

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Influencing Teachers' Self-Efficacy: Case of Albania

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Abstract: *Emotional Intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage your own and others' emotions. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in Emotional Intelligence, particularly in education, as evidenced by numerous research studies conducted in this area. Throughout the literature, the results emphasize the idea that Emotional Intelligence is strongly correlated with variables such as teachers' and students' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, subjective well-being, and students' positive attitudes. The primary objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Self—efficacy, employing a quantitative research design with a correlational method. Instruments used to measure this relationship are the Quick Emotional Intelligence Assessment for Emotional Intelligence and the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (short form). The hypothesis was held to explore if there is a positive relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. Moderate to strong positive correlations were found between Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy variables.*

Keywords: teachers, emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, correlation, gender.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in emotional intelligence, particularly in education, as evidenced by numerous research studies conducted in this area. Throughout the literature, gained results emphasize the idea that emotional intelligence is strongly correlated with variables such as teachers' and students' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, subjective well-being, and students' positive attitudes. An essential variable correlating with EI is teacher self-efficacy. Teachers have a significant impact on students' educational outcomes. School is the institution that makes the difference in terms of students' achievements and well-being. Recent research studies have been designed to explore the impact of Emotional Intelligence on Teacher self-efficacy. Based on the recent literature, EI is essential in guaranteeing student well-being and positive achievement. Emotional intelligence (EI) and self-efficacy beliefs are critical psychological concepts that necessitate a thorough understanding to enhance teachers' effectiveness (Wu, Y., et al., 2018).

Aim of the study

The primary objective of this research study is to investigate the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and their self-efficacy.

Research questions:

What are the prevailing levels of emotional intelligence among in-service teachers?

What levels of self-efficacy are reported by teachers about their professional practice?

How is emotional intelligence associated with teachers' self-efficacy beliefs?

Main hypothesis:

Teachers with high levels of emotional intelligence report high self-efficacy.

Null hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence scores between male and female teachers.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant difference in self-efficacy scores between male and female teachers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to an individual's ability to understand and manage their own emotions, as well as empathize with and respond appropriately to the feelings of others (Wu et al., 2018). This capacity plays a vital role in social functioning and professional contexts such as teaching. Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2004), as cited in Tapia (2006), defined Emotional Intelligence as the ability to perceive emotions, generate emotional knowledge to assist thinking, understand emotions, and regulate them to promote both emotional and intellectual growth. Similarly, Salovey and Mayer (1990) and Mayer and Salovey (1997), as cited in Brackett and Salovey (2006), emphasized that Emotional Intelligence theory offers a unified framework for studying the cognitive and emotional mechanisms involved in processing emotional information. In the educational context, teachers' self-efficacy, or their belief in their capability to produce desired teaching outcomes, is also critical. Bandura (1994) defined perceived self-efficacy as individuals' beliefs about their abilities to execute actions that influence events in their lives, shaping how they feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy are more likely to encourage their students and support cognitive development (Penrose, 2007). Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998), as cited in Penrose (2007), highlighted that teacher self-efficacy correlates with various positive outcomes, including classroom behavior, effort, goal setting, openness to new ideas, persistence, resilience, enthusiasm, and career longevity.

Bandura's (1978) theory of self-efficacy, as cited in Lian et al. (2018), suggests that successful teaching performance raises teachers' efficacy beliefs by reinforcing expectations of future success, whereas perceived failures lower such beliefs. Likewise, Bandura (1997), cited in Rastegar and Memarpour (2009), described self-efficacy as a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the actions required to achieve specific goals. Recent empirical studies have further explored the interplay between emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and teacher effectiveness. Su et al. (2022) found that emotional intelligence positively influences teachers' ability to foster creativity in the classroom, primarily through increased work engagement, which acts as a key motivational mechanism. Mérida-López et al. (2017) reported, in a meta-analysis, that higher emotional intelligence is significantly linked to lower teacher burnout, underscoring its protective role in promoting well-being and sustainability in the profession. Geraci et al. (2023) examined the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout, work engagement, and self-efficacy during the COVID-19 lockdown, revealing that higher emotional intelligence was associated with greater work engagement and self-efficacy, while mitigating burnout. These findings highlight the EI's role in supporting teachers' psychological resilience in challenging circumstances. Furthermore, Anwar et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between trait emotional intelligence and ESL teacher effectiveness, identifying self-efficacy as a mediating mechanism. Their

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results showed that emotional intelligence enhances teacher effectiveness through increased self-efficacy. Together, these studies emphasize that emotional intelligence not only directly contributes to positive teaching outcomes but also operates through mechanisms such as work engagement and self-efficacy to enhance teacher performance, well-being, and resilience.

METHODS**Design**

This research study is quantitative. It used a descriptive and correlational design. A correlational design was employed to investigate whether a significant relationship exists between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy.

Population and sampling

The population participating in this study consists of middle school teachers. A total of 105 middle school teachers from Albania participated in this study. They were chosen by convenience due to the time limitation and their availability. The data were analyzed using the SPSS program.

Instruments

To measure emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, the second part of the questionnaire included demographic data such as gender, age, and years in the profession, serving as the instrument for emotional intelligence. This instrument measures four domains: Emotional Awareness, Emotional Management, Social-emotional Awareness, and Relationship Management (WICT Chicago Chapter, 2016). The third part of the questionnaire was the "Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (short form)," which measured teachers' perceptions of how they deal with various difficulties in their school activities (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

The questionnaire was compiled and delivered via Google Forms. Participants received the survey link electronically and were asked to complete it voluntarily within a specified time frame. Responses were collected automatically through the platform for further analysis.

RESULTS**Table 1: Descriptive data for emotional intelligence variables**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Emotional Awareness	105	2.75	0.65	1	4
Emotional Management	105	1.97	0.70	1	4
Social-emotional Awareness	105	2.26	0.68	1	4
Relationship Management	105	2.59	0.66	1	4

Descriptive results for emotional intelligence

Descriptive statistics for the four emotional competency variables are presented in Table 1. Teachers revealed a moderate level of emotional management. The mean scores for the other two variables, social-emotional awareness and relationship management, are above average, indicating that participants reported positive experiences in these areas.

Table 2: Test of Normality for Key Variables of Emotional Intelligence

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk	df	Sig.
Emotional Awareness	0.976	105	.084
Emotional Management	0.963	105	.021
Social-emotional Awareness	0.970	105	.042
Relationship Management	0.981	105	.134

To assess normality, given the sample size, the Shapiro-Wilk Test was used. Results indicated that Emotional Awareness and Relationship Management did not significantly deviate from a normal distribution ($p < 0.05$). However, Emotional Management and Socio-Emotional Awareness showed significant deviations from normality.

Descriptive analyses of the variables of self-efficacy among teachers.

Table 3: Descriptive results for self-efficacy

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Efficacy in Student Engagement	105	2.86	0.65	1	4
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	105	3.25	0.60	1	4
Efficacy in Classroom Management	105	1.97	0.70	1	4

The descriptive data revealed that teachers hold moderate to high positive perceptions of their efficacy in student engagement and instructional strategies. However, for the variable of efficacy in classroom management, teachers reported low to moderate levels, as shown in Table 3.

Table 4: Test of Normality for key variables of teacher self-efficacy

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk	df	Sig.
Efficacy in Student Engagement	0.978	105	.065
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	0.984	105	.122
Efficacy in Classroom Management	0.960	105	.018

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to assess the normality of the efficacy variables. Two of them, Efficacy in Student Engagement and Efficacy in Instructional Strategies, did not show significant deviations from normal distribution. However, the Efficacy in Classroom Management variable did not follow a normal distribution. As a result, Spearman's rank correlation was used to assess the relationships among variables, as it does not require normality assumptions.

Table 5. Spearman's correlations between emotional intelligence variables and self-efficacy Variables

Variables	Emotional awareness	Emotional management	Social-emotional awareness'	Self-regulation	Efficacy in Students' Engagement	Efficacy in Instructional Strategies	Efficacy in Class Management
Emotional awareness	1	.541**	.682**	.556**	.598**	.247**	.473
Emotional management		1	.782**	.875**	.531**	.386**	.782
Social-emotional awareness'			1	.675**	.432**	.569**	.734
Self-regulation				1	.654**	.682**	.789
Efficacy in Students' Engagement					1	.758**	.637
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies						1	.871
Efficacy in Class Management							1

Spearman Correlations between Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy

*Correlation is significant at the $p < .01$ (**), $p < .05$ (*), two-tailed.*

A Spearman correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy variables. As shown in Table 5, results indicate a moderate positive correlation between emotional awareness and self-efficacy, suggesting that higher emotional awareness is associated with increased self-efficacy. The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between emotional management, social-emotional awareness, and relationship management with self-efficacy in teachers. Overall, a statistically significant relationship exists between emotional intelligence and teachers' self-efficacy.

Furthermore, strong positive correlations were observed between emotional management, social-emotional awareness, relationship management, and teacher self-efficacy. These results indicate that these emotional intelligence components are significantly associated with higher levels of perceived self-efficacy among teachers. Overall, the findings suggest a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and teachers' self-efficacy.

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Additionally, Spearman correlation coefficients revealed moderate to strong correlations among the emotional intelligence variables themselves. A strong and significant correlation was found between emotional management and social-emotional awareness ($\rho = .782$), and an even stronger correlation was observed between emotional management and self-regulation ($\rho = .875$).

Similarly, moderate to strong positive correlations were revealed among self-efficacy constructs. For example, a statistically significant relationship was found between efficacy in student engagement and efficacy in instructional strategies ($\rho = .758$), as well as between instructional strategies and classroom management ($\rho = .871$).

In testing the hypothesis that teachers with high levels of emotional intelligence report an increased level of self-efficacy, the analyses confirmed significant associations. For example, emotional awareness was positively correlated with students' engagement ($\rho = .698$), while emotional management showed a strong correlation with classroom management ($\rho = .782$). Similarly, a significant relationship was found between social-emotional awareness and classroom management ($\rho = .734$).

These results provide robust support for the hypothesis that emotional intelligence is significantly and positively associated with teachers' self-efficacy. The findings are consistent with prior research that emphasizes the influence of emotional intelligence on key professional competencies, such as confidence, classroom management, and instructional effectiveness.

Gender differences among teachers for Emotional Intelligence variables**Table 6: Gender differences for Emotional Intelligence variables**

Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. (p)	Decisión
The distribution of EI related to emotional awareness is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.285	Retain the null hypothesis
The distribution of EI related to emotional management is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.356	Retain the null hypothesis
The distribution of EI related to social emotional awareness is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.773	Retain the null hypothesis
The distribution of EI related to relationship management is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.501	Retain the null hypothesis

Asymptotic significances are shown. The level of significance is .05. As all p-values are above 0.05, the null hypothesis is retained for all variables of emotional intelligence, suggesting that levels of emotional intelligence do not differ significantly across genders.

Gender differences among teachers for Self-Efficacy variables**Table 6: Gender differences for Self-Efficacy variables**

Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig. (p)	Decision
The distribution of SE related to student engagement is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.345	Retain the null hypothesis
The distribution of SE related to instructional strategies is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.465	Retain the null hypothesis
The distribution of SE related to classroom management is the same across genders	Mann-Whitney U Test for independent samples	.850	Retain the null hypothesis

Asymptotic significances are shown. The level of significance is .05.

We have the same findings for Teacher's Self-Efficacy variables. As all p-values are above .05, the null hypothesis is retained for all variables of Self-Efficacy, suggesting that levels of Self-Efficacy variables do not significantly differ across gender.

DISCUSSION

The results showed a significant relationship among the emotional intelligence subscales. These findings are also based on previous research data. Individuals with high emotional awareness are more likely to manage their emotions effectively. On the other hand, people who score high in social emotional awareness have strong abilities to maintain and manage relationships with others. Teachers with high levels of Emotional Intelligence tend to regulate their own emotions and stay calm while dealing with the different problems they face with their students. These attitudes have a positive impact on the overall classroom climate, enhancing positive and empathetic relationships among students. This form of positive management enhances their self-confidence and their beliefs about their ability to influence not only environmental classroom issues but also students' achievements. Li, A., et al. (2021) also found that individuals with high skills in understanding and managing their own and others' emotions in difficult situations are less inclined to avoid problems; conversely, they take responsibility for solving these problems. Teachers with high self-esteem in intelligence, in some cases, take responsibility for solving problems, while in other cases, they shy away from such responsibility.

As was previously hypothesized, teachers' Emotional Intelligence was positively correlated with Self-efficacy. These findings align with those presented by Kostić-Bobanović (2020). The author suggested that assisting

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teachers to develop their Emotional Intelligence further may have a positive influence on Self-efficacy. This positive relationship was also consistent with other findings of Wu et al. (2018), who emphasized that higher EI was positively associated with a higher level of self-efficacy. As Wang & Wang (2022) highlighted, teachers who can shift their emotions from negative to positive are more likely to perceive and evaluate the classroom as less challenging. Also, Rastegar, M. & Memarpour, S. (2009), concluded that there was a significant positive relationship between EI and self-efficacy in teachers. These findings align with those presented by Valente, S. et al. (2020), who examined in their paper how teachers who can regulate their own emotions can modify not only their feelings but also those of their students in intense situations.

The study found no statistically significant differences in gender, as all p-values were above the .05 level. These results align with prior research suggesting that gender does not play a pivotal role in influencing teachers' confidence in their instructional and classroom management skills (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), as well as with Emotional Intelligence variables. This indicates that both female and male teachers possess comparable emotional awareness, regulation, and interpersonal skills. The findings are supported by other prior studies that report minimal or no gender differences in emotional intelligence within professional contexts (Petrides & Furnham, 2000; Mayer et al., 2008). The results imply that both teachers' emotional intelligence and Self-efficacy are stable traits across genders in this sample. This might reflect the professional demands that foster these attributes equally, regardless of gender.

Implication to Research and Practice

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study, several limitations are significant to acknowledge. First, the study results rely on self-report measures, which are subject to potential bias. Teachers may have overestimated or underestimated their emotional intelligence or their self-efficacy, which could have influenced the reliability of the data. Secondly, while significant correlations were identified between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, it is not possible to determine whether emotional intelligence directly enhances self-efficacy or whether other intervening variables contribute to this relationship. Third, the sample size was limited to a specific geographic context. So the findings may not be fully generalizable to teachers in different educational systems, environments, or backgrounds.

CONCLUSIONS

Teaching is one of the most critical and challenging professions today. Different problems that teachers face every day require not only good professional skills but also good emotional skills. This study aimed to investigate the levels of Emotional Intelligence and self-efficacy in teachers and to examine the relationship between teachers' Emotional Intelligence and self-efficacy. The data obtained revealed that teachers participating in this study demonstrated a moderate to high level of Emotional Intelligence and high levels of Self-Efficacy. Spearman rank correlations showed a positive relationship between Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy. These findings are consistent with other grounded research in this field, considering the importance of Emotional Intelligence in teaching and its relationship with self-efficacy. No statistically significant differences were found in Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy variables across the gender category.

These results underscore the importance of emotions in educational environments, particularly for teachers whose emotion-related processes have a significant impact on the overall classroom climate and students' performance.

Future Research

Future research should consider adopting a longitudinal design to investigate how emotional intelligence and self-efficacy evolve and interact with one another. Incorporating mix method approaches may provide a richer

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understanding of how emotional intelligence manifests in real teaching situations. Research in this field could explore potential mediating variables, such as occupational stress, job satisfaction, or school climate, to better understand the mechanisms underlying the Emotional intelligence–Self–efficacy relationship.

Ultimately, interventions aimed at enhancing teachers' emotional intelligence should be rigorously tested to assess their effectiveness in improving both teacher self-efficacy and classroom outcomes.

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