Research Article

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on the Well-being of Teachers and Students

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Studies from across the world have reported a high prevalence of stress across all spheres of life and the field of higher education is no exception. The United Nations has given impetus to the well-being of people by incorporating the same in its sustainable development goals. The discussion on well-being can never be complete without a mention of emotional intelligence, a key skill in managing emotions, which in turn leads to well-being. The new normal is presently witnessing the key stakeholders of higher education, namely teachers and students adjusting themselves to the transition from online to hybrid classes. Research studies have reported a high prevalence of stress among teachers and students. With this background, this study examines the association between emotional intelligence and well-being among teachers and students. The sample for the study included 100 teachers and 100 students from Government and private colleges in South India. Emotional Intelligence was measured using "DeepaKrishnaveni Emotional Intelligence Test", developed for adults in the Indian context. Well-being was assessed using the "General Well-being Scale", which measures the 6 facets of well-being. The study found a significant association between emotional intelligence and well-being. It has implications for developing the emotional intelligence competencies of both teachers and students, thereby promoting their well-being.

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1. Introduction

Teachers and students are the two most important entities of an educational ecosystem and their well-being is of paramount importance. Studies conducted on teachers in different parts of the world have declared that teaching is a stressful occupation and that teachers are highly stressed (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2021; Sharifian & Kennedy, 2019; Von Der Embse, Ryan, Gibbs, & Mankin, 2019). It was found

that teachers in Asia were the most anxious and that the stress level is high among University teachers, compared to school teachers (Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Idoiga Mondragon, Bueno-Notivol, Perez-Moreno, & Santabarbara, 2021). Due to the prevalence of high-stress levels, their mental health (Pyne, 2017; Hsiang, 2016) and well-being (Rajesh, Ashok, Rao, Kamath, Sekaran, Devaramane, & Swamy, 2022) are compromised, which in turn impacts the teaching-learning process (Herman, Prewett, Eddy, Savala, & Reinke, 2020). The stress levels are not low among the students. Pascoe and colleagues (Pascoe, Hetrick, & Parker, 2020) report that 66 percent of students from across 72 countries were experiencing stress. Studies from Malaysia (Razdi, Garald, Zarir, & Othman, 2022), China (Guo, Kaminga, & Xiong, 2021), the United States (Graves, Hall, Dias-Karch, Haischer, & Apter, 2021), and Nigeria (Okechukwu, Ogba, Nwufo, Ogba, Onyekachi, Nwanosike, & Onyishi, 2022) also report worrying stress levels among students. In India, the situation is even worse. The National Crime Bureau report of India shows that suicide rates among students are alarmingly high and that the state of Tamilnadu is third on the list. The review shows that the well-being of both teachers and students is at stake due to the prevalence of stress. The United Nations, in its charter of Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs), has included measures to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for everyone. In this context, emotional intelligence emerges as a significant skill to manage stress and improve well-being. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to understand and manage emotions and is cited as a significant predictor of well-being. EI can be used as an effective intervention to mitigate the stress levels of teachers and students. Many studies have examined the association between emotional intelligence and the well-being of teachers (Lucas-Mangas, Valdivieso-Leon, Espionoza-Diaz, & Tous-Pallares, 2022, Fu, Wang, Tang, Lu, & Wang, 2021; Kamboj & Garg, 2021; Ngui & Lay 2020; Molero, Ortega, Jimenez, & Valero, 2019) and students (Ramadan, 2021; Malinauskas & Malinauskiene, 2020; Extremera, Sanchez-Alvarez, & Rey, 2020; Toscano-Hemoso, Ruiz-Frutos, Fagundo-Rivera, Gomez-Salgado, & Romero-Martin, 2020; Jugnu & Vivekananda, 2018; Shaheen & Shaheen, 2016). However, there is a dearth of studies in the Indian context, that too in Tamilnadu (a southern state in India), where student suicides are high. Hence this study aims to address the lacuna by examining the association between emotional intelligence and well-being among teachers and students. The outcomes of this study could throw light on the feasibility of using emotional intelligence as an effective intervention to enhance the well-being of both teachers and students, in line with the United Nations Sustainability Development Goal (UNSDG 3).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Emotional Intelligence

John Mayer and Peter Salovey coined the term emotional intelligence in the year 1990 and termed it as an ability to understand, utilize, and manage emotions of self and others for better outcomes. The concept lay low until it was popularized by Daniel Goleman in the year 1995. Since then, a lot of researchers have contributed to this field and have assessed the emotional intelligence of respondents across different professions. Emotional intelligence was found to reduce burnout among teachers (Suarez Martel & Martin Santana, 2021; Kamboj & Garg, 2021). Anjum and Swathi (2017) found that there was a low prevalence of stress among teachers with high EI. Another study from India (Para, 2022) brought out the significant association between EI and the quality of life of primary school teachers. Ngui and Lay (2020) reported that emotionally intelligent teachers will have high resilience which will help them to mitigate stress effectively. Emotional Intelligence was also found to have a significant association with work-family conflict among teachers (Juniarly, Purnamasari, Anggraini, & Andini, 2018). Studies (Sudibjo & Sutarji, 2021; Merida-Lopez, Extremera, & Rey, 2017) have found emotionally intelligent teachers to be highly engaged with their profession thus making them effective. Soanes and Sungoh (2019) found that female teachers scored high in emotional intelligence compared to their male counterparts and that there was no significant difference in Emotional Intelligence scores across age and educational qualification. Kamboj and Garg (2021) also reported the prevalence of high EI among female teachers, in their study conducted in India.

Emotional intelligence was found to be associated with the physical and mental health of students (Toscano-Hermosa et al., 2020). Jurado and colleagues (Jurado, Perez-Fuentes, Martinez, Martin, Marguez, & Gazquez Linares, 2021) found that EI had reduced the burnout caused among students due to their low academic performance. A study from Spain (Toscano-Hermoso et al., 2020) found that 50 percent of the students had adequate emotional intelligence skills. According to a few studies (Kamboj & Garg, 2021; Toscano-Hermosa et al., 2020), female students had high emotional intelligence compared to their male counterparts. A study from Iran (Sasanpour, Khodabhakshi, & Kh, 2012) found that students with high EI were happier and possessed better mental health compared to those with low EI. Thus Emotional intelligence was found to have a mitigating effect on stress and thus was associated with several beneficial outcomes among teachers and students.

2.2. Well-being

Well-being (WB) is a subjective feeling of happiness and satisfaction with one's life (Pavot & Diener, 2003). It is a sense of satisfaction that individuals experience with themselves, their health, and with their relationships (Salomi, 2010). A study found that teachers in the USA had high WB followed by those in Turkey and Pakistan (Ozu, Zepeda, Ilgan, Jimenez, Ata, & Akram, 2017). Fu and colleagues (Fu et al., 2021) used the General Well-being Scale (Duan, 1996) to assess the WB of teachers and reported marginal well-being (mean = 75.57). Women reported high WB compared to men in a study among teachers (Juniarly, Purnamasari, Anggraini, & Andini, 2018). Shaheen and Shaheen (2016) found that the well-being of female students was high compared to male students.

2.3. Emotional Intelligence and Well-being

The association between emotional intelligence and well-being has been examined by many studies across various professions (Deepa & Krishnaveni, 2014). In the educational context, the relation between the variables has been examined succinctly. A review of the literature showed that most of the studies related to the EI and WB of teachers and students (Lucas-Mangas et al., 2022; Jurado et al., 2021; Suarez-Martel & Martin Santana, 2021; Extremera, Sanchez-Alvarez, & Rey, 2020; Toscano-Hermoso et al., 2020; Molero et al., 2019; Merica-Lopez et al., 2017) have been conducted in Spain. This is an interesting finding and warrants further investigation. Kamboj and Garg, (2021) report a significant association between the EI of teachers and their WB. The ability of teachers to regulate their emotions was found to have an affirmative effect on their psychological well-being (Suarez-Martel & Martin Santana, 2021). Ngui and Lay (2020) opine that EI can improve the self-efficacy of teachers, thereby driving resilience. In a study conducted among teacher trainees, Malinauskas and Malinauskiene, (2020) found that there was an association between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being. Many other studies (Lucas-Mangas et al., 2022; Fu et al., 2021; Blasco-Belled et al., 2020; Tan, 2019; Molero et al., 2019) have also reported a significant positive association between EI and WB among teachers.

Studies that were conducted among students also show an association between emotional intelligence and well-being. Jugnu and Vivekananda (2018) found that many dimensions of EI assessed among students were significantly associated with psychological well-being. Moeller and colleagues (Moeller, Seehuus, & Peisch, 2020) found that EI enhances the experience of belongingness among students leading to better mental health and well-being. In a study conducted in Egypt (Ramadan, 2021) EI was reported as a strong predictor of the well-being of students. Extremera and colleagues (Extremera,

Sanchez-Alvarez, & Rey, 2020) opine that the ability of emotional intelligence is associated with psychological well-being and subjective well-being. Based on the literature review, it is evident that EI is significantly associated with well-being. With this background, the study aims to examine the association between EI and well-being among teachers and students.

3. Methodology

The study was conducted in Tamilnadu, the southernmost state of India. The sample included teachers and students from higher education institutions across Tamilnadu. A two-stage convenience sampling was used. In the first stage, the authors shared the data collection tools with their first round of contacts. In the second stage, the first round of contacts was requested to share the tools with their known contacts. The final sample included 100 teachers and 100 students from the length and breadth of Tamilnadu. The demographics are shown in Table 1 (See Appendix).

Emotional Intelligence was assessed using DeepaKrishnaveni Emotional Intelligence test (DKEIT), which has 18 items to assess the emotional intelligence of the respondents. The 18 items also include situational judgment tests. The test assesses three constituents of EI namely perception, appraisal, and regulation. DKEIT is a validated test (Krishnaveni & Ranganath, 2011) and has been used in another study (Dhani & Sharma, 2017) with adequate reliability and validity. There are five levels of EI low (26-59), medium (60-66), moderately high (67-78), high (79-88), and very high (89-100).

Well-being was assessed using the General Well-Being Scale which was initially developed by the National Center for Health Statistics and later revised by Duan (1996). The scale assesses well-being using 18 items on a 5-point Likert scale. The 18 items assess 6 dimensions of well-being namely anxiety, depression, positive well-being, self-control, vitality, and general health. There are 7 levels of well-being, severe (0-25), serious (26-40), distress (41-55), stress problem (56-70), marginal well-being (71-75), low positive well-being (76-80), and positive well-being (81-110). The scale has been used in the Asian context by a few studies (Fu et al., 2021, Krishnaveni & Deepa, 2013)

Both the scales were put together along with the socio-demographic variable in a Google form and circulated among the respondents. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS.

4. Analysis

4.1. EI and Well-being of Teachers and Students

The main objective of the study was to examine the association between EI and well-being. The emotional intelligence and well-being scores of teachers and students are presented in Tables 2 and 3 (See Appendix). The emotional intelligence and well-being levels of teachers and students are presented in Tables 4 and 5 below

EI Level	Teachers		Students	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Low	7	7	0	0
Medium	9	9	3	3
Moderately High	21	21	15	15
High	21	21	17	17
Very High	42	42	63	63

Table 4. Emotional intelligence levels of teachers and students

The study found that 63 percent of the students had a very high level of emotional intelligence compared to 42 percent among teachers. This is in line with a study from Spain (Toscano-Hermoso et al., 2020) which found that 50 percent of the students had adequate emotional intelligence abilities. Despite the high levels of EI, suicidal tendencies and stress prevail among the students and teachers respectively. This shows that there is a lack of application of EI skills. A systematic training program that creates awareness about this ability and its application can lead to the skill being put to good use. Studies from across the world (van Wingerden et al., 2017; Hodzic et al., 2017; Bakker et al., 2016) report positive outcomes of EI training programs. A couple of studies in the Indian context (Panicker, Deepa, Vimala, & Poornima, 2021; Deepa & Arulrajan, 2020) have proven the effectiveness of EI training programs offered to students in higher education institutions. Based on this, the authors recommend that systematic

training programs be designed and offered to teachers and students, which could help them put their abilities to better use.

Well-being Level	Teachers		Students	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Severe	0	0	0	0
Serious	1	1	2	2
Distress	17	17	11	11
Stress Problem	30	30	26	26
Marginal Well-being	27	27	8	8
Low positive well-being	13	12	2	2
Positive well-being	12	12	51	51

Table 5. Well-being levels of teachers and students

It was found that only 12 percent of the teachers reported positive well-being compared to 51 percent of the students who had positive well-being. This corroborates with the high prevalence of stress levels among teachers, thus impacting their well-being. The association between EI and well-being has been established by many previous studies outlined in the literature review. It is evident from Table 4 that 63 percent of the students had a high EI score and hence it is obvious that most of them had reported positive well-being. However, it is to be noted with caution that 39 percent of the students had stress problems and 48 percent of teachers reported significant stress levels. Referring to the association between EI and well-being and the effectiveness of EI training programs, the study warrants the need for the systematic inclusion of EI training programs and interventions to improve well-being in the teaching-learning environment.

4.2. Association between EI and Well-being

The association between EI and well-being, as established by previous studies (Lucas-Mangas et al., 2022; Fu et al., 2021; Blasco-Belled et al., 2020; Tan, 2019; Molero et al., 2019) has been substantiated further by the outcomes of this study as shown in Tables 6 and 7

	P	A	R	TEI	Anx	Dep	PWB	SC	Vit	GH	TWB
P	1	0.337*	0.341*	0.648*	0.102	0.253*	0.098	0.01	0.267*	0.174	0.229*
A		1	0.202*	0.550*	0.047	0.081	0.081	0.136	0.107	0.107	0.129
R			1	0.886*	0.411*	0.475*	0.229*	0.165	0.421*	0.307*	0.516*
TEI				1	0.342*	0.443*	0.220*	0.163	0.416*	0.307*	0.480*
Anx					1	0.726*	0.430*	0.316*	0.463*	0.366*	0.862*
Dep						1	0.378*	0.234*	0.486*	0.278*	0.813*
PWB							1	0.324*	0.297*	0.082	0.600*
SC								1	0.165	-0.083	0.443*
Vit									1	0.435*	0.725*
GH										1	0.515*
TWB											1

Table 6. Association between EI and Well-being - Teachers

P=Perception; A=Appraisal; R=Regulation; TEI=Total EI; Anx=Anxiety; Dep=Depression; PWB=Positive Well-being; SC=Self-control; Vit=Vitality; GH=General Health; TWB=Total Well-being.

The EI scores of teachers were found to be significantly associated with their well-being scores. The outcome of this study corroborates with the results of the previous studies on teachers (Lucas-Mangas et al., 2022; Fu et al., 2021; Blasco-Belled et al., 2020; Tan, 2019; Molero et al., 2019). The study also reiterates the outcome of another study (Kamboj & Garg, 2021) in the Indian context. Regulation, a constituent of emotional intelligence was found to be strongly associated with total well-being (r=0.516; See Table 6).

This supports the notion that the ability of teachers to regulate their emotions will have a positive effect on their well-being (Suarez-Martel & Martin Santana, 2021). Ngui and Lay (2020) stated that EI can drive resilience and improve well-being. Anjum and Swathi (2017) reported that teachers with high EI had low-stress levels. The scoring of the General Well-Being Scale is such that a high score in the anxiety and depression construct means the respondents are experiencing less anxiety and depression. Hence it is proven that the higher the EI, the lower the stress level, anxiety, and depression and hence improved resilience.

	P	A	R	TEI	Anx	Dep	PWB	SC	Vit	GH	TWB
P	1	0.333*	-0.124	0.414*	0.437*	0.430*	0.357*	0.343*	0.434*	0.211*	0.473*
A		1	0.242*	0.743*	0.671*	0.643*	0.671*	0.547*	0.561*	0.374*	0.701*
R			1	0.752*	0.620*	0.589*	0.493*	0.578*	0.644*	0.338*	0.648*
TEI				1	8.884*	0.848*	0.770*	0.766*	0.849*	0.473*	0.93*
Anx					1	0.843*	0.755*	0.764*	0.770*	0.366*	0.939*
Dep						1	0.694*	0.683*	0.764*	0.372*	0.905*
PWB							1	0.685*	0.640*	0.333*	0.814*
SC								1	0.613*	0.326*	0.806*
Vit									1	0.395*	0.866*
GH										1	0.531*
TWB											1

Table 7. Association between EI and Well-being - Students

P=Perception; A=Appraisal; R=Regulation; TEI=Total EI; Anx=Anxiety; Dep=Depression; PWB=Positive Well-being; SC=Self-control; Vit=Vitality; GH=General Health; TWB=Total Well-being.

The statistics in Table 7 show that there was a significant association between the emotional intelligence ability of students and their well-being. Jugnu and Vivekananda (2018) reported that several dimensions

of EI were associated with well-being. In this study also all the constituents of EI namely perception, appraisal, and regulation had a significant association with the well-being scores. Moeller and colleagues (Moeller et al., 2020) reported that high EI leads to an increased sense of belongingness leading to better mental health. In this study, it was found that EI was significantly associated with vitality and general health. The review showed an increase in suicidal tendencies among students and Tamilnadu was found to rank third in the number of suicides among students. The outcome of this study shows that EI is significantly associated (r=0.766; see Table 7) with self-control. The results of this study show that EI, if imparted as an ability can help students overcome their stress and suicidal tendencies, leading to their well-being, in line with the UNSDG 3.

5. Implications

Teachers and students are facing a significant amount of stress as reported by several studies, leading to a negative impact on their well-being The impact on the well-being can directly affect the teaching-learning process, thereby reducing the efficacy of higher education institutions in imparting knowledge to their student stakeholders. This study added insights to the existing research by highlighting the significant association between emotional intelligence and well-being among both teachers and students. The signficant association between EI and well-being of both teachers and students shows that EI can be used as an effective intervention to enhance their well-being. Training programs that were designed to impart EI skills to teachers and students were found to be effective (van Wingerden et al., 2017; Hodzic et al., 2017; Bakker et al., 2016; Panicker, Deepa, Vimala, & Poornima, 2021; Deepa & Arulrajan, 2020). Hence policymakers and administrators should take measures to introduce emotional intelligence in their curriculum and should also impart EI training to their faculty members. By doing so, they can achieve positive outcomes such as improved engagement, work-life balance, quality of life, self-efficacy, overall life satisfaction, and well-being for the two most important stakeholders of our education system.

6. Conclusion

The study was conducted in Tamilnadu among respondents (both teachers and students) from private and Government Institutions. The working environment of both these systems is different and hence the study can examine the mediating role of the education environment of private and Government Institutions on the association between EI and well-being. The effect of socio-demographic factors on

this association and the differences in EI and well-being across those factors should be examined in detail to design interventions. A phenomenological study on the challenges faced by the teachers and students in the state of Tamilnadu can provide valuable information on the prevalent challenges, thereby enabling the implementation of effective interventions. The study can be repeated with respondents from across the world to gain more insights. The study will serve as a blueprint and warrant the attention of researchers to the threat to the well-being of both teachers and students. The authors conclude with a request that in line with the UNSDG, educational administrators and policymakers should design effective interventions to ensure the well-being of teachers and students.

Appendix

Variable	Categories	Teachers		Students	
		N	%	N	%
Gender	Male	44	44	49	49
	Female	56	56	50	50
	Other	0	0	1	1
	Total	100	100	100	100
Age	18-20	0	0	29	29
	21-30	59	59	71	71
	31-40	25	25	0	0
	41-50	11	11	0	0
	51-60	5	5	0	0
	Total	100	100	100	100
Marital Status	Single	39	39	90	90
	Married	61	61	10	10
	Total	100	100	100	100
Qualification	UG	14	14	41	41
	PG	44	44	57	57
	M.Phil and Ph.D	42	42	2	2
	Total	100	100	100	100
Economic Status	Lower Middle Class	9	9	5	5
	Middle Class	56	56	50	50
	Upper Middle Class	17	17	43	43
	Upper Class	6	6	2	2
	Total	100	100	100	100

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Variable	Categories	Teachers		Students	
		N	%	N	%
Type of Institution	Private College	62	62	65	65
	Government College	38	38	35	35
	Total	100	100	100	100

Table 1. Demographics of the sample

Construct	Teachers (n=100)		Students (n=100)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Perception	15.7	3.97	14.94	3.54
Appraisal	25.4	4.02	25.42	4.77
Regulation	40.54	9.59	46.58	7.02
Total EI	81.64	13.28	86.94	10.28

Table 2. Emotional Intelligence scores of teachers and students

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Construct	Teachers (n=100)		Students (n=100)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Anxiety	14.24	3.81	16.19	5.81
Depression	12.78	3.35	13.64	3.95
Positive Well-being	9.37	2.46	10.76	2.73
Self-control	10.35	2.24	11.17	2.93
Vitality	13.15	3.11	14.52	3.79
General Health	8.11	2.5	9.61	3.23

Table 3. Well-being scores of teachers and students

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