

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A DETERMINANT OF LIFE SKILLS AMONG PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT:

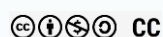
Teaching is considered one of the more stressful professions, particularly due to the frequent interpersonal interactions with students and society, where educators must navigate not only the emotions of students, parents, and colleagues, etc. Emotional intelligence (EI) has been recognized as an important concept across various areas of everyday life, such as mental health and physical health, social interactions, academic and workplace performance. In this study, the emotional intelligence of Prospective teachers (B.Ed students) is taken for research. A normative survey method was adopted for this study. The researcher chose 500 students from 10 B.Ed colleges located in Madurai District, Tamil Nadu, India as a sample. This study uses a purposive sampling method. The investigator constructed & validated a tool for the Emotional Intelligence Rating Scale (EIRS). The statistical tools used in this study are frequency analysis and the t-test..

KEYWORDS: Emotional Intelligence, Prospective Teachers, Life Skills, Teaching

PAPER CITATION:

Jayachithra, J.: "Emotional intelligence as a determinant of life skills among prospective teachers", *International Journal of Informative & Futuristic Research (IJIFR)*, Vol.(13) (5), January 2026, pp. 535-541

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64672/IJIFR/26.01.13.5.014>

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1. INTRODUCTION

Life skills denote the capabilities that allow people to efficiently manage challenges, demands of day to day life. They enhance mental well-being in young people and help them confront real-life situations. Education in life skills fosters mental health and readiness, equipping individuals to act in socially positive ways. Life skills education empowers children, encouraging them to take greater responsibility for their actions. These skills inspire healthy behaviors and boost self-confidence. Consequently, we can assert that they contribute to improved psychological health and play a significant role in preventing psychological disorders and behavioral issues. For instance, research on substance abuse has showed that three interconnected factors are involved: - Low self-worth, challenges in conveying feelings, and insufficient relationship skills.

Despite the technological and educational development, the educational institutes are often challenged by the issues regarding the educational system. These concerns primarily revolve around unsatisfactory academic results, the pressures and expectations placed by parents, the declining standards of education, the inactivity of students, the excessive burdens on teachers, and so on. Such challenges hinder teachers' ability to meet both academic progress and the societal expectations from parents and students. Social pressure builds emotional interactions and challenges among teachers. Ignat and Clipa (2012) believe that if educators emphasize the enhancement of their professional and emotional skills, they can more easily overcome such challenges. In this context, emotional intelligence (EI) acts as an essential resource that assists teachers in managing their emotions when faced with societal issues that disrupt their emotional stability. In addition, the views of Beilock and Ramírez (2011) states that it is important to study the emotions of a classroom environment in order to recall the learning patterns and motivations of the student. The capability to comprehend and oversee the emotions in social contexts is crucial to attain success in interpersonal and career domains (Zeidner, Matthews & Roberts, 2004). Emotional intelligence is a significant psychological element that greatly influences an employee's capabilities and performance.

The famous psychologist E.L. Thorndike gave emphasis on Emotional Intelligence through his concept of social intelligence 1920. Thorndike characterized social intelligence as “the capacity to understand and interact with individuals of various ages and genders in order to enhance social connections.” Goleman stated that “Emotional intelligence accounts for skills that are different from, yet complementary to, academic intelligence, which is linked to cognitive abilities reflected in IQ tests.” It pertains to “the capacity to identify our own thoughts as well as those of others, to gain insight into ourselves, and to regulate our emotions and those of others.” He argues that emotional intelligence constitutes a crucial group of psychological skills associated with life success.

The primary focus of an educational community revolves around the teacher, who serves as a facilitator for interpersonal connections and the educational processes. Consequently, social and emotional skills are acknowledged globally as a fundamental component of a ‘knowledge society’.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The way individuals manage their emotions and skills affects learning experiences, overall well-being—both psychological and bodily—the quality of relationships, academic success (Brackett & Caruso, 2007). Thus, the emotional intelligence of teachers is essential not only for their own health but also for promoting effective teaching and learning, especially in supporting students' socio-emotional growth (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003).

Positive emotions among teachers can enhance their well-being and lead to a more favorable learning environment (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In contrast, negative feelings such as anxiety, depression, and anger can reduce cognitive functioning and information processing capacity (Eysenck & Calvo, 1992). Teaching is inherently a demanding job. An increase in negative stress levels and insufficient emotional intelligence may result in burnout. A study said that burnout negatively impacts teachers' mental and

physical health, but also the effectiveness of teaching and learning outcomes. Previous research suggests that negative emotions can affect both trainee performance and the character of educational instruction (Vanderberg & Huberman, 1999).

Emotional intelligence favorably influences a teacher's self-belief. Since teachers' self-belief is connected to pupils' empowerment, improving educators' emotional intelligence seems to be a further effective approach for improving student success. Educators with high emotional intelligence often apply more coping strategies in response to various school-related stressors, leading to greater productivity (Brackett & Palomera). It is commonly noted that educators view emotion management as a crucial skill for achieving academic goals, fostering healthy social connections, and succeeding in educational environments (Sutton & Harper).

The service industry, emotional intelligence is especially vital due to the constant and direct interactions between individuals. A study in the food service industry by Sy, Tram, O'Hara (2006) found that Individuals in leadership positions who possess high emotional intelligence tend to perform better at addressing the needs of their employees in terms of job management within the organization. Similarly, other researchers have explored the link between transformational leadership and their ability to influence the emotions and moods of both customers and employees (Bono, Foldes, Vinson & Muros, 2007). Leaders possessing strong emotional intelligence frequently engage in emotional labor at work to maintain professionalism, thereby creating an appropriate emotional environment during interactions. In this context, emotional labor refers to the management the adjustment of one's emotions to meet job and organizational expectations is an important aspect of workplace dynamics (Diefendorff et al., 2005; Pugh, 2001). Bono and Vey (2007) emphasized the crucial role of emotional labor in job performance, particularly within the service industry. However, Grandey, Fisk, and Steiner (2005) noted that emotional labor can be quite taxing for employees who lack sufficient autonomy in their roles. Despite these challenges, workers can effectively manage and shape their emotions even in difficult situations.

A person's capacity to understand their own emotions helps in regulating those feelings during interactions with others. Additionally, it aids in recognizing when emotional labor is necessary. Brotheridge (2006) argues that emotional intelligence plays an important role in anticipating situational requirements, which can then guide expectations for emotional labor. Employees with high emotional intelligence recognize that expressing emotions is vital for their roles. Furthermore, for jobs that require emotional labor, performance in such roles can be anticipated through the framework of emotional intelligence (Joseph & Newman, 2010).

Tobias et al., 2025, study says that "Exploring Emotional Intelligence and Teaching Performance of New Generation Educators." Emotional intelligence (EI) is crucial for enhancing the performance of new educators, as research links higher EI to better teaching and student outcomes. This study aims to improve professional development and support for future educators.

Maraza-Quispe et al., 2025, this study titled "Emotional Intelligence in Teaching: A Key to Performance and Institutional Climate in Basic Education" explores the connection between emotional intelligence (EI), teaching performance, and institutional climate (IC) within the realm of basic education. The findings indicate that higher levels of emotional intelligence are positively associated with enhanced teaching effectiveness and a more favorable school environment. As a result, the study advocates for the implementation of EI training programs to foster improvements in both teaching quality and institutional climate.

Tolentino, 2023, Study shows that "Emotional Intelligence and Experiences: Their Relationship to Teaching Performance". This study explored the connections between the profiles of teachers, their experience, emotional intelligence, and their effectiveness in teaching. Utilizing Google Forms, it applied a descriptive-correlational approach to assess demographic information. Findings revealed that emotional intelligence and experience significantly enhance teaching performance. The study

recommends collaboration among district supervisors, principals, and donors to support teachers' postgraduate education.

J.H. West & P. Cougar Hall, 2011, shows that "Potential predictors of student teaching performance: Considering emotional intelligence". The study found a positive link between GPA and Praxis scores with teaching performance in 74 student teachers, accounting for 16% of variance. However, emotional intelligence showed no correlation with teaching performance.

3. OBJECTIVES

- To assess the level of Emotional Intelligence of prospective teachers
- To study the Emotional Intelligence of prospective teachers with respect to their gender
- To research the Emotional Intelligence of prospective teachers with respect to their educational qualification

4. HYPOTHESES

- There will be a significant difference between Men and Women with respect to their Emotional Intelligence among prospective teachers
- There will be a significant difference between Undergraduates (UG'S) and Post graduates (PG'S) with respect to their Emotional Intelligence among prospective teachers

5. METHODOLOGY

In this study, the normative survey method was utilized. The study population consisted of prospective teachers, specifically B.Ed students, enrolled in various colleges of education across Tamil Nadu, India. The researcher selected a sample of 500 B.Ed students from 10 colleges situated in the Madurai District, using a purposive sampling strategy. The goal of this approach was to maintain a balanced representation of male and female participants in the sample. Both genders were included, along with a diverse set of twelve subjects: Tamil, English, Mathematics, Physical Science, Biological Science, History, Geography, Home Science, Commerce, Economics, Computer Science, and Social Science, with their selection reflecting the overall population proportions. The investigator developed and validated an Emotional Intelligence Rating Scale (EIRS) for this study. To analyze the data, frequency analysis and the 't' test were employed as the statistical methods.

6. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Table 1: Distribution of Frequencies Regarding Emotional Intelligence Levels

S.No	Level of Emotional Intelligence	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	134	26.8
2	Mediocre	237	47.4
3	High	129	25.8
Total		500	100

From the table, we can see that 26.8% of students fall into the low level of emotional intelligence, 47.4% are at the mediocre level, and 25.8% qualify as having a high level. As a result, we determine that most students possess a mediocre level of emotional intelligence.

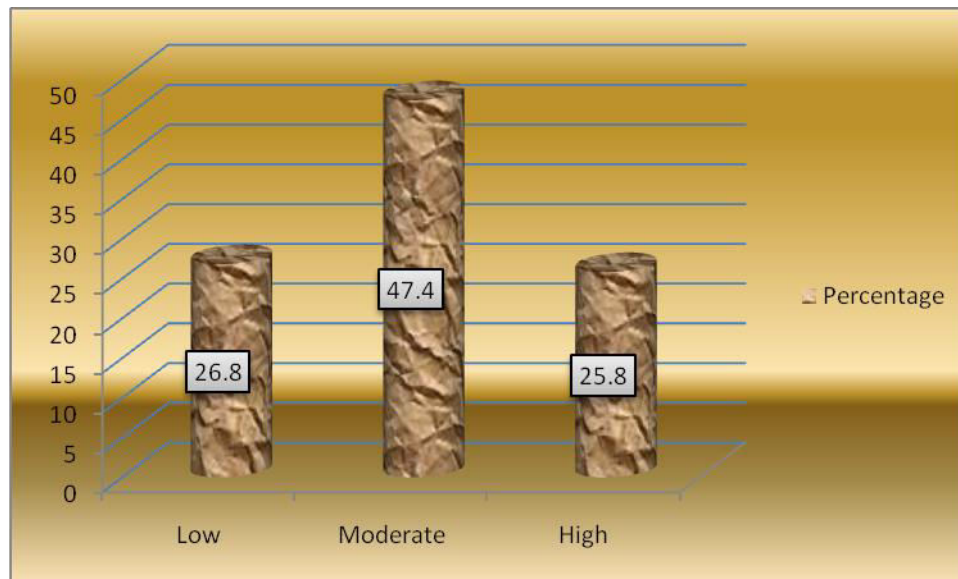


Figure 1: Level of Emotional Intelligence

Hypothesis I

There will be a significant difference between Men and Women with respect to their Emotional Intelligence among prospective teachers

Table 2: 't' values related to differences in gender

Correlates	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance
Emotional Intelligence	Men	200	44.51	9.65	1.55	NS
	Women	300	43.16	9.32		

The computed 't' value is 1.55, which is lower than the critical value of 1.96. Since it is not significant, we accept the null hypothesis. Thus, we determine that there is no meaningful difference in emotional intelligence between male and female prospective teachers.

Hypothesis II

There will be a significant difference between Undergraduates (UG'S) and Post graduates (PG'S) with respect to their Emotional Intelligence among prospective teachers.

Table 3: 't' values for Educational Qualification

Correlates	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance
Emotional Intelligence	UG	408	43.72	9.67	0.1	NS
	PG	92	43.62	8.53		

The above table shows that the calculated 't' value is 0.1, which is less than the table value of 1.96, it is not considered significant. Hence, we accept the null hypothesis. This concludes that there is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between undergraduates (UGs) and postgraduates (PGs) among prospective teachers.

7. FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

This study indicates that the majority of prospective teachers possess a moderate level of emotional intelligence. It concludes that there is no significant difference in emotional intelligence between men and women among these prospective teachers. This finding is encouraging since it suggests that gender does not affect emotional intelligence in this group. Additionally, the study found no significant

difference in emotional intelligence between undergraduates (UGs) and postgraduates (PGs) among prospective teachers, which implies that educational qualification does not influence emotional intelligence either. Overall, these findings are fairly positive.

8. CONCLUSION

Today's educators are required to exhibit strong intellectual, ethical, and social growth while encouraging these traits in their students. They must learn to work collaboratively with the entire educational community, comprehend their surroundings, and run schools efficiently. The demanding role of educators in the constantly evolving landscape of Indian society underscores the necessity for reform in pre-service teacher training programs. Emotional Quotient (E.Q.), which gauges emotional intelligence, is as critical—if not more so—than Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.), which assesses abstract reasoning to achieve success and fulfillment in life, it is essential to have educators who are proficient in imparting life skills. Only those teachers equipped with these vital competencies can effectively prepare individuals for the challenges they may encounter and can impart these vital abilities to their students at the same time. This means that teacher education programs should encompass thorough training in life skills. For existing teachers, regular in-service training on life skills should be organized by university education departments, colleges for teacher training, and teacher education universities. This strategy will ultimately strengthen the student community.

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