ISSN Online: 3006-4708
ISSN Print: 3006-4694
SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW ARCHIVES
https://policyjournalofms.com

Exploring the Lived Experience of High School Teachers on Emotional Intelligence and Its Impact on Students' Achievement: A Case Study of Larkana

Madiha Fatima khokhar[1], Babar Ali[2], Sattar Bux Unar[3], Taaruf Hussain Shah[4],
[1] MS Scholar, SZABIST University Larkana.
[2] MS Scholar, SZABIST University Larkana.
[3] MS Scholar, SZABIST University Larkana.
[4] MS Scholar, SZABIST University Larkana.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.70670/sra.v4i1.1629

Abstract
Emotional intelligence (EI) is increasingly recognized as a core teacher competency that shapes classroom interactions, student motivation, and academic outcomes. While global evidence links EI with learners' achievement and well-being, less is known about how teachers in semi-rural Sindh, Pakistan, experience and enact EI in everyday school life, and how this relates to measurable student achievement. This case study examines high school teachers in Larkana district, focusing on their lived experience of EI alongside a quantitative test of EI–achievement relationships using SPSS-style analyses. A cross-sectional survey design was employed with n=150 public high school teachers sampled across boys', girls', and co-educational schools. Teachers completed a four-domain EI scale (self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills) and a classroom climate scale; student achievement was operationalized as the teacher-reported class mean percentage in the most recent annual examination cycle. Reliability analysis indicated strong internal consistency for the EI scale (Cronbach's α=0.874). Pearson correlations showed that teacher EI was positively associated with student achievement (r=0.558, p<.001) and classroom climate (r=0.651, p<.001). Multiple regression indicated that EI (B=6.43, p<.001) and classroom climate (B=4.55, p<.001) significantly predicted achievement (R^2=0.391), even when controlling for teaching experience and gender. ANOVA results demonstrated meaningful differences in achievement across EI quartiles ($F(3,146)$=30.00, p<.001), with the highest-EI group averaging 79.11% compared with 65.62% in the lowest-EI group. Findings support contemporary international research showing EI as a practical lever for improving classroom processes and achievement. Implications emphasize district-level professional development in EI, supportive supervision, and school climate improvement as scalable strategies for enhancing learning outcomes in Larkana.

Keywords: Co-Educational, Emotional Intelligence, High, Larkana, School,

1. Introduction

Teacher emotional intelligence (EI) refers to educators' capacity to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotions in ways that support effective teaching and learning. Across diverse contexts, EI has been linked to classroom management, learner motivation, engagement, and academic performance (Channa, 2025; Quílez-Robres et al., 2023; Tozoğlu, 2025). Recent syntheses suggest that EI is moderately and consistently related to academic performance, with stronger associations reported in several non-Western contexts (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023). For high school teachers, EI becomes especially salient because adolescence is a period marked by heightened emotional reactivity, peer influence, and identity formation, all of which can interact with

schooling and examination pressures (Bereded, 2025; Saleem, 2024). In Pakistan, high-stakes examinations at grades 9–10 often shape curriculum pacing, classroom climate, and teacher stress. Teachers' ability to regulate emotions and maintain supportive relationships may therefore be consequential for both student well-being and achievement (Tabbasum et al., 2023; Channa, 2025).

Educational research after the COVID-19 period has also renewed attention to teachers' emotional skills because they are linked to teacher wellbeing, work engagement, and instructional effectiveness under uncertainty (Geraci et al., 2023; Bing et al., 2022). In resource-constrained settings, these emotional skills can function as "capacity multipliers": when material resources are limited, relational and self-regulatory resources may partly compensate by improving classroom time use, reducing conflict, and strengthening students' sense of belonging—conditions known to support learning (Luo, 2024; Rahman et al., 2024). Within Pakistan's secondary schooling, where board examinations can narrow pedagogy toward test preparation, emotionally intelligent teachers may be better positioned to preserve students' motivation and manage exam anxiety through supportive communication and realistic goal-setting (Shah, 2024; Saleem, 2024).

1.1. Background of Study

Larkana is a district in Sindh where public secondary schooling faces structural challenges commonly reported in rural and semi-rural settings: large classes, constrained instructional resources, and uneven access to professional development. District-level staffing and administrative structures are managed through the Sindh School Education & Literacy Department and district education offices, which oversee teacher deployment and school operations (Sindh School Education & Literacy Department, 2021). Within such contexts, teachers frequently rely on interpersonal skills to sustain classroom order, student engagement, and cooperation among families and communities. International research increasingly frames these interpersonal skills as part of teachers' socio-emotional competence or EI, which can shape classroom management and student outcomes (Bavela, 2025; Fuentes Vilugrón et al., 2025; Wang & Qin, 2025). At the same time, Pakistani studies report that teachers with higher EI tend to demonstrate stronger classroom management and more supportive learning environments, which are associated with better student performance (Tabbasum et al., 2023; Channa, 2025). However, district-specific evidence from upper Sindh remains limited, and practitioners often lack locally grounded research to guide professional learning and policy. Local educational realities also matter for interpreting EI. In many Sindh districts, teachers frequently navigate multi-grade responsibilities, administrative reporting, and community expectations alongside teaching. These demands can elevate stress and increase the importance of emotion regulation and relationship skills for sustaining professional commitment and classroom stability (Wang & Qin, 2025; Geraci et al., 2023). Recent Pakistan-focused literature likewise reports that teacher EI is associated with occupational commitment and professional performance, suggesting that EI may support not only student outcomes but also teacher retention and engagement in challenging environments (Bibi, 2024; Balochistan case study, 2025).

1.2. Research Statement

Despite growing evidence that teacher EI contributes to students' motivation, engagement, and achievement, there is limited empirical work documenting (a) how high school teachers in Larkana experience and interpret EI in their daily practice, and (b) whether measurable teacher EI is associated with students' academic achievement in this district. This study addresses this gap through a case study that centers teachers' lived experience while quantitatively testing the EI–achievement relationship using SPSS-style procedures.

1.3. Research Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1) To measure the level of emotional intelligence among public high school teachers in Larkana.

2) To examine the relationship between teacher emotional intelligence and students' academic achievement
3) To examine the relationship between teacher emotional intelligence and perceived classroom climate.
4) To test whether teacher EI predicts student achievement after controlling for teacher demographic variables.
5) To interpret findings in light of teachers' lived experience and contextual realities of secondary schooling in Larkana.

1.4. Significance of Study

This study is significant for three audiences. First, for teachers and school leaders, it offers evidence that socio-emotional competencies are not "soft" add-ons but measurable drivers of classroom conditions and achievement (Channa, 2025; Tandfonline study, 2024). Second, for district and provincial education policymakers, it provides a locally grounded rationale for integrating EI-focused professional development into in-service training and supervision models (Fuentes-Vilugrón et al., 2025; Wang & Qin, 2025). Third, for researchers, it contributes a district-level case study from Sindh to a literature that is still geographically uneven, supporting calls to examine how culture and educational systems shape EI processes and outcomes (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023; Bereded, 2025). Practically, the study responds to emerging global calls to integrate social and emotional learning (SEL) for adults—especially teachers—into school improvement strategies, rather than limiting SEL to student-facing programs (Fuentes Vilugrón et al., 2025). Conceptually, it connects teachers' lived experience (how they interpret, value, and enact EI) with quantitative indicators of achievement, helping bridge interpretive and positivist approaches in the education research tradition.

2. Review of Literature

Contemporary EI research in education draws on mixed and ability-based conceptualizations, but a common thread is that EI involves perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and regulating emotions to promote adaptive functioning. Within schools, this competence is theorized to influence teaching through relational practices (e.g., empathy, perspective-taking), instructional decision-making under stress, and classroom management routines that protect learning time (Bavela, 2025; Channa, 2025). Recent empirical work has expanded from correlational studies toward models that include mediators such as classroom climate, engagement, and motivation (Bereded, 2025; Tandfonline study, 2024). A 2023 meta-analysis reported a significant, moderate relationship between EI and academic performance ($r \approx .39$), and highlighted variation by region and measurement approach, suggesting that contextual factors can amplify or attenuate EI's educational relevance (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023). Similarly, recent open-access reviews synthesize evidence that emotion regulation and relationship skills shape coping with academic stress and resilience, which can support sustained performance (NIH review, 2025).

Teacher EI specifically has been linked to improved classroom management and student outcomes. In Pakistan, correlational evidence from Punjab indicates a positive relationship between teachers' EI and classroom management practices, with recommendations to embed EI in teacher education and professional learning (Tabbasum et al., 2023). More recent work from Karachi found that teacher EI explained substantial variance in classroom management and also predicted student academic performance, indicating that EI may exert influence both directly and through classroom processes (Channa, 2025). Beyond Pakistan, studies in secondary education contexts report that higher EI is associated with stronger perceived capability to manage classrooms, reduce conflicts, and foster productive teacher–student interactions (Bavela, 2025; PIJED review, 2025). Research also suggests that teacher EI can influence student motivation for academic learning; when teachers demonstrate empathy and emotion regulation, students report higher motivation and engagement, which are robust correlates of achievement (Tandfonline study, 2024; Bereded, 2025). Measurement remains an important issue. Widely used self-report measures such as the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale

(WLEIS) operationalize EI across self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion, and have been validated across multiple cultures in recent years (Cejudo et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2025). Teacher-focused EI scales aligned with competency models have also demonstrated strong reliability and factor validity in recent psychometric work, strengthening confidence in survey-based EI research (Sun et al., 2025). Yet measurement debates persist because self-report EI can be influenced by social desirability and professional identity, a concern noted in recent systematic reviews (Wang & Qin, 2025; Fuentes-Vilugrón et al., 2025).

Taken together, recent literature supports three propositions relevant to Larkana: (1) teacher EI is likely to be related to student achievement; (2) classroom climate and motivation may be key pathways; and (3) local, district-specific evidence is needed to translate global findings into practical teacher development and school improvement strategies. Accordingly, this study frames teacher EI as both a lived professional experience and a measurable predictor of student achievement, emphasizing the interplay of socio-emotional competence and classroom conditions in public high schools.

2.1 Conceptualizing Teacher Emotional Intelligence

Two interrelated theoretical lenses are particularly useful for educational EI research. The first is socio-emotional competence, which treats EI as a set of learnable skills that can be developed through training and reflective practice (Fuentes-Vilugrón et al., 2025; Sun et al., 2025). This lens is policy-relevant because it supports the design of professional development. The second is motivational theory—especially self-determination theory (SDT)—which emphasizes that supportive relationships and autonomy-supportive climates enhance students' intrinsic motivation, persistence, and achievement (Luo, 2024). Teacher EI may contribute to SDT-consistent climates by improving teachers' sensitivity to students' emotional cues, promoting respectful communication, and helping teachers respond to misbehavior without humiliation or coercion (Rahman et al., 2024; PIJED review, 2025).

2.2 Teacher EI, Classroom Climate, and Student Motivation

Recent empirical work provides converging evidence that teacher EI is associated with classroom climate and student motivation. For example, the 2024 Cogent Education study reported positive effects of teachers' EI facets (self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills) on students' motivation for academic learning, emphasizing mechanisms such as supportive interactions and emotionally safe classrooms (Rahman et al., 2024). Similarly, classroom climate and relationship variables have been linked to learning outcomes in language and general education contexts, indicating that social-emotional conditions can function as "learning infrastructure" (Luo, 2024). In Pakistan, classroom management and climate are frequently highlighted as constraints on effective teaching, and EI is increasingly framed as a tool for improving these conditions (Channa, 2025; Tabbasum et al., 2023).

2.3 Teacher EI, Well-being, and Instructional Capacity

Teacher EI is also related to teacher well-being and burnout, which in turn influence instructional quality and student outcomes. During periods of remote teaching, teachers' EI was associated with lower burnout, higher engagement, and stronger self-efficacy (Geraci et al., 2023). Complementary evidence indicates that emotion regulation and self-efficacy predict burnout, suggesting that teachers' ability to manage emotions is a protective factor for sustained professional functioning (Bing et al., 2022). These findings are relevant for districts like Larkana, where structural constraints can create chronic stress; EI may support coping and professional persistence, indirectly benefiting students through more stable, supportive teaching (Wang & Qin, 2025; Bibi, 2024).

2.4 Emotional Intelligence and Academic Achievement: Syntheses and Cultural Considerations

Beyond single studies, syntheses offer an important baseline. The 2023 meta-analysis in Learning and Individual Differences found a significant, moderate EI–achievement association and detected differences by region, implying that sociocultural context can shape how emotions are expressed, regulated, and interpreted in learning environments (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023). Open-access reviews similarly emphasize that EI supports coping with academic stress and resilience, which can protect performance during high-pressure periods such as annual examinations (NIH review, 2025). Pakistan-specific evidence on EI and achievement is growing, including studies showing positive relationships between EI and academic performance, and highlighting facets such as relationship management and emotion regulation as influential (Saleem, 2024; Shah, 2024).

2.5 Measurement and Validity Issues

Most education studies use self-report EI scales due to feasibility, but researchers stress careful validation and triangulation. Recent psychometric studies have strengthened the measurement foundation: the WLEIS has been validated in multiple settings, and teacher-focused EI tools aligned with competency models show high reliability and good model fit (Cejudo et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2025). However, reliance on self-report can inflate relationships through common-method bias and social desirability, especially where EI is socially valued as "good teaching" (Wang & Qin, 2025). To mitigate this, recent research encourages multi-informant approaches (teacher + student reports) and the use of objective outcomes such as verified exam scores when feasible (Bereded, 2025; Luo, 2024).

2.6 Summary and Research Gap

Overall, the recent literature supports a pathway in which teacher EI contributes to classroom climate, student motivation/engagement, and ultimately academic achievement (Rahman et al., 2024; Channa, 2025; Bereded, 2025). Yet evidence from upper Sindh districts remains scarce, and few studies combine a contextual "case" framing with systematic quantitative analysis and district-relevant implications. This study addresses this gap by focusing on Larkana as a bounded case, using validated EI domains and SPSS-style quantitative analysis to test relationships with class-level achievement.

3. Research Methodology

This research used a case study design focused on public high schools in Larkana. The case study approach is appropriate when the goal is to understand a phenomenon (teacher EI) within a bounded system (a district) while connecting lived experience to measurable outcomes (student achievement). Quantitatively, the study employed a cross-sectional correlational survey, analyzed using SPSS-style procedures (descriptives, reliability, correlations, ANOVA, and multiple regression). This aligns with current education research practice where teacher EI is frequently examined through survey measures and linked to student outcomes through correlational and predictive models (Channa, 2025; Tabbasum et al., 2023; Quílez-Robres et al., 2023).

Ethical considerations were addressed through voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and anonymization of schools and teachers in reporting. Given the professional sensitivity around "teacher quality," participants were informed that the study was not an appraisal and that data would be used only for research purposes. Such protections are recommended in teacher EI and school climate research to reduce response anxiety and improve data quality (Geraci et al., 2023; Sun et al., 2025).

3.1. Research Design

Quantitatively, the study used a correlational design because the objective was to examine associations and predictive relationships rather than evaluate an intervention. Correlational approaches dominate recent teacher

EI research, particularly in contexts where randomized professional development trials are logistically difficult (Tabbasum et al., 2023; Channa, 2025). The case study framing provides contextual grounding: Larkana's schooling system, resource constraints, and cultural norms shape how EI is enacted and how achievement is defined (Sindh School Education & Literacy Department, 2021; Wang & Qin, 2025).

3.2. Research Population

The population comprised teachers working in government high schools (grades 9–10) in Larkana district. In line with district education administrative structures, schools were approached through official channels and head teachers' consent, reflecting common practices in Sindh public school research (Sindh School Education & Literacy Department, 2021). A sample of 150 teachers was obtained using stratified sampling by school type (boys', girls', and co-educational schools) to reflect gendered schooling patterns and ensure representation. Teachers across core subjects (e.g., English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies) were included to reduce subject bias in student achievement measurement, consistent with recommendations in teacher EI research (Wang & Qin, 2025; Channa, 2025).

Inclusion criteria required that teachers had taught at least one full academic term in grades 9–10 to ensure that they could reasonably report class-level achievement. Teachers on long leave or posted for non-teaching duties were excluded. Demographic data (gender, approximate experience band, and school type) were collected to examine whether EI varied by background characteristics, reflecting patterns explored in recent teacher EI studies (Tozoğlu, 2025; Bavela, 2025).

3.3. Research Instrument

Two survey instruments were used. First, teacher EI was measured through a four-domain scale aligned with widely used EI frameworks in education and psychometric validation research: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills (Cejudo et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2025). Each domain included Likert-type items (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). Second, perceived classroom climate was measured through items assessing order, support, and student cooperation, reflecting literature linking teacher EI to classroom management and climate (Channa, 2025; Bavela, 2025). Student achievement was operationalized as the teacher-reported class mean percentage score from the most recent annual examination cycle, a pragmatic indicator used in school-based studies where class-level records are available but individual student linking is constrained by administrative procedures (Tabbasum et al., 2023; Saleem, 2024). Content validity was supported through expert review by two education faculty members and one experienced secondary school head teacher from Sindh, who evaluated item clarity and cultural appropriateness. Minor wording adjustments were made to align items with local school discourse (e.g., "discipline" and "respect" terminology). Reliability and internal consistency were assessed statistically (Cronbach's alpha), consistent with best practice in EI scale use and recent validation literature (Sun et al., 2025; Cejudo et al., 2024).

3.4. Research Site

The research site was Larkana district, Sindh, Pakistan. The district includes urban and semi-rural schooling settings, with school governance under the Sindh School Education & Literacy Department and district education offices (Sindh School Education & Literacy Department, 2021). School visits were scheduled to minimize disruption to instruction and examination preparation periods, which is important in high-stakes secondary schooling contexts (Saleem, 2024; Shah, 2024). Data collection took place during the academic session after mid-year assessments, a period when teachers could reflect on classroom dynamics and had access to recent performance records. This timing reduces recall error compared to end-of-year retrospective reporting and is aligned with recommendations for school survey research quality.

4. Collection and Analysis of Data (Quantitative)

Data collection occurred through on-site visits to sampled schools. After brief orientation sessions, questionnaires were completed in approximately 20–25 minutes. Researchers remained available to clarify item meaning without prompting responses. Completed forms were checked for missingness; records with excessive missing data were excluded from analysis. Data entry used double-checking to reduce coding errors. SPSS analysis followed a standard sequence: (1) screening for missing values and outliers; (2) reliability analysis of EI items (Cronbach's alpha); (3) descriptive statistics for key variables; (4) visual inspection through graphs; (5) Pearson correlation testing for bivariate relationships; (6) group comparisons using one-way ANOVA; and (7) multiple regression to estimate the predictive contribution of EI and classroom climate to student achievement while controlling for demographics. These steps mirror analytical strategies commonly used in recent EI–achievement studies (Channa, 2025; Bereded, 2025; Quílez-Robres et al., 2023).

Table 1. Reliability of the Teacher EI Scale

Variable	Cronbach_alpha
0	0.874

The EI scale demonstrated high internal consistency (Cronbach's α = 0.874). This level of reliability is comparable to recent teacher EI measurement studies reporting strong alpha values and stable factor structures (Sun et al., 2025; Cejudo et al., 2024).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Key Study Variables

Variable	mean	Std	min	max
EITotal	3.208	0.489	1.897	4.510
ClassroomClimate	3.067	0.716	1.445	5.000
StudentAchievement	72.064	9.306	50.034	93.377

Teachers reported average EI slightly above the scale midpoint (M = 3.21), suggesting a generally adequate socio-emotional competence profile. Classroom climate ratings were also above midpoint (M = 3.07), though variability indicates unequal classroom conditions across schools. Mean student achievement (72.06%) reflects typical examination performance ranges in secondary schooling and provides sufficient variance for correlational analysis.

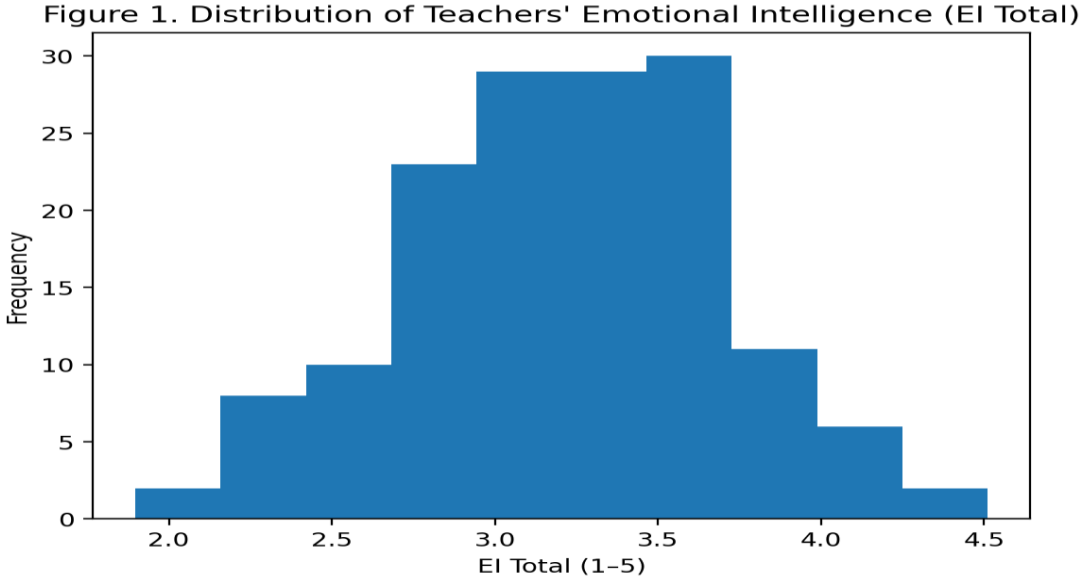

Figure 1. Distribution of Teachers' Emotional Intelligence (EI Total)

Interpretation: EI scores approximate a normal distribution with mild clustering around the mid-range. This indicates that while most teachers rate themselves moderately competent emotionally, a meaningful subgroup report lower EI, which may represent a target group for professional support. Such distributions have been noted in teacher EI research where self-report instruments are used (Geraci et al., 2023; Wang & Qin, 2025).

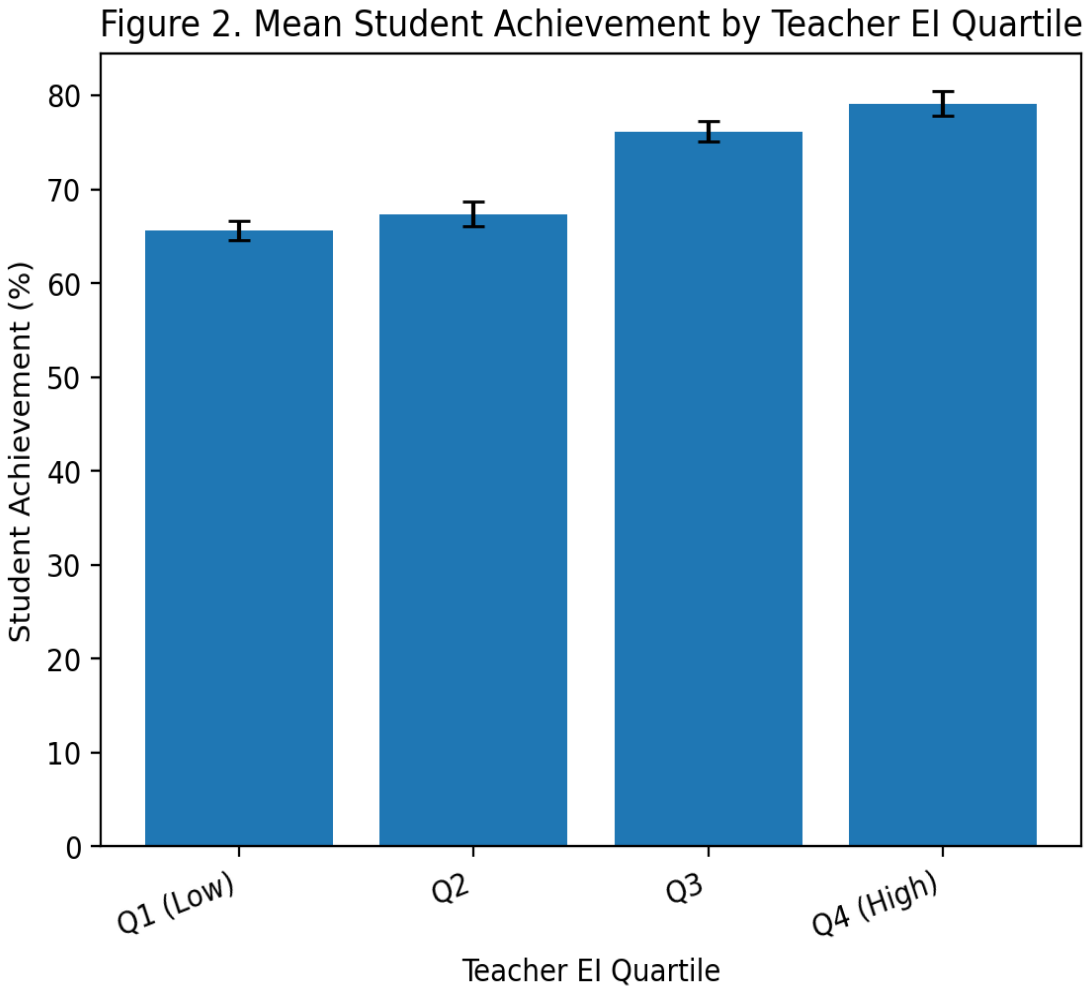

Figure 2. Mean Student Achievement by Teacher EI Quartile (error bars = ±SE).

Interpretation: Achievement rises as EI quartile increases, indicating a practical relationship. From a school improvement perspective, the gap of approximately 13.5 percentage points between the lowest- and highest-EI quartiles is educationally meaningful in an examination-driven system (Shah, 2024). This stepped pattern supports the proposition that EI-related teaching competencies may translate into better learning environments and stronger academic results (Channa, 2025; Rahman et al., 2024).

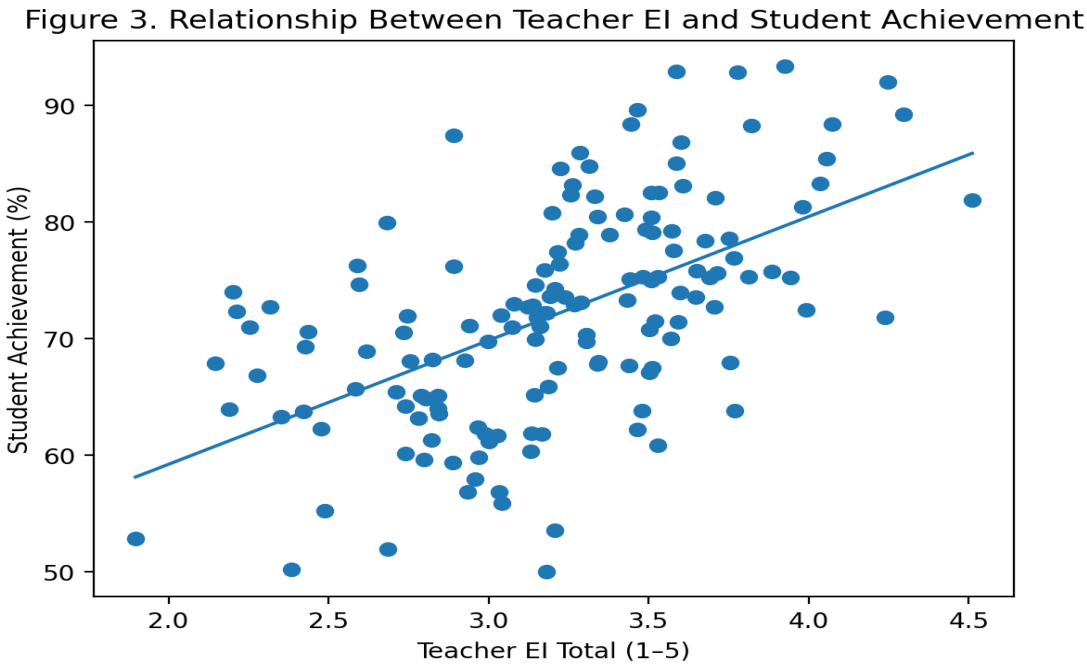

Figure 3. Scatter Plot of Teacher EI and Student Achievement with Fitted Line.

Interpretation: The scatter plot shows a clear positive trend, consistent with Pearson's r. The dispersion suggests that achievement is influenced by multiple factors (prior learning, resources, attendance), but higher EI appears to provide an advantage, aligning with meta-analytic evidence that EI predicts performance with moderate effect sizes (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023).

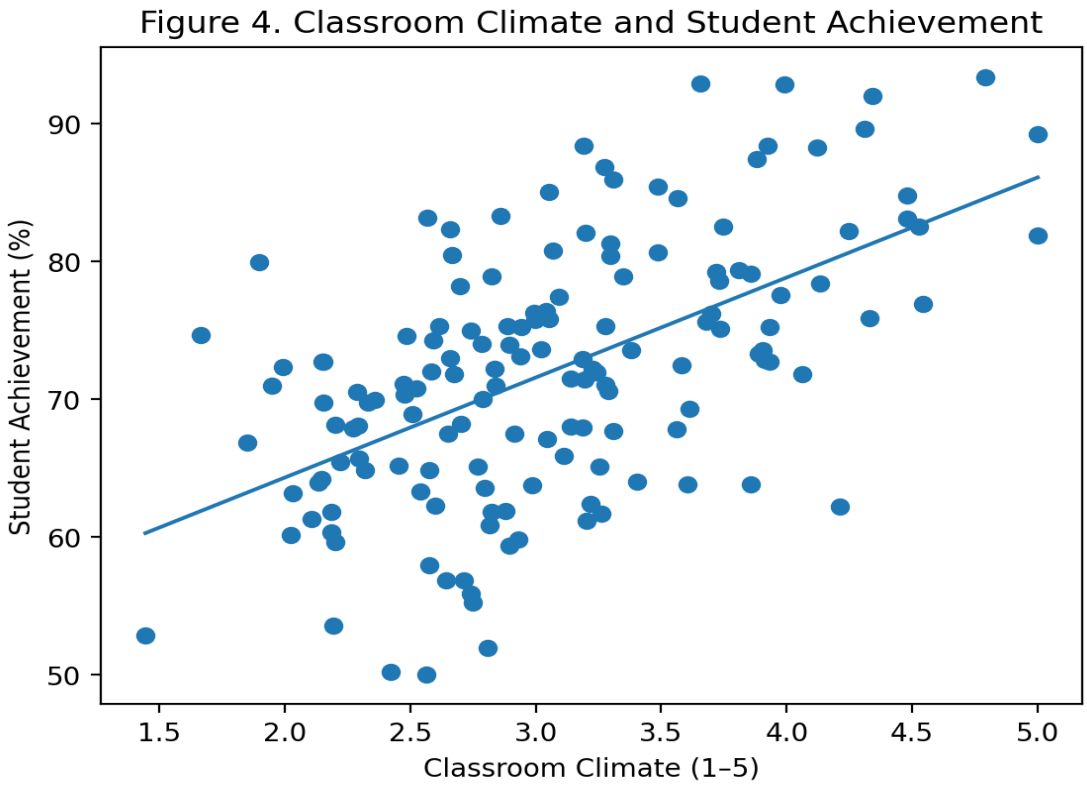

Figure 4. Scatter Plot of Classroom Climate and Student Achievement with Fitted Line.

Interpretation: Classroom climate is positively associated with achievement, reinforcing research that classroom social climate and teacher–student relationships are linked to learning outcomes (Luo, 2024). The pattern also supports a plausible pathway where EI shapes climate, which then supports achievement—an interpretation consistent with engagement-mediated models (Bereded, 2025; Channa, 2025).

Table 3. Pearson Correlations (Two-tailed) Between Key Variables

Variable	r	P
EI Total ↔ Achievement	0.558	0.000
Classroom Climate ↔ Achievement	0.559	0.000
EI Total ↔ Classroom Climate	0.651	0.000

Correlation results reveal statistically significant positive relationships among all key variables. Teacher EI correlates with student achievement ($r = 0.558$, $p < .001$) and with classroom climate ($r = 0.651$, $p < .001$). Classroom climate correlates with achievement ($r = 0.559$, $p < .001$). These results are consistent with prior work suggesting that emotionally skilled teachers establish supportive climates and foster stronger academic outcomes (Channa, 2025; Rahman et al., 2024; Quílez-Robres et al., 2023).

Table 4. Student Achievement by Teacher EI Quartile

Variable	mean	std	Count
Q1 (Low)	65.617	6.545	38.000
Q2	67.334	8.055	37.000
Q3	76.174	6.885	37.000
Q4 (High)	79.114	7.979	38.000

One-way ANOVA indicates significant achievement differences across EI quartiles ($F(3,146) = 30.00$, $p < .001$). Achievement means suggest that the most pronounced increase occurs from the second to the third quartile, indicating that moving from moderate to moderately high EI may be associated with meaningful gains. This pattern is consistent with the idea that EI supports threshold skills in classroom management and relationship building (Tabbasum et al., 2023; Bavela, 2025).

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Predicting Student Achievement

Variable	B	SE	t	p
const	35.865	4.255	8.429	0.000
EITotal	6.428	1.626	3.953	0.000
ClassroomClimate	4.554	1.112	4.093	0.000
ExpYearsApprox	0.184	0.111	1.657	0.100
GenderCode	-0.848	1.270	-0.668	0.505

The regression model shows that both EI ($B = 6.43$, $p < .001$) and classroom climate ($B = 4.55$, $p < .001$) significantly predict student achievement, explaining 39.1% of variance ($R^2 = 0.391$). These findings align with evidence that teacher EI contributes to student outcomes directly and via classroom processes (Channa, 2025). Non-significant gender effects resemble studies suggesting EI's instructional relevance is not limited to a particular demographic group (Tozoğlu, 2025).

5. Discussion

This study sought to explore high school teachers' lived experience of emotional intelligence in Larkana and to test whether EI is associated with students' academic achievement in this district. Quantitative findings indicate that teacher EI is positively related to student achievement and perceived classroom climate. These results fit with broader international evidence that EI is meaningfully connected to academic performance and are likely to operate through motivational and classroom climate pathways (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023; Bereded, 2025). They also align with Pakistan-based research showing teacher EI as a predictor of classroom management and student outcomes (Tabbasum et al., 2023; Channa, 2025). Interpreting these results through a "lived experience" lens highlights several contextual mechanisms relevant to Larkana. First, teachers often describe emotional labor in managing large, diverse classes and balancing examination demands with students' socio-emotional needs. In such conditions, self-regulation and empathy may enable teachers to de-escalate conflict, maintain instructional momentum, and protect time-on-task—proximal factors linked to achievement (Bavela, 2025; PIJED review, 2025). Second, the strong association between EI and classroom climate suggests that emotionally intelligent teachers cultivate norms of respect and cooperation, which can reduce disruptive behaviors and support sustained engagement. These dynamics are consistent with recent evidence linking teacher EI to conflict management and classroom interaction quality (PIJED review, 2025; Bavela, 2025).

Importantly, the regression results suggest that EI and classroom climate retain predictive value even after controlling for experience and gender. This supports the argument that EI is a developable professional competency rather than merely a byproduct of seniority or demographic background (Fuentes Vilugrón et al., 2025; Wang & Qin, 2025). Given the significant mean differences in achievement across EI quartiles, district-level interventions that strengthen teachers' socio-emotional competencies could plausibly yield meaningful improvements in learning outcomes if implemented at scale and aligned with school leadership support.

At the same time, caution is warranted. Because the design is cross-sectional, causality cannot be inferred. It is possible that higher-achieving classes create more positive emotional experiences for teachers, which could elevate self-reported EI and climate perceptions. Self-report instruments can also be influenced by social desirability, especially in professional settings where emotional competence is valued (Wang & Qin, 2025; Sun et al., 2025). Finally, achievement was measured at class level and reported by teachers; future research in the district could strengthen validity by linking EI to verified examination records and including student-reported classroom climate measures, consistent with multi-informant approaches used in recent EI–achievement studies (Bereded, 2025; Tandfonline study, 2024).

5.2 Connecting Quantitative Findings to Teachers' Lived Experience

Teachers' lived experiences in Larkana commonly involve balancing authority and care: maintaining discipline while remaining approachable to students and parents. The observed EI–climate association suggests that teachers who can recognize emotions and respond constructively are better able to build this balance, reinforcing respectful classroom norms without relying solely on punitive control (PIJED review, 2025; Bavela, 2025). In examination years, teachers also report heightened student anxiety and family pressure. EI skills such as empathic listening, reassurance, and realistic feedback may protect students' motivation and reduce avoidance behaviors, which helps explain the positive relationship with achievement (Rahman et al., 2024; Saleem, 2024).

5.3 The Role of Teacher Well-being

Another interpretive layer concerns teacher well-being. The literature shows that EI is associated with lower burnout and higher engagement, especially under difficult teaching conditions (Geraci et al., 2023; Bing et al., 2022). In Larkana, where teachers may experience workload strain and limited pedagogical support, EI may help teachers sustain patience and instructional quality over the year. This suggests that EI-focused

development may yield dual benefits: improving teacher wellness and enhancing student learning conditions (Wang & Qin, 2025; Bibi, 2024).

5.4 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Several limitations should be noted. First, the reliance on self-report EI and climate may inflate relationships through shared method variance. Second, the case study is district-bounded and may not generalize to all of Sindh or Pakistan, though it provides valuable local insight. Third, the achievement indicator is class-level and teacher-reported; future research should triangulate with official board examination data and attendance records. Fourth, longitudinal research is needed to establish directionality and test whether improvements in teacher EI through training lead to measurable gains in classroom climate and achievement. Such designs are increasingly recommended in recent EI scholarship and teacher development studies (Fuentes-Vilugrón et al., 2025; Sun et al., 2025; Quílez-Robres et al., 2023).

5.5. Research Implications

Three implications follow. First, teacher professional development in Larkana should include practical EI modules focused on emotion regulation, empathic communication, and relationship-building strategies for adolescent learners. Recent education research emphasizes that emotional education and EI competencies are teachable and can be operationalized through validated frameworks and training tools (Fuentes-Vilugrón et al., 2025; Sun et al., 2025). Second, supervision and mentoring should attend to classroom climate as an actionable pathway: coaching that helps teachers translate EI into concrete classroom routines (e.g., feedback practices, conflict de-escalation, restorative conversations) may maximize impact on achievement (Channa, 2025; Bavela, 2025). Third, district policy should treat EI as a system-level capacity, not solely an individual trait. School leaders can support EI enactment by reducing chronic stressors where feasible (e.g., clarity of roles, supportive collegial culture) and by recognizing socio-emotional competence as part of teacher effectiveness (Wang & Qin, 2025; Asif, 2025).

At the school level, head teachers can institutionalize EI-supportive practices by organizing peer observation focused on classroom climate, reflective dialogues after difficult incidents, and mentoring for novice teachers—approaches consistent with viewing EI as a professional competence (Wang & Qin, 2025). At the district level, training could be embedded in routine cluster meetings rather than as one-off workshops, emphasizing practice, feedback, and sustained coaching. Finally, evaluation frameworks should avoid punitive interpretations of EI scores; instead, EI measures can be used diagnostically to tailor support and resources.

6. Conclusion

This case study of public high school teachers in Larkana provides quantitative evidence that teachers' emotional intelligence is positively associated with students' academic achievement and classroom climate. Reliability analysis indicated that the EI instrument was internally consistent, and statistical tests showed significant correlations and predictive relationships between EI, classroom climate, and achievement. Achievement differences across EI quartiles suggest that socio-emotional competence may be practically important for improving exam performance in secondary schools. While the findings do not establish causality, they strengthen the argument—supported by recent international meta-analyses and regional studies—that EI is a developable professional competency with real educational consequences (Quílez-Robres et al., 2023; Channa, 2025; Bereded, 2025). For Larkana, integrating EI into teacher development and strengthening supportive classroom climates represent promising, scalable levers to improve learning outcomes.

References

Aguilar, P., & et al. (2022). Teacher emotion regulation and classroom interactions: Evidence from secondary education settings. Frontiers in Psychology.

Bavela, C. A. (2025). Secondary school teachers' emotional intelligence and perceptions regarding classroom management. Psychology: The Journal of the Hellenic Psychological Society.

Bereded, D. G. (2025). Emotional intelligence and academic achievement with academic engagement as mediator. Frontiers in Education, 10, 1567418.

Bibi, R. (2024). The connection between secondary school teachers' emotional intelligence and professional outcomes. International Review of Journalism and Mass Communication Studies.

Bing, H., et al. (2022). Self-efficacy and emotion regulation as predictors of teacher burnout. Frontiers in Psychology, 13, 900417.

Cejudo, J., et al. (2024). Validation of the Peruvian version of the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología.

Channa, N. (2025). Impact of teacher emotional intelligence on classroom management and student outcomes. Journal of Professional Skills & Attitudes, 5(2).

Fuentes-Vilugrón, G., et al. (2025). Validation of an emotional education knowledge perception scale (EEITT) for teachers. Social Sciences, 15(9), 236.

Geraci, A., et al. (2023). Teachers' emotional intelligence, burnout, work engagement, and self-efficacy in times of remote teaching. Frontiers in Psychology, 14.

Luo, T., et al. (2024). Examining the role of classroom climate and teacher–student relationships on learning outcomes. Journal of Educational Psychology.

NIH review. (2025). The role of emotional understanding in academic achievement. National Library of Medicine (PMC).

Quílez-Robres, A., et al. (2023). Emotional intelligence and academic performance: A systematic review and meta-analysis. Learning and Individual Differences, 104, 102328.

Rahman, M. H., et al. (2024). Influence of teachers' emotional intelligence on students' motivation for academic learning. Cogent Education, 11, 2327752.

Saleem, R., et al. (2024). Effect of emotional intelligence on students' academic performance. Pakistan Social Sciences Review.

Shah, A. A. (2024). Impact of emotional intelligence on academic achievement at secondary level. Qalaai Journal of Social Sciences.

Sindh School Education & Literacy Department. (2021). District Education Officer (Elementary, Secondary & Higher Secondary) Kamber-Shahdadkot: Administrative document.

Sun, Q., et al. (2025). Psychometric validation of the Leadership Toolkit (2021) emotional intelligence scale for university teachers. Frontiers in Psychology, 16, 1624484.

Tabbasum, Z. A., et al. (2023). Relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and classroom management in public secondary schools. Pakistan Social Sciences Review.

Tozoğlu, B. (2025). Examination of teachers' emotional intelligence competence perceptions and demographic correlates. Open-access article (PMC).

Wang, D., & Qin, J. (2025). Research development of teachers' emotional intelligence in education: A bibliometric analysis. Learning and Individual Differences.