attention. Highly emotional intelligent teachers must provide interactive learning environments for both students and their teachers (Hargreaves, 1998).

Emotionally intelligent people can work under pressure and they are resilient, optimistic, empathetic, and self-confident. But, emotional outbursts may create aggressive behavior and destroy self-esteem. Delinquent behaviors during the adolescent period are the results of the outburst of negative emotions (Ogurlu, 2020b). Teachers can channel the students' negative emotions during adolescent periods so that they can adjust to every situation at the same time they will get success in their personal and professional life. The value system may be reduced (Mortiboys, 2005). Emotional intelligence also helps to adapt and increase learning emotional skills (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Romero, et al., 2014). So, it can be increased through different courses and workshops.

The study attempted to explore whether the emotional intelligence of teachers differs in relation to gender, whether teachers differ in emotional intelligence irrespective of different teaching experiences like less, medium, and highly experienced groups. Therefore, it is a comparative study of emotional intelligence concerning two contextual variables i.e. gender and teaching experience. Thus, the study dealt with three variables, and details are given as follows:

Emotional Intelligence

It is one of the significant skills of an individual to know, understand, and capability to regulate emotions effectively in different situations. It is the skill of discriminating between different types of emotions and managing those emotions effectively (Salovey and Rodin, 1985; Goleman, 1995). The original tool was developed by Bar-On (2000). The instrument considered the following dimensions:

Intrapersonal Abilities

It is the skill of managing different types of emotions effectively and abilities to face challenging situations.

Interpersonal Abilities

It is the skill of interacting and collaborating effectively with others in verbal and non-verbal ways.

Managing Stress

It is the ability to operate different types of emotional and physical tensions properly and channel emotions positively.

Mood Adaptability

It is the adjustment ability of different types of temporary emotions as per the situations.

Gender (Demographic Variable)

In this study, gender is considered to be a contextual and categorical variable with two levels, namely, male teachers and female teachers. These two levels are indicated by 1 for male teachers and 2 for female teachers who are teaching at the secondary level of the West Bengal board of secondary education.

Teaching experience (Demographic Variable)

The term 'Teaching experience' researcher referred to the experience in the teaching profession at the secondary level. There were three types of experiences, namely, less experienced teachers

(less than 5 years), medium experienced teachers (5-10 years), and highly experienced teachers (>10 years). Thus, 'Teaching experience' is considered as a categorical variable with three levels which were leveled as 1 was denoted for less, 2 for medium, and 3 for highly experienced teachers.

Need of the study

Teaching is a dynamic process where a teacher must face varied numbers of situations. One becomes an effective teacher when one becomes able to cope with those. This kind of adjustment capacity is the reflection of the emotional intelligence of the teacher. A proper definition of emotional intelligence remains unclear. Diverse terms have been used by different authors to refer to similar constructs. There is a contradiction in definitions that helps to develop emotional intelligence theory and models. It is the skill to identify and discriminate different types of emotions and manage those emotions effectively (van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004), effectively use of emotions (Bandura, 1977), is a kind of non-cognitive competency that helps to adjust and adapt to different difficult situations (Bar-On, 2006), it is a kind of cognitive ability helps in understanding and regulating emotions effectively (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). Hence, there is an inconsistency in the definition of emotional intelligence across studies. Eventually, this area emerges as a fertile area for educational research.

Theorists generally agree that emotional intelligence is a multidimensional construct, although the number and nature of inconsistencies in the dimensions and measurements of EI (Zeidner, 2017), the multiplicity of modes of measurement of emotional intelligence using the different instruments is another challenge. The emotional Intelligence Scale appeared to be widely used in some studies (Ciarrochi, et al., 2001; Austin, et al., 2004). Apart from this scholars have used Inventory (Bar-On, 2000; Sala, 2002), and Test (Mayer, et al., 2004; Brackett & Salovey, 2006) for the same purpose. Throughout the different studies, it is found that there is an inconsistency in the definition, structure, and measurement of emotional intelligence. There are certain tools to measure emotional intelligence for students, and executives in the Indian context. But very few studies are conducted to measure the emotional intelligence of teachers. Intrapersonal abilities, interpersonal abilities, managing stress, and mood adaptability were selected to measure emotional intelligence Bar-On (2000).

The present study

The present study is a kind of comparative study of emotional intelligence concerning gender and the teaching experience of teachers. The major focus is: whether teachers differ across gender? Whether it varies across teaching experience?

Objectives of the study

For answering these questions the following objectives were formulated:

1. To compare the mean scores of emotional intelligence of male and female teachers.
2. To compare the mean scores of emotional intelligence of less, medium, and highly experienced teachers.

Hypotheses of the study

The hypotheses were formed following the above research objectives as follows:

H₀1: There exists no significant difference in mean scores of emotional intelligence of male and female teachers.

H₀2: There exists no significant difference in means scores of emotional intelligence of less, medium, and highly experienced teachers.

Materials and Methods

Method

There were two contextual variables: gender and teaching experience. For this quantitative data was collected from different secondary school teachers at the same point in time. Hence, for the present study, a cross-sectional survey research method was followed.

Sample

Three hundred teachers in West Bengal formed the sample of the study. The participants were selected following multistage sampling procedures. Teachers of the less, medium, and highly experienced teachers were selected for the present study across the schools. The detail of the sample was given in table 1.

Table 1. Details of the sample for the present study

Demographic Variables	Sample (300 teachers)	
	N	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	150	50
Female	150	50
Teaching experience		
Less experienced teachers	100	33.33
Medium experienced teachers	100	33.33
High experienced teachers	100	33.33

There were 100 less experienced teachers, 100 medium experienced teachers, and 100 highly experienced teachers in the present sample. Among the 300 teachers 150 (50%) were males and 150 (50%) were females. All the participants belonged to 15 secondary schools in West Bengal. The schools were randomly selected from four districts, namely, Birbhum (3 schools), East Bardhaman (3 schools), Nadia (3 schools), Hooghly (3 schools), and Murshidabad (3 schools). All the schools were in Bengali medium state-aided.

Measures

The Emotional Quotient Inventory was used which was previously used in many studies (Bechter, et al., 2021) consists of 20 items. The original tool was developed by Bar-On (2000). This tool consisted of four dimensions: intrapersonal abilities, interpersonal abilities, managing stress, and mood adaptability. It consisted of high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.86) as reported in the previous different studies (Allen et al., 2012).

Data collection procedures

The researcher has taken permission from the head of the institution for data collection from their teachers who were teaching classes IX-X. After getting permission from the head of the institution/school all the secondary teachers who are teaching Class-IX and Class-X of each particular school were informed about the study. It was instructed to them that the tool will only be used for research purposes and they are requested to provide answers with the utmost degree of honesty. Teachers were also instructed that their responses were kept confidential and also neither going to be evaluated nor to be disclosed anywhere that was only used for research purposes. The above selected five-point rating scale was provided to all the teachers who were teaching classes IX-X to fill it. The secondary school teachers are asked to provide their responses on certain items which

were prepared to check the emotional intelligence of teachers along with some demographic information like gender and teaching experience about them. Under the supervision of the researcher, all the sessions were executed in specific schools. However, no incentives were entertained for the teachers for that data collection purpose.

Data analysis strategy

In the present study, two null hypotheses were tested using an independent sample t-test, and the second one using One-Way ANOVA.

Results

Hypotheses 1

The first hypothesis which is a null form can be tested with the help of a t-test. It consisted two-variable namely gender and emotional intelligence of teachers. There were two levels of gender namely males and females whereas emotional intelligence is a continuous variable measured on an interval scale therefore for testing the hypothesis independent sample t-test (2-tailed) and SPSS was used for data analysis. The outputs of SPSS given in Table 2 and the Gender-wise Mean, Standard deviation, N, and t-Values of emotional intelligence of teachers are in Table 3.

Table 2. Group Statistics

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
Emotional Intelligence	Males	150	52.42	7.74	0.63
	Females	150	75.16	8.26	0.68

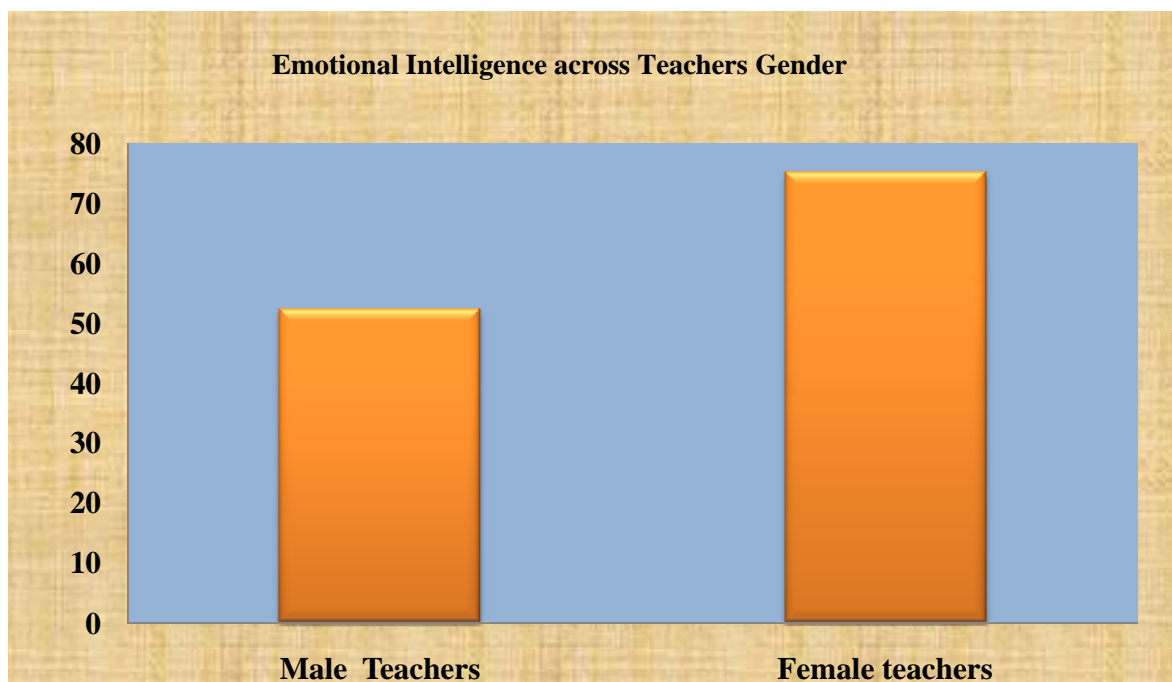


Figure 1. Emotional Intelligence across Gender

From table 3, It was evident that the t-value was 35.53 which was significant at a 0.001 level with $df = 298$. That means the null hypothesis was rejected. So, mean scores differ significantly concerning gender.

Table 3. Gender-wise M, SD, N, and t-Values

Variable	Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	t-value	Remarks
Emotional Intelligence	Males	52.42	7.74	150	35.53	p<0.01
	Females	75.16	8.26	150		

However, the mean scores of female teachers were 75.16 which was significantly higher than that of male teachers (52.42), and figure 1 also depicted the same that female teachers' emotional intelligence was higher than males. It may, therefore, be said that female teachers' emotional intelligence was found to be significantly more than that of their counterpart male teachers.

Hypotheses 2

The second hypothesis which is formulated in a null form can be tested with the help of one-way ANOVA. Data were analyzed using SPSS given in the following Table 4.

Table 4. Analysis of variance

Emotional intelligence					
	Sum of square	Degree of freedom	Mean square	F-value	Sig.
Between Group	13224.25	2	6612.13	11.32	p<.01
Within Group	173521.03	297	584.25		
Total	186745.28	299			

It can be said that the F-value was 11.32 significant at 0.01 level with $df = 2/297$ given in table 4. It shows that mean scores of the less, medium, and highly experienced teachers' emotional intelligence differ significantly. So the null hypothesis was rejected. Teaching Experience wise mean, N and standard error, and standard deviation of emotional intelligence of teachers are given in table 5. To know which type of experienced teachers had significantly higher mean scores of emotional intelligence, the data were further analyzed using Duncan multiple range tests given in Table 6.

Table 5. Teaching Experience wise mean, N and standard error and standard deviation of emotional intelligence of teachers

Variable	Groups	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Emotional Intelligence	Less experienced teachers	100	58.25	5.24	2.01
	Medium experienced teachers	100	72.18	4.72	2.47
	High experienced teachers	100	71.52	5.63	1.98

It showed in Table 6 that the mean scores of medium and less experienced teachers differed significantly. The mean score of medium experienced teachers was 72.18 which was significantly higher than that of less experienced teachers mean score was 58.25.

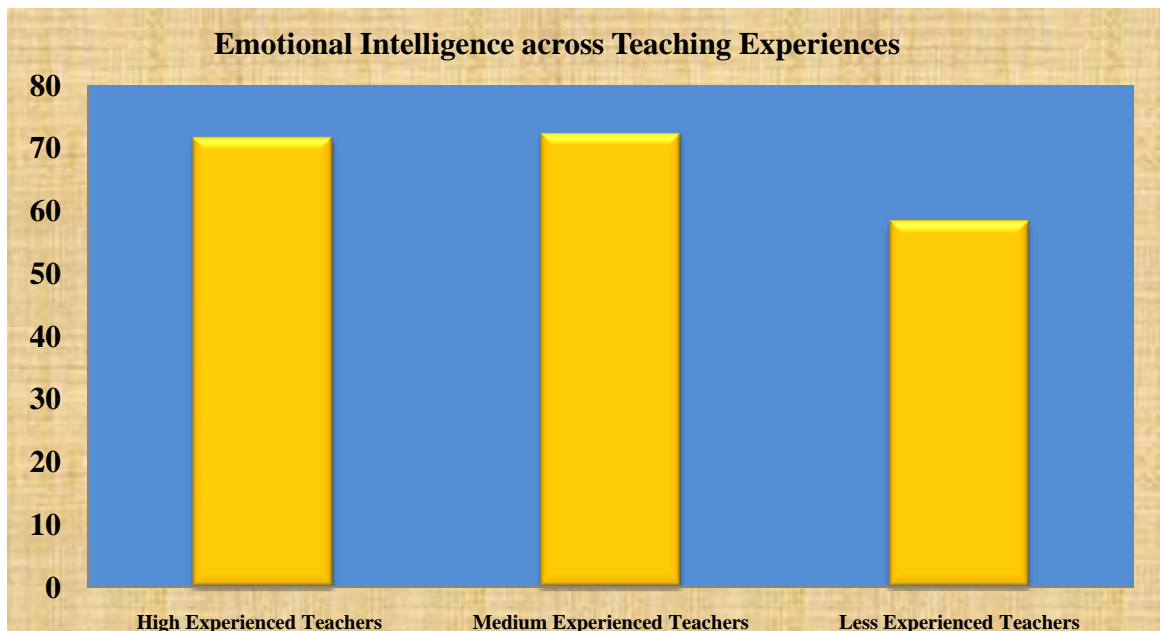


Figure 2. Emotional Intelligence Across Teaching Experience

Figure 2 depicted the same things that mean the score of medium experienced teachers was higher than less experienced teachers' emotional intelligence. It was found that medium experienced teachers are significantly more emotionally intelligent than less experienced teachers. The mean score of medium experienced and highly experienced emotional intelligent teachers did not differ significantly. It may therefore be said that teachers of medium experienced and highly experienced were found to believe to the same extent emotionally intelligent.

Table 6. Teaching Experience wise mean, N and significance of difference among mean scores of emotional intelligence of teachers

Teaching Experience	M	N	Medium experienced teachers	High experienced teachers
Less experienced teachers	58.25	100	**	**
Medium experienced teachers	72.18	100		Not Significant
High experienced teachers	71.52	100		

**significant at 0.01 level

It was depicted in Table 6 that the mean scores of less experienced and highly experienced teachers' emotional intelligence differ significantly. The mean scores of emotional intelligence of highly experienced teachers were 71.52 which was significantly higher than that of less experienced teachers 58.25. It may therefore be said that highly experienced teachers were significantly more emotionally intelligent than less experienced teachers. On the whole, it might be said that teachers

with medium and high experience were relatively more emotional intelligence than the less experienced teachers.

Discussion

On the basis of data analysis, the major findings emerged that the mean score of female teachers was 75.16 which was significantly higher than male teachers that were 52.42. So, females have stronger emotional intelligence than male teachers. Some of the following studies are in line with these findings like female teachers are more empathetic and more emotionally intelligent Bar-On (2002). Major findings supported those studies where female teachers had higher social skills and socializing abilities (Naghavi & Redzuan, 2011). Further, parents take part in more emotional talk with their daughters mainly than sons (e.g., Adams et al., 1995; Fivush et al., 2000). Brody (1997) found different types of social dynamics status imbalance and discrimination in gender roles were the major cause of differences in emotional intelligence. Females being motherly in nature may be the reason for healthy relations with others, especially with learners. From childhood to adulthood parents prepare mentally for their daughters so that they need to keep patience in stages of life (UNESCO, 2011).

However, the findings of the present study contradicted the Goleman (1998) perspective that neither males nor females surpass each other. Every human being has a personal emotional intelligence profile with some capacities and faintness. He also argued that there were certain similarities and dissimilarities irrespective of different gender groups. Few females were adaptive as males and few males are sensitive and expressive as females. If their emotional intelligence profile averages out then there remains no gender difference in overall emotional intelligence. Goleman (1998) also contradicted that both gender groups were with the same qualification and in the same profession so their job demand was also similar as well and handled the challenges successfully. The findings of the study were more encouraging for the female teachers than that for the male teachers.

From the present article, it was revealed that the mean score for high experience teachers was 71.52, the mean score for medium experience teachers was 72.18, and the mean score for low experience teachers was 58.25, $p < 0.01$. That means teaching experience affects the emotional intelligence of teachers. So, the medium experience was stronger emotional intelligence than less experienced teachers. These results are supported by some of the previous studies that also found similar kinds of results (Mayer et al, 1999; Sanches-Nunez, et al., 2008; Ghanizadeh and Moafian 2009; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010), but these findings also contradicted with some of the previous studies (Cobb 2004; Penrose et al., 2007; Rastegar and Memarpour 2009) they found that emotional intelligence was independent of their teaching experiences. That means there was no impact of teaching experiences on the emotional intelligence of teachers.

Conclusions

Teachers can inculcate values in the students by grooming them. The teacher must have rich content knowledge along with skills and strategies to teach with emotional intelligence that can create a positive working ambiance. Teachers need to use emotional intelligence in learning experiences (Mortiboys, 2005). The teachers may be aware of the gender gap in emotional intelligence across different teaching experiences. They may be motivated to plan strategies for promoting emotional intelligence through activity-based teaching. They may devise activities to ensure their active participation irrespective of gender. Further, future researchers may investigate the factors that help to increase emotional intelligence. Studies may be conducted to identify the teachers' characteristics

that influence emotional intelligence. This study was limited to a small sample consisting of teachers of less, medium, and highly experienced teachers under the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education (WBBSE). Instead, the Bar-On EQ-self-report test by Mayer et al., 2002 can be used to identify it in a better way. However, this comparative study may be extended to other contextual factors like gender. Further, several studies focusing on the emotional intelligence of specific groups may be more meaningful.

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