



EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RELATION TO GENDER AND LOCALE

Dr. Shikha

Assistant Professor, SSD Girls' College of Education, Bathinda

ABSTRACT

Emotional competence plays an important role in the teaching profession, particularly at the elementary level where teachers interact closely with young learners and influence their emotional and social development. Teachers with higher emotional competence are better able to understand students' feelings, manage classroom situations effectively, and create a supportive learning environment. The present study was conducted to examine the emotional competence of elementary school teachers in relation to gender and locale. The descriptive survey method was used for the investigation. A sample of 200 elementary school teachers was randomly selected from government elementary schools located in rural and urban areas of Bathinda district, Punjab. The Emotional Competence Scale developed by Dahiya and Gahlawat (2018) was used as the tool for data collection. The scale measures five dimensions of emotional competence: self-awareness, adaptability, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The collected data were analysed using the t-test to determine the significance of differences between groups. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers with respect to gender and locale. The results indicated that male teachers scored higher on emotional competence than female teachers. Similarly, urban teachers showed higher emotional competence compared to rural teachers. The study highlights the importance of emotional competence in improving teaching effectiveness and maintaining healthy teacher-student relationships. The findings suggest that training programmes and professional development workshops should be organised to enhance the emotional competence of teachers, especially those working in rural schools. Strengthening teachers' emotional skills can contribute to better classroom management, improved student engagement, and a more positive educational environment.

Keyword: Emotional Competence, Elementary School Teachers, Gender Differences, Locale (Rural and Urban), Emotional Intelligence, Teacher Effectiveness, Classroom Environment, Professional Development.

INTRODUCTION

Elementary school is the first milestone to define a person's academic, professional and personal life as well. It is considered as the most important part in every person's educational life through which every child steps towards many different levels of knowledge and skills. During elementary years, the children learn to read, count, write, develop critical thinking, moral values and learn more about the universe all around. The importance of an elementary school teacher in the educational process is unquestionable. In the field of education or in a specific teaching learning situation, he/she plays a crucial role in dispensing knowledge, framing the time schedule, selecting reading materials, planning daily activities and evaluating learning outcomes and of course helping pupils to overcome their difficulties and personal problems. Emotional competence involves the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and appropriately express emotions in oneself and others. In the context of elementary education, emotional competence is particularly vital. Teachers regularly interact with young children who are still developing their emotional regulation skills. Managing classroom dynamics, responding to students' emotional needs, resolving conflicts, and maintaining constructive communication with parents and colleagues all require high levels of emotional awareness and regulation. Teachers with strong emotional competence are better equipped to handle stress, prevent burnout, and foster supportive learning environment.

EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

Emotional competence is used synonymously with emotional intelligence. It is the ability to control one's emotions, impulses, feelings and caring for other's emotions and above all listening to others instead of being selfish and giving priority to own self. It is the power to adapt to changing circumstances, flexible to changing demands, managing time according to priorities, self-control, self-motivation, self-confidence and social awareness and skills such as empathy and optimistic or positive attitude towards others. Competence is the skill with which some one interacts constructively with other people. The level of emotional competence or intelligence improves with time as people can better adapt their emotions and impulses at motivating themselves and this growth of emotional competence is termed as maturity. Mayer and Salovey, 1997 expressed emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion, understand and regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

Emotional competence is emotional literacy. Skills such as empathy, problem-solving capabilities, optimism and self-awareness which allow people to understand, reflect and react to various environmental situations are related to emotional competence. The basic components of emotional competence are self-awareness, self-regulation, self-esteem, stress management, motivation, empathy and social skills, managing conflicts and recognizing personality traits in others. Emotional competence is the mental capability that among other things includes the ability to adjust reason, plan, solve complex problems easily, think abstractly and learn from different circumstances and from experience. Emotional competence has a great impact on human being, especially among the teachers, whether they teach in schools, colleges or universities.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Edannur (2010) showed no significant gender and locale-wise difference in emotional intelligence among school teachers. Toor (2013) found a significant gender difference in emotional intelligence among school teachers. Male school teachers showed higher emotional intelligence than female school teachers. Sankari, K. (2014) showed no significant gender and locale-wise difference on emotional competence among school teachers. Ahmad & Khan (2016) revealed a significant gender difference in emotional intelligence among school teachers. Male school teachers showed higher emotional intelligence than female school teachers. Soanes & Sungah (2019) showed a significant gender difference in emotional intelligence among school teachers. It was also found that there was no significant locale-wise difference in emotional intelligence among school teachers. Kalik, A. S. (2020) found a significant difference between male and female elementary school teachers. Male elementary school teachers showed higher emotional competence than female elementary school teachers. Awan, R. N. et al. (2021) revealed that there was no significant gender difference in relation to gender. Roychowdhury, S. (2022) concluded a significant difference in relation to gender and locale among school teachers. Male and urban school teachers showed higher emotional competence than female and rural school teachers.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To compare the emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to gender and locale.

HYPOTHESES

- There will be no significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to gender.
- There will be no significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to locale.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive method is used to conduct the present study.

TOOLS USED

- Emotional Competence scale by Dahiya, S. & Gahlawat, S. (2018) is used. This tool contains 34 items which includes five dimensions. These are (i) self-awareness, (ii) Adaptability, (iii) Motivation, (iv) Empathy (v) Social Skills.

SAMPLE

The present study is conducted on elementary school teachers from Bathinda district of Punjab state. A representative sample of 200 elementary school teachers are randomly selected from government elementary schools located in rural and urban areas of the said district.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The data was analysed using t-test to study the significance of gender and locale-wise differences in emotional competence among elementary school teachers.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

In order to find out the significant of gender differences in emotional competence among secondary school teachers, t-test was applied.

Table I

Gender Differences in Emotional Competence among Elementary School Teachers

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Emotional competence	Male	103	26.33	4.52	2.73**
	Female	97	24.12	4.64	

** $p \leq 0.01$

The table I show that mean score of male elementary school teachers on emotional competence is 26.33 and SD is 4.52. The mean score of female elementary school teachers on emotional competence is 24.12 and 4.64. The t-value testing the significance of gender differences came out to be 2.73, which is significant at 0.01 level. This implies that there is a significant gender difference in emotional competence of elementary school teachers. Further the mean score of male elementary school teachers is significantly higher than mean score of female elementary school teachers. It shows that male elementary school teachers have better emotional competence than female elementary school teachers. So, the hypothesis stating “**There will be no significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to gender**” is rejected.

LOCALE-WISE DIFFERENCES IN EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

In order to find out the significant of locale-wise differences in emotional competence among secondary school teachers, t-test was applied.

Table II

Locale-wise Differences in Emotional Competence among Elementary School Teachers

Variable	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Emotional competence	Urban	98	27.83	5.14	2.79**
	Rural	102	25.59	4.98	

** $p \leq 0.01$

The table II show that mean score of urban elementary school teachers on emotional competence is 27.83 and SD is 5.14. The mean score of rural elementary school teachers on emotional competence is 25.59 and 4.98. The t-value testing the significance of locale-wise differences came out to be 2.79, which is significant at 0.01 level. This implies that there is a significant locale-wise difference in emotional competence of elementary school teachers. Further the mean score of urban elementary school teachers is significantly higher than mean score of rural elementary school teachers. It shows that urban elementary school teachers have better emotional competence than rural elementary school teachers. So, the hypothesis stating “**There will be no significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to locale**” is rejected.

FINDINGS

1. There is a significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to gender.
2. There is a significant difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to locale.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the present study provides significant information about emotional competence among elementary school teachers on the basis of their gender and locale. A representative sample of 200 elementary school teachers is randomly selected from government elementary schools located in rural and urban areas from Bathinda district. The data are analysed using descriptive and differential statistics. The results show a significant gender and locale-wise difference in emotional competence among elementary school teachers. Findings also showed that male and urban elementary school teachers have better emotional competence than female and rural elementary school teachers.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of the study highlight the importance of emotional competence in the teaching profession. The findings show significant differences in emotional competence among elementary school teachers based on gender and locale. Emotional competence helps teachers manage classroom situations, understand students' emotions, and maintain positive relationships. The results also suggest that rural teachers may require more professional development opportunities to enhance their emotional skills. These findings can help policymakers, teacher educators, and school administrators plan training programs and workshops to improve teachers' emotional competence and overall teaching effectiveness.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, J. & Khan, M. A. (2016). A study of emotional intelligence of secondary school teachers in relation to their gender, locality and experience. *Global Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, 5(2), 175-181.
- Awan, R. N., Anwar, M. N. & Farooq, S. (2021). The role of elementary teachers' emotional intelligence competencies in improving students' motivation and student-teacher relationship. *Sir Syed Journal of Education and Social Research*, 4(2), 492-499.
- Edannur, S. (2010). Emotional intelligence level of teacher educators, *International Journal of Education Science*, 2(2), 115-121.
- Dahiya, S. & Gahlawat, S. (2018). Emotional competence scale. Agra: National Psychological Corporation.
- Kalik, A. S. (2020). Emotional competence among elementary school teachers in relation to gender. *Research and Reflection on Education*, 18(3A), 36-39.
- Mayer, J. D. & Salovey, P. (1997). *What is emotional intelligence?* Emotional development and emotional intelligence: Educational implications (pp. 3–31). New York: Basic Books.
- Roychowdhury, S. (2022). A study of emotional competence of school teachers of Delhi. *Journal of Commerce, Arts and Science*, 5(1).
- Toor, K. K. (2013). A study of social and emotional intelligence of secondary school teachers. *International Journal of Behavioral, Social and Movement Sciences*. 2(4), 22-34.
- Soanes, D. G. & Sungoh, S. M. (2019). Influence of emotional intelligence on teacher effectiveness of science teachers. *Psychology*, 10, 1819-1831.

