

## Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Teacher's Effectiveness: A Study of Higher Secondary School Students Perceptions

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### Abstract

This paper has investigated the role of EI in making teaching effective. Although studies indicate that EI teachers create more favourable classroom environments, very few studies have been conducted on how the students of higher secondary schools perceive effective teaching in relation to the teacher's emotional intelligence. The main objective was to identify which EI elements students value most in teachers and how these components relate to perceptions of teaching effectiveness. Six urban government higher secondary schools from the district of Kohat were selected. Of these schools, 285 students completed a 30-item questionnaire. Ten items on effective teachers and twenty on emotional intelligence were included. A 5-point Likert scale was used to analyse the collected data and assess reliability. T-test and ANOVA were also used. The analysis showed that students rated EI and effective teaching positively, with average scores ranging from 2.21 to 2.32. According to students, the most important element of EI is motivation, with 24.9% and, followed by social skills with 21.8%. The items of the questionnaire were highly consistent with a value from 0.720 to 0.896 of Cronbach's alpha. The results verify that the EI is well identified by students in their teachers and they correlated it with effective teaching. It is also recommended that EI development be included in future teachers' training programs, and such research may be conducted with students in rural areas and private schools.

**Key Words:** Effective teachers, Emotional intelligence, Motivation, self-regulation, Empathy, Social Communication

### Introduction

Emotional intelligence, or EI, plays an important role in a teacher's effectiveness. EI is the ability to understand, recognize, and use emotions not only in oneself but also in others. It is considered an important factor of professional success. On the other hand, an effective teacher is one who not only delivers content but also provides a supportive environment for their students, motivates them, and addresses complex social problems in the classroom. The study investigated the role of EI and the relationship of its elements to an effective teacher.

### Literature Review

Salovey and Mayer defined EI as the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions. They established four main branches: emotion perception, emotional knowledge, emotional control, and the use of affect in cognition. Goleman followed this framework by including self-awareness,

self-management, motivation, and social skills as the basic elements of EI. He argued that EI plays a pivotal role in career achievement and productivity by making teachers more effective (Bar-On et al., 2000; Goleman, 2005; Hartung, 2020; Mayer et al., 2016).

The Emotional intelligence of teachers is the ability to use emotions to enhance learning outcomes. For instance, Rust also found that emotionally intelligent teachers help students engage with the material and remain confident in the face of challenges. This supports Chen and Guo, who conceptualised that teacher EI increases students' academic performance through effective teaching and promotes students' engagement in classroom activities. He also stated that EI is not limited to specific classroom-based interpersonal interactions but also affects other educational processes (Chen & Guo, 2020; Hamid, 2025; Horowitz, 2019).

## **Objectives**

The primary objective of the study was to investigate which EI element students rate most highly in an effective teacher. EI-established models by Bar-On and Goleman will enable us to provide strong suggestions for making teachers' development programs more effective by introducing EI-based sessions.

## **Research Questions**

Two main research questions were framed.

1. Which element of EI is more important when we measure the teacher's effectiveness?
2. What is the perception of students about an effective teacher with the help of EI and its elements?

## **Hypothesis**

**Primary Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>):** There is a positive relationship between the teacher's effectiveness and his emotional intelligence.

**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>):** EI of a teacher is not significantly related to a teacher's effectiveness.

The hypothesis based on Vithanage (2023) shows a statistically significant positive correlation ( $r = .53, p < .01$ ) between students performance and teacher's score of EI.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

A quantitative, descriptive, and correlational design was used to examine the correlation between different elements of EI and effective teachers' effectiveness as perceived by higher secondary school students. The reason behind keeping the study quantitative was that it required numerical data collection through a standardized questionnaire. The design was also consistent with previously conducted studies in the field of educational psychology.

### **Population of the Study**

The target of 285 students was selected from six urban higher secondary schools in District Kohat, representing both 11th and 12th classes at each school, enrolled in the academic session of 2024-25.

### **Sample of the Study**

The study comprised 1425 students in 11th and 12th classes, of whom 285 were selected as 20% of the total population, following the formula set by Mills & Gay (2015). GHSS No. 1 had the highest percentage (33%) in the sample, while GCMHS had the lowest (8.8%). The sample population consisted of students aged 15-19. 17-year-old students accounted for the highest 46% of the study's participants.

## Sampling procedure

Stratified random sampling was used, ensuring that every member of the total population had an equal opportunity to be included in the sample.

## Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected with the help of 30-item questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale, measuring the qualities of an effective teacher (10 items) and emotional intelligence (20 items) across five subscales: self-awareness (SA), self-regulation (SR), motivation (9), empathy (E), and social skills (SS). The questionnaire was validated by educational psychology experts and pilot-tested, showing strong reliability with Cronbach's alpha value of .892 for effective teacher and .896 for all five emotional intelligence elements. Researchers collected data face-to-face during regular class time by using a supervised questionnaire completion method, which provides immediate guidance and a higher response rate. Proper approval from school authorities was sought, and informed consent from participants was obtained, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation.

## Data Analysis

The collected data from 285 participants was analysed through SPSS. Descriptive statistics were employed to categorise responses, finding the percentage, Mean, and Standard deviation. A t-test was used to compare grade-level responses; a one-way ANOVA was used to examine relationships among between variables, while for comparisons post hoc, post-hoc Tukey tests were conducted. To identify meaningful findings, all tests used a significance level of .05.

## Findings

This research paper discusses the perceptions of 285 first-year- and second-year students from six urban government higher secondary schools in the district of Kohat regarding the EI level and the effectiveness of their teachers' teaching. Students were asked to evaluate 10-item scales containing both positive and negative attributes related to Effective Teacher, as well as 20-item scales evaluating five elements of EI (Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills) on a 5-point rating scale. The overall mean scores ranged from 2.21 to 2.32, indicating a general sense that Effective teaching or Emotional intelligence exists in their schools. The measurement instrument questionnaire was also validated by finding the reliability of different items related to ET and EI, which revealed that the internal consistency in all scales was from acceptable to excellent, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .720 to .896, while .70 is considered acceptable. The learners prioritized motivation (24.9%), then Social Skills (21.8%), and empathy (21.4%). These findings indicate their attachment to the external aspect of EI, while self-awareness and self-regulation were marked as less being internal traits of teachers. A grade-level comparison showed that 12th-grade students have a better perception of their effective teachers and EI than 11th-grade students (both  $p < .005$ ). Comparison on school basis revealed that the Government Higher Secondary School Billitang consistently reported significantly higher scores on the two measures of EI and ET than the other remaining five schools (all  $p < .001$ ). The results obtained validate that students acknowledge and appreciate EI among their teachers, especially in terms of motivation and social skills, and behavioural perceptions differ significantly across class and school levels.

Table 1:

Descriptive Statistics Related to Student Responses

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
ET-1	285	1	5	2.11	1.050
-2	285	1	5	2.18	1.157

-3	285	1	5	2.19	1.096
-4	285	1	5	2.28	1.121
-5	285	1	5	2.31	1.137
-6	285	1	5	2.27	1.110
-7	285	1	5	2.30	1.100
-8	285	1	5	2.12	1.130
-9	285	1	5	2.08	1.012
-10	285	1	5	2.28	1.087
SA-1	285	1	5	2.37	1.092
-2	285	1	5	2.34	1.094
-3	285	1	5	2.44	1.101
-4	285	1	5	2.31	1.080
SR-1	285	1	5	2.36	1.110
-2	285	1	5	2.35	1.079
-3	285	1	5	2.40	1.107
-4	285	1	5	2.28	1.054
M-1	285	1	5	2.23	1.078
-2	285	1	5	2.28	1.197
-3	285	1	5	2.29	1.191
-4	285	1	5	2.14	1.217
E-1	285	1	5	2.23	1.042
-2	285	1	5	2.36	1.090
-3	285	1	5	2.36	1.113
-4	285	1	5	2.32	1.147
SS-1	285	1	5	2.26	1.149
-2	285	1	5	2.24	1.238
-3	285	1	5	2.37	1.166
-4	285	1	5	2.47	1.131

Note: This table describes the descriptive statistics of how students responded to questions about their perceptions of ET and EI. This sample comprises 285 students who rated each item on a 5-point scale, where 1 is for 'strongly agree,' and 5 is for 'strongly disagree'. For ET, standard deviation is 2.08 to 2.31, for SR items, it is 2.28 to 2.40, for SA items, from 2.31 to 2.44, for Motivation, it is from 2.14 to 2.29, for empathy, it is from 2.23 to 2.36, and for social skills, it is from 2.24 to 2.47. Across all EI items, SD ranges from 1.04 to 1.24, indicating a consistent pattern of reaction.

**Table 2:**  
MOST IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF EI

Components	f	%
SA	48	16.8

SR	43	15.1
M	71	24.9
E	61	21.4
SS	62	21.8
Total	285	100.0

Note: Students were asked to respond to the most important component of EI. All 285 students had to mark their top choice. Motivation was selected by 71 students (24.9%), viewing it as the key component, followed by Social Skill (n = 62, 21.8%), Empathy was selected by 61 students (21.4%), Self-awareness by 48 (16.8%), and Self-regulation by 43 (15.1%), but still considerable proportions of students. Overall, the distribution suggests that students place slightly more emphasis on outward traits of an effective teacher, interpersonal (motivation, empathy, SS), than on inward (SA, SR).

**Table 3:**  
**ANOVA Results for Teacher Effectiveness**

Source of Variation	Total Squares	df	Mean Sq.	F	Sig.
ET Between Groups	18.772	5	3.754	6.726	0.000
Within Groups	155.744	279	0.558		
Total	174.516	284			

Note: This table shows that ET was noted as different across the schools mentioned, with a significant result ( $F(5,279) = 6.73, p < .001$ ). It also shows that one school's mean Emotional Intelligence score differs from those of the other 5 schools. For EI, the score is also significant ( $F(5, 279) = 6.85, p < .001$ ). Each school's students' scores varied with respect to EI.

## Discussion

The findings of the research confirm that students perceive those teachers as more effective who are equipped with EI components, with motivation, social skills, and empathy being the most valued. These findings align with previous research that emphasizes the importance of social skills and empathy in fostering positive classroom environments (Goleman, 2005; Akram et al., 2019).

Moreover, the argument that EI is an important part of teacher quality that students can recognise in everyday classroom interactions was partially validated, as not all components of EI are equally valued by students when they think about an “effective teacher” at the higher secondary level. (Shafaqat et al., 2025)

The significant differences between grade levels and schools suggest that 12th-grade students have a more refined understanding of effective teaching, possibly due to their broader exposure to various teaching styles and more time in the school than the 11th-grade students. The variability across schools highlights the effect of school-specific factors—such as teacher training and school culture—on students' perceptions.

The first objective of the research was to check whether students perceive a relationship between teachers' Emotional intelligence and Effective teaching. The results confirmed that the mean scores for the Effective teacher scale and five EI subscales fell within a similar, positive range. Although this design is correlational rather than experimental, the pattern shows that students who experience their teachers as emotionally intelligent also consider them as more effective teachers. This interpretation aligns with several studies that report a positive relationship between teachers' EI and their effectiveness (Akram et al., 2019; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011).

Different international studies conducted across regions of the world, such as Europe, the Middle East, and Asia, similarly show that teachers with higher Emotional Intelligence are perceived as more effective, with stronger classroom management skills, and secure higher educational outcomes (Shahab et al., 2025). Studies on empathy skills show a clear relationship with learner involvement, student flourishing, and scholastic adaptation (Ampofo et al., 2025). Research in languages has also highlighted that students value those teachers who are accessible, inspirational, and compassionate (Huang et al., 2024). Rahman (2024) reported that all five EI dimensions, including motivation, empathy, and social skills, have significantly predicted students' academic motivation at the level of higher education. (Rahman et al., 2024).

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the results provide robust evidence that Emotional Intelligence is a fundamental component of effective teaching at the higher secondary level. Because student judgments of quality are deeply influenced by a teacher's emotional and social skills, EI should no longer be treated as an elective 'soft skill'.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the superior ratings observed in twelfth graders and specific high-performing institutions like GHSS Billitang, it is recommended that the Elementary and Secondary education incorporate evidence-based EI training into both pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programs to ensure a more empathetic and effective learning environment.

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