

Emotional Intelligence and Effectiveness in Teaching: A Study on High School Teachers in Gjirokastër"

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Abstract: *This study aims to evaluate the level of emotional intelligence among high school teachers in the city of Gjirokastër and to examine its role in improving professional effectiveness and interpersonal relationships within the educational environment. Relying on Daniel Goleman's theoretical model, the research focuses on the five main components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills. The study uses a quantitative approach with a standardized self-assessment instrument (EI Questionnaire), administered to a sample of 40 teachers from three public high schools in Gjirokastër. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, which show overall satisfactory levels of emotional intelligence. Self-awareness appears as the most developed component, while emotion management represents the field with the greatest challenges. The findings support existing literature that emphasizes the importance of emotional competencies in coping with stress and in building positive relationships in the classroom. In conclusion, the study recommends the inclusion of training on emotional intelligence in professional development programs for teachers, aiming to improve the quality of teaching and well-being in school environments. Further research may be extended to different geographical contexts and use combined methodological approaches to deepen the understanding of this phenomenon.*

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, teaching, high school teachers, emotion management, interpersonal relationships.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers face great emotional demands in their profession, as they often encounter negative emotions during interactions with students, parents, and colleagues. These challenges can affect their emotional well-being and are considered one of the main risks that undermine the professional health and well-being of teachers. However, they can overcome these difficulties by improving their professional competencies and developing emotional intelligence both in themselves and in their students. Competence in this direction helps teachers to better manage stressful situations, maintain emotional balance, and create a positive learning environment.

Modern teaching requires a new approach that takes into account the social, cultural, and ethnic diversity of students. In order to ensure an inclusive and effective environment, it is necessary to restructure teaching methods and classroom organization. This includes managing diversity, adapting the learning environment, and using collaborative methods when working with students and other professionals. Furthermore, teachers should extend their role beyond the classroom, cooperating with parents, the community, and social partners in curriculum development and school organization. Increasing the professionalism of teachers is essential and involves a research-based approach, problem-solving, and a commitment to ongoing professional development, viewing learning as a lifelong process. This approach helps in creating a more dynamic educational system that is suitable for the needs of students (Sratch 2010). The teaching profession requires a wide range of skills and competencies, many of which are related to emotional intelligence. According to Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (2002), Bar-On (1997), Goleman (2004), Segal (1999), Petrides and Furnham (2001), as well as Wood and Toley (2003), emotional intelligence can be seen as cognitive skills or as a personality trait. It includes the awareness of personal emotions, the ability to be decisive, sensitivity, sociability, and social responsibility. Also, skills such as problem solving, flexibility, self-control, motivation, communication, collaboration, and teamwork are essential for effective teaching. These competencies assist in classroom management, increasing student engagement, and creating a supportive and inclusive environment, emphasizing the role of emotional intelligence in education.

In the field of education, research has highlighted the importance of emotions and emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing performance. According to George and Day et al., teachers who effectively manage their emotions are better able to express needs and confront emotional challenges in achieving their goals. These teachers are more resilient against stress and professional burnout, maintaining an emotional balance that helps them to tackle difficult tasks. Furthermore, they are good collaborators, creating a harmonious working environment and contributing to the achievement of institutional objectives.

The development of emotional intelligence is emerging as an important issue between factors such as competence and effectiveness due to challenges and rapid social transformations, norms, and the setting of high professional standards. The aim of this research is to highlight the levels of emotional intelligence among high school teachers in the city of Gjirokastrë.

Theory

Studies on social intelligence began in the early twentieth century, with the pioneering work of Edward Thorndike (1920). Early research focused on defining, describing, and measuring the behaviors of social competence (Chapin, 1942; Doll, 1935; Moss & Hunt, 1927; Moss et al., 1927; Thorndike, 1920). One of the early contributions in this field came from Edgar Doll (1935), who developed the first instrument for measuring socially intelligent behavior in young children. Following this line of research, David Wechsler integrated into his intelligence test two subtests—"Comprehension" and "Picture Arrangement"—aimed at assessing aspects of social intelligence. After the first publication of this test in 1939, Wechsler (1940) emphasized the importance of non-intellectual factors in intelligent behavior, further arguing that a comprehensive model of intelligence would be incomplete without including these elements (1943).

In the book *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998), Daniel Goleman introduced a model of emotional intelligence (EI) that includes four main components: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management. This model aims to show how the ability to develop these competencies directly influences professional success. Based on studies carried out in hundreds of organizations and companies, Goleman argues that EI is a key factor that distinguishes high-performing individuals from average ones. Treating emotional intelligence as a theory of performance, he explores

physiological evidence and research on factors that influence workplace success. This model represents an improved version of the emotional intelligence framework presented in 1998. The previous model included five main categories, which consisted of twenty-five different competencies. Three of these categories—self-awareness, self-control, and motivation—belonged to personal competencies, which relate to the ability to understand and manage individual emotions. Meanwhile, the other two categories—empathy and social skills—represented social competencies, which relate to the ability to understand and manage the emotions of others.

A FRAMEWORK OF EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES		
Recognition	Self-Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emotional self-awareness - Accurate self-assessment - Self-confidence 	Social Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empathy - Service orientation - Organizational awareness
Regulation	Self-Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-control - Trustworthiness - Conscientiousness - Adaptability - Achievement drive - Initiative 	Relationship Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing others - Influence - Communication - Conflict management - Leadership - Change catalyst - Building bonds - Teamwork & collaboration

Intercultural studies on emotions and their impact on thinking processes have served as a basis for research on emotional intelligence. According to P. Ekman (2011), the expression and recognition of basic emotions have a universal character; however, the way emotions are reflected in social situations depends on culture. Meanwhile, J.D. Mayer and his colleagues, who established the theoretical approach to emotional intelligence, emphasize that Western studies on emotional skills have different approaches. Scholars analyze the accuracy of emotion perception, their impact on thinking and decision-making, the relationship between emotions and creativity, as well as the ways of categorizing and controlling them. According to Mayer, Roberts, and Barsade, emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to understand, express, and use emotional knowledge to improve thinking. In this framework, emotions are treated as coordinated changes in physiology, behavior, cognitive processes, and subjective perception, which occur in response to perceived or real changes in the environment.

The Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence emphasizes the importance of the interweaving of emotional and social skills in the way we understand ourselves, interact with others, and face daily challenges. According to this model, being emotionally and socially intelligent implies the ability to recognize and express oneself in a healthy manner, to understand the feelings and needs of others, and to create positive relationships.

It also includes the ability to adapt to changes, to make sound decisions, and to solve problems effectively. Emotion management plays a key role, helping to use emotions in our favor rather than as an obstacle. Equally important is an optimistic approach and an internal motivation that help us face challenges with confidence and flexibility. In this way, emotional-social intelligence becomes a fundamental factor in an individual's adaptability and success in daily life.

Studies

An increasing number of researchers are increasingly emphasizing the role of emotional intelligence in teachers, considering it a key factor for their effectiveness in teaching (Hassan et al., 2015; McCown, Jensen, & Freedman, 2007; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Various scholars argue that teachers with well-developed emotional intelligence are better able to create a supportive environment for their students, increasing engagement in the learning process and improving academic outcomes (Cotezee & Jensen, 2007; Ramana, 2013).

A study involving 257 primary school teachers and 157 high school teachers showed that those rated as the most effective had a higher level of emotional intelligence, based on EQ measurements (Stein & Book, 2000). Also, studies conducted by Haskett (2003), Hwang (2007), and Drew (2006) have confirmed a significant relationship between teaching quality and the emotional skills of teachers, suggesting that these competencies play a key role in creating a healthy learning environment and in enhancing student success. Emotional awareness is a fundamental component of emotional intelligence, which enables teachers to understand their emotions and predict their impact on the classroom environment (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). It helps them to identify and manage personal emotional challenges, using a reflective approach in difficult situations (Perry & Ball, 2007). Through this ability, they can better control their emotions in interactions with students, maintain personal motivation (Stein & Book, 2000) and respond appropriately to various behaviors in the classroom (Brackett et al., 2009).

Emotion management is a key aspect, as uncontrolled behaviors on the part of teachers can create an insecure environment for students, affecting their educational experience and emotional well-being (Stein & Book, 2000). Moreover, emotional awareness gives teachers the ability to better perceive the emotions of others (Goleman, 1995) and to show care, interest, and empathy towards their students (Brackett et al., 2009).

Research has shown that interpersonal skills, such as empathy and building healthy relationships, are key factors for success in teaching (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Stronge, 2007). Teachers who display empathy and care have a greater ability to understand the needs and perspectives of their students (Mugno & Rosenblitt, 2001), thereby building strong and supportive relationships (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Nodding, 1992) which help in the learning process (Boyd, 2005).

Research Objectives

- To measure and describe the level of emotional intelligence among full-time educational staff in high schools in Gjirokastër.
- What is the level of emotional intelligence among full-time educational staff in high schools in Gjirokastër?
- What are the characteristics of emotional intelligence among full-time educational staff in high schools in Gjirokastër?

Variables

Emotional Intelligence – The ability to recognize, understand, and express emotions, as well as to integrate them into the process of thinking and interacting with others.

High School Teachers – Educators who teach in grades IX, X, and XI in Gjirokaštër.

Population and Sample Selection

This study includes high school teachers in the city of Gjirokaštër. The research included teachers from public schools. For carrying out the study, a sample of 40 teachers from 3 schools within this district was selected. The sample was chosen randomly using a collected sample method. Initially, all high schools were identified, from which three institutions were purposefully selected to gather the necessary data for the research.

Ethical

The study adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring that participants were fully informed about the research objectives and procedures. Steps were taken to protect participants' right throughout the study.

Instrument

The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EI) is the instrument that is intended to measure the emotional intelligence of high school teachers, authored by Daniel Goleman. The EI is a self-report inventory of socially and emotionally intelligent behavior that provides an assessment of emotional-social intelligence. This inventory consists of 50 statements and uses a 5-point response scale with an answer format ranging from “very rarely or not true of me” (1) to “very often or true of me” (5). This instrument is composed of 5 components of social intelligence that include: self-awareness (statements 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36, 41, 46), emotion management (2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, 42, 47), self-motivation (3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 33, 38, 43, 48), empathy (4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39, 44, 49) and social skills (5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50). Based on the scores obtained from these 5 components of emotional intelligence we have: 35-50 indicates a high emotional intelligence, 18-34 indicates that attention should be paid to which of the five components one feels weaker in, 10-17 indicates a low level of emotional intelligence.

Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency of the EI questionnaire and its subscales was measured using Cronbach's Alpha:

Subscale		Reliability/Interpretation
Self-Awareness	0.7	Moderate Reliability
Emotional Management	0.69	Moderate Reliability
Self-Motivation	0.87	Strong Reliability
Empathy	0.78	Good Reliability
Social Skills	0.83	Strong Reliability
Total Scale	0.94	Excellent Consistency

RESULTS

To obtain an overall panorama of the distribution of results for each component of emotional intelligence, a descriptive statistical analysis was carried out. In the table below, the values of the mean, standard deviation, variance, as well as the distribution indicators (skewness and kurtosis) for each of the five dimensions of emotional intelligence are presented: self-awareness, emotion management, self-motivation, empathy, and social skills.

	N Statistic	Range Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Sum Statistic	Mean Statistic
Total scores of Self awareness	40	14.00	33.00	47.00	824.00	41.2000
Total scores of Managing emotions	40	22.00	28.00	50.00	739.00	36.9500
Total scores of Motivating Oneself	40	25.00	25.00	50.00	797.00	39.8500
Total scores of Empathy	40	22.00	26.00	48.00	759.00	37.9500
Total scores of Social Skills	40	26.00	24.00	50.00	782.00	39.1000
Valid N (listwise)	40					

Results indicate that the participants have a good overall level of emotional intelligence. The highest mean was registered for the Self-Awareness component ($M = 41.20$), which indicates a well-developed emotional self-reflection and awareness. Meanwhile, Emotion Management has the lowest mean ($M = 36.95$), suggesting that this is the area in which individuals face the most difficulties.

Additionally, the components Self-Motivation and Social Skills show considerable means, reflecting a positive tendency towards emotional stability and interpersonal connectivity. The wide range of results, especially in Social Skills, indicates high variability among individuals in this area.

	Mean Std. Error	Std. Deviation Statistic	Variance Statistic	Skewness Statistic	Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic
Total scores of Self awareness	.91364	4.08592	16.695	-.474	.512	-.448
Total scores of Managing emotions	1.17982	5.27631	27.839	.351	.512	.644
Total scores of Motivating Oneself	1.53430	6.86160	47.082	-.265	.512	-.240
Total scores of Empathy	1.29060	5.77176	33.313	-.687	.512	-.007
Total scores of Social Skills	1.44167	6.44736	41.568	-.388	.512	.366
Valid N (listwise)						

The data presented in the tables indicate that the participants showed different levels of the dimensions of emotional intelligence, with means ranging from 4.09 (Self-Awareness) to 6.86 (Self-Motivation). The values of the standard deviation and variance indicate considerable variability in the participants' responses, particularly in the Self-Motivation and Social Skills components. The skewness indicators for most variables are near zero, suggesting an approximately symmetrical distribution, except Empathy and Self-Awareness, which display a slight left skew (negative skewness), indicating that most participants received values above the average. The kurtosis values, in general, are low and hover around zero, which suggests

that most distributions are near normal; an exception is Emotion Management (kurtosis 0.64), which indicates a slightly more pronounced distribution.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The results of this study reflect the level of emotional intelligence among high school teachers in the city of Gjirokastrë, based on Daniel Goleman's model and the respective assessment instrument. Based on the data obtained from the EI questionnaire and the descriptive statistical analyses, participants demonstrated relatively high levels of overall emotional intelligence, with some differences among the individual components. The component with the highest mean was Self-Awareness ($M = 41.20$), which indicates a developed level of emotional awareness and reflection among teachers. This result is consistent with existing literature that emphasizes the role of emotional self-awareness in classroom management and in interpersonal relationships with students (Goleman, 1998; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The component with the lowest mean was Emotion Management ($M = 36.95$), suggesting that teachers face difficulties in controlling and regulating emotions in stressful situations. This finding aligns with literature (Stein & Book, 2000) that underscores how a lack of emotional management can negatively impact the classroom environment and the quality of interactions with students. The distribution of results was generally near normal, with skewness and kurtosis not indicating large deviations. Empathy and Self-Awareness exhibited a slight left skew, suggesting that most teachers scored above average in these areas. Meanwhile, Social Skills and Self-Motivation showed the highest variance, reflecting a wide variability in the levels of these competencies among teachers. This diversity may be related to different personal and professional experiences, as well as the level of institutional support they receive.

The findings of this study are in line with the theoretical models of emotional intelligence, particularly those of Goleman and Bar-On. As emphasized in the literature (Bar-On, 1997; Mayer et al., 2002), emotional intelligence is closely associated with teacher success, including the ability to create healthy relationships with students, maintain emotional balance, and manage conflicts in the school environment. Previous studies (Stein & Book, 2000; Hassan et al., 2015) have shown that teachers with high levels of emotional intelligence are more successful in creating a supportive climate and enhancing student performance. In this study too, components such as Empathy and Social Skills, which are essential for interacting with students, were well developed among the participants.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, this study confirms the importance of emotional intelligence in teaching and the ongoing need to support its development. It is recommended that educational institutions include training on emotional intelligence as part of teachers' professional development and foster a reflective approach in their daily practice. The data suggest that professional development training for teachers should include components of emotional intelligence, particularly in areas where challenges are evident, such as emotion management. Increasing emotional awareness and improving interpersonal skills can positively influence stress management, classroom control, and the establishment of healthy relationships in schools.

Future studies may expand the sample, use mixed methods (quantitative and qualitative), and analyze other influencing factors such as gender, teaching experience, and school type. Additionally, longitudinal research would help assess the long-term impact of emotional intelligence on teachers' professional performance and personal well-being.

Furthermore, it is important that this model be examined in different cultures to assess its validity and application in areas such as parenting, education, the work environment, and healthcare on a global scale.

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