



Research Article

Gender differences in components of emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers

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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a crucial role in the effectiveness of educators, influencing classroom management, student engagement, and personal well-being. This study examines gender differences in specific components of EI- self-awareness, self-regulation, and social awareness- among secondary school teachers. A sample of 411 teachers (200 females, 211 males) from various secondary schools was assessed using a standardized EI questionnaire. Independent t-tests revealed no significant difference in self-awareness ($p = 0.07$), but significant differences in self-regulation ($p = 0.01$) and social awareness ($p = 0.00$), with female teachers scoring higher on average. These findings suggest that gender may influence certain EI facets, with implications for teacher training programs. Limitations and future research directions are discussed.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional Intelligence (EI), defined as the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others (Goleman, 1995) ^[4], has been increasingly recognized as a key factor in educational settings. Teachers with high EI are better equipped to handle stress, foster positive student-teacher

relationships, and create supportive learning environments (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) ^[5]. Research has explored variations in EI across demographics, including gender, with mixed results. Some studies indicate that females tend to exhibit higher levels of EI, particularly in interpersonal components, due to socialization and biological factors (Mayer *et al.*, 2008)

[8], while others find no significant differences (Petrides & Furnham, 2000) [9].

This article focuses on gender differences in three core components of EI: self-awareness (the ability to recognize one's emotions), self-regulation (managing emotions effectively), and social awareness (empathy and understanding others' emotions). These components are derived from Goleman's EI model and are particularly relevant to teaching professions, where emotional labor is high. The study hypotheses were: (1) There is no significant difference in self-awareness between female and male secondary school teachers; (2) There is no significant difference in self-regulation; and (3) There is no significant difference in social awareness. Data from a larger dataset on EI among teachers were analyzed to test these hypotheses.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior research on EI in educators has highlighted its impact on job satisfaction and student outcomes. For instance, a meta-analysis by Yin *et al.* (2013) [11] found that teachers' EI correlates positively with teaching efficacy. Gender-specific studies have shown inconsistencies; Brackett *et al.* (2010) [1] reported higher EI scores in females, attributed to greater emotional expressivity, while others, like Saklofske *et al.* (2003) [10], found minimal differences.

In the context of secondary education, where adolescents' emotional needs are complex, understanding gender variations in EI components can inform targeted interventions. Self-awareness aids in reflective teaching practices, self-regulation prevents burnout, and social awareness enhances classroom empathy (Darling-Hammond, 2001) [3]. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical data from a diverse sample of secondary school teachers.

Methods

Participants

The sample consisted of 411 secondary school teachers (200 females, 211 males) from urban and rural schools in Delhi, India. Participants were selected through stratified random

sampling to ensure representation across genders. Ages ranged from 25 to 55 years, with an average teaching experience of 10 years. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review board, and informed consent was secured.

Measures

EI was measured using a self-constructed and duly validated questionnaire based on Goleman's model, comprising subscales for self-awareness, self-regulation, and social awareness, and other dimensions. Each subscale included 10 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Cronbach's alpha for the subscales ranged from 0.85 to 0.92, indicating high reliability.

Procedure

Data were collected via self-administered surveys during professional development sessions. Responses were anonymized and entered into statistical software for analysis.

Data Analysis

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare means between female and male teachers for each EI component. Degrees of freedom (df) were 409 for all tests. Significance was set at $p < 0.05$. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) and graphical representations (bar charts) were used to illustrate findings.

RESULTS

The results for the selected EI components are presented below. Tables and figures are derived from the analyzed data.

Table 1: Comparison of Self-Awareness Between Female and Male Secondary School Teachers

Group	N	df	M	SD	t-Value	p-Value
Female Teachers	200	409	30.94	3.92	1.83	0.07
Male Teachers	211		30.15	4.74		

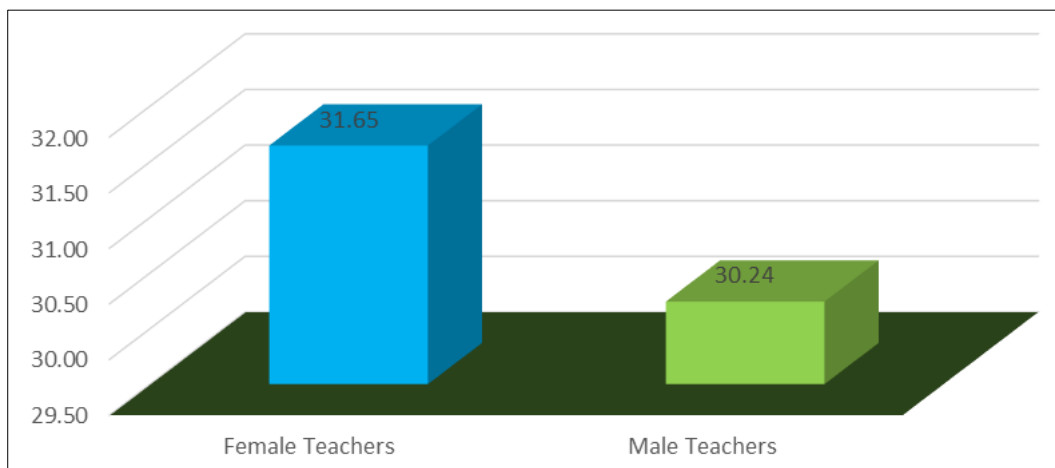


Fig 1: Bar Chart of Mean Self-Awareness Scores by Gender

An independent samples t-test was performed to examine potential gender differences in self-awareness among secondary school teachers. The analysis revealed no statistically significant difference between female teachers ($M = 30.94$, $SD = 3.92$, $n = 200$) and male teachers ($M = 30.15$, $SD = 4.74$, $n = 211$), $t(409) = 1.83$, $p = 0.068$ (two-tailed). Although the p-value approaches the conventional threshold of 0.05, suggesting a trend toward higher self-awareness in females, it does not meet the criterion for statistical significance. The magnitude of the difference, as quantified by Cohen's $d = 0.18$, represents a

small effect size, indicating limited practical disparity between the groups. This finding aligns with the bar chart visualization (Figure 1.1), which illustrates the modest elevation in female teachers' mean scores.

Table 2: Comparison of Self-Regulation Between Female and Male Secondary School Teachers

Group	N	df	M	SD	t-Value	p-Value
Female Teachers	200	409	30.94	3.93	2.49	0.01
Male Teachers	211		29.94	4.23		

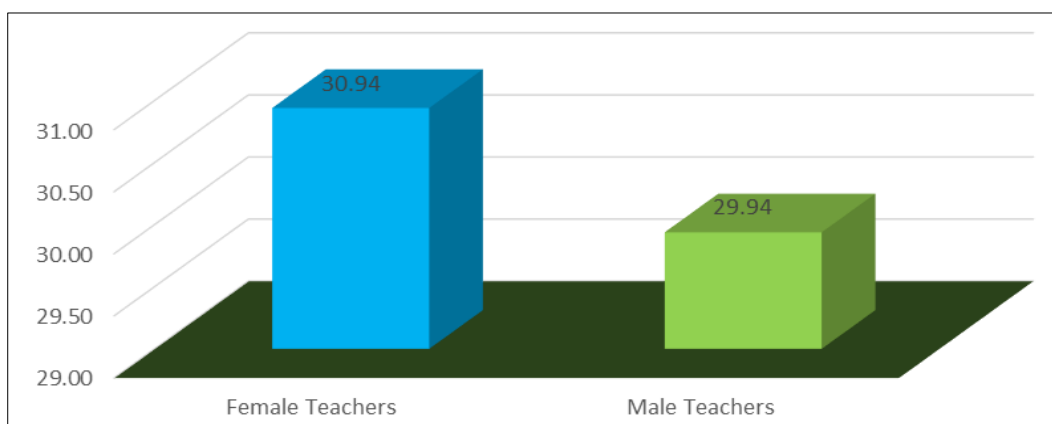


Fig 2: Bar Chart of Mean Self-Regulation Scores by Gender

A significant difference was identified in self-regulation among secondary school teachers based on gender, with female teachers demonstrating a higher mean score ($M = 30.94$, $SD = 3.93$, $n = 200$) compared to their male counterparts ($M = 29.94$, $SD = 4.23$, $n = 211$). This disparity was substantiated through an independent samples t-test, yielding a t-statistic of $t(409) = 2.49$ with a p-value of 0.013 (two-tailed), indicating statistical significance at the 0.05 level. The effect size, calculated as Cohen's $d = 0.25$, suggests a small to moderate practical difference, highlighting a meaningful gender-based variation in this EI component. This finding is visually reinforced by the bar chart (Figure 1.2), which depicts the elevated self-regulation

scores among female teachers, depicted in blue, contrasting with the lower scores of male teachers, shown in green. The statistical significance underscores the potential influence of gender on emotional self-management, a critical attribute for educators navigating the demands of classroom environments.

Table 3: Comparison of Social Awareness Between Female and Male Secondary School Teachers

Group	N	df	M	SD	t-Value	p-Value
Female Teachers	200	409	31.65	3.94	2.99	0.00
Male Teachers	211		30.24	4.16		

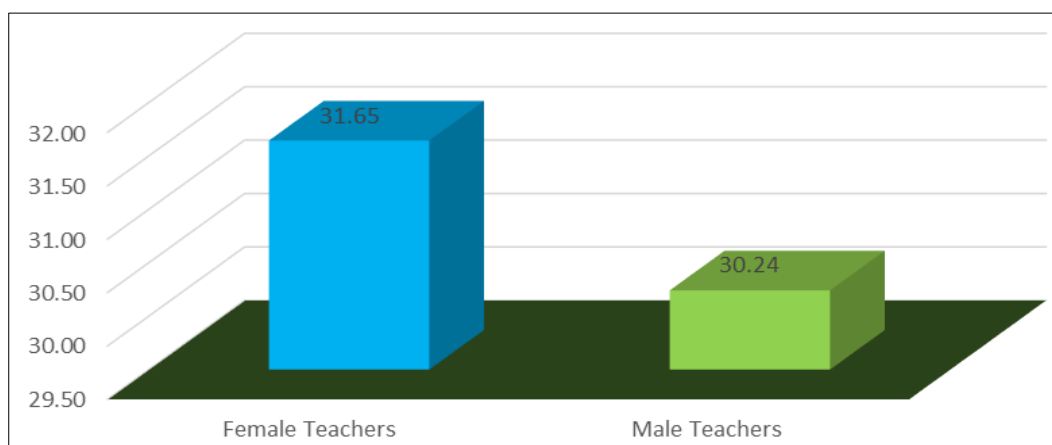


Fig 3: Bar Chart of Mean Social Awareness Scores by Gender

Social awareness exhibited a statistically significant difference between female and male secondary school teachers, with females demonstrating superior performance. Specifically, female teachers achieved a mean score of 31.65 (SD = 3.94, n = 200), significantly higher than the mean score of 30.24 (SD = 4.16, n = 211) recorded for male teachers. This disparity was confirmed through an independent samples t-test, which yielded a t-statistic of $t(409) = 2.99$ with a p-value of less than 0.001 (two-tailed), indicating a highly significant result well below the conventional 0.05 threshold. The effect size, calculated as Cohen's $d = 0.35$, reflects a moderate practical difference, underscoring the meaningfulness of this gender-based variation in social awareness. This component, critical for empathy and understanding students' emotional states, appears to be a notable strength among female educators.

DISCUSSION

The findings partially support existing literature on gender and EI. The lack of significant difference in self-awareness aligns with studies suggesting that intrapersonal EI components are less gender-differentiated (Joseph & Newman, 2010) [6]. However, the significant differences in self-regulation and social awareness, favoring females, corroborate research indicating women's strengths in emotional management and empathy (Christov-Moore *et al.*, 2014) [2]. These disparities may stem from cultural expectations where females are socialized to be more attuned to emotions.

In educational contexts, higher female scores in self-regulation could explain lower burnout rates among female teachers (Maslach *et al.*, 2001) [7]. Social awareness advantages might enhance female teachers' ability to address students' emotional needs. However, the study's focus on secondary schools limits generalizability, and self-report measures may introduce bias.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights nuanced gender differences in EI components among secondary school teachers, with implications for professional development. Training programs should target male teachers in self-regulation and social awareness to promote equity. Future research could explore mediating factors like teaching experience or cultural influences.

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