



# EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETENCIES AND THEIR ROLE IN ENHANCING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ENGAGEMENT AND TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF PROFESSORS: AN ANALYSIS OF KEY INFLUENCES AND BARRIERS.

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## **ABSTRACT**

*In today's dynamic academic environment, emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial competency for college professors, influencing their engagement in professional development and overall teaching effectiveness. This study investigates how specific EI competencies affect professors' willingness and ability to engage in professional development activities, and explores the barriers that limit the practical application of EI in teaching roles. Using a quantitative research design, data was collected from 203 college professors in Arts and Science colleges in Chennai. The analysis employed multiple regression and one-way ANOVA using SPSS. Findings reveal that competencies such as initiative-taking and emotional regulation significantly enhance professional development engagement, while excessive self-awareness may hinder it. Additionally, professors' perceptions of barriers—such as workload, lack of support, and burnout—differ significantly based on their years of teaching experience. The study highlights the need for targeted emotional intelligence training and institutional support systems that consider experience-level differences. These findings have implications for faculty development programs and educational policy-making aimed at improving both emotional well-being and teaching performance in higher education.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Intelligence, Professional Development, Teaching Performance, Faculty Engagement, Barriers.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Introduction**

In today's higher education environment, the responsibilities of college professors go beyond teaching content—they are also expected to mentor, collaborate, and continually develop professionally. Emotional intelligence (EI), which involves perceiving, understanding, managing, and using emotions effectively, is increasingly recognized as a key factor in helping educators build stronger relationships, cope with stress, and actively participate in professional learning. Professors with high EI tend to be more adaptable, self-aware, and open to feedback, making them more likely to benefit from professional development programs.

However, the integration of emotional intelligence into academic practice is not without obstacles. Factors such as institutional limitations, cultural beliefs, and lack of formal EI training may prevent professors from fully applying these skills in their work. This study explores which EI competencies most influence professors' engagement in professional development and their teaching performance. It also examines the key barriers that limit the practical use of EI. The findings aim to inform faculty development programs, institutional policies, and leadership strategies that support emotionally intelligent teaching practices in higher education.

## **B. Statement of the problem**

College professors are increasingly expected to demonstrate high levels of teaching performance and active participation in professional development. However, many struggle to sustain engagement due to emotional stress, lack of support, and limited awareness of emotional intelligence (EI) competencies. Although EI has been shown to enhance interpersonal effectiveness and self-regulation, its practical integration into academic roles remains inconsistent. Institutional barriers, time constraints, and inadequate EI training further hinder its application. This study addresses this gap by examining how specific emotional intelligence competencies influence professional development engagement and teaching performance, and by identifying the barriers that restrict their effective implementation in higher education.

## **C. Significance of the study**

This study holds significant relevance in the context of higher education, where teaching excellence and continuous professional growth are essential for institutional success. By examining the influence of emotional intelligence (EI) competencies on professional development engagement and professors' performance, the research offers valuable insights into how emotional self-awareness, empathy, and regulation can enhance teaching effectiveness.

Furthermore, identifying the barriers that hinder the application of EI can help educational institutions develop targeted faculty training programs, promote emotionally intelligent leadership, and create supportive work environments. The findings will benefit policymakers, academic leaders, and faculty development coordinators in designing strategies that foster both emotional well-being and professional competence among college professors.

## **D. Objectives of the Study**

- To identify the key emotional intelligence competencies that significantly influence professional development engagement.
- To analyze the challenges and barriers that hinder the effective application of emotional intelligence in enhancing the teaching performance of professors.

## **E. Hypotheses of the study**

- ✓ H1<sub>o</sub>: None of the emotional intelligence competencies significantly predict professional development engagement among college professors.
- ✓ H2<sub>o</sub>: There is no difference in perceived barriers among different experience groups.

## F. Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design. The target population comprises college professors working in Arts & Science Colleges in Chennai. A purposive sampling method was used. The sample size is 203. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS. The following techniques were applied: multiple regression analysis and one way ANOVA.

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sharma, A., & Pillai, V. S. (2023). *Impact of emotional intelligence on employees performance in higher education institutes: A comprehensive literature review*. This literature review explores the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on employee performance in higher education institutions. It highlights that EI - comprising self-awareness, empathy, regulation, and social skills - positively influences teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and workplace relationships. Studies from countries like India, Pakistan, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka show consistent links between high EI and reduced burnout, improved decision-making, and stronger institutional commitment. The authors suggest incorporating EI into training, hiring, and evaluation practices. They also call for further research on how EI interacts with leadership styles, organizational culture, and other psychological factors in educational environments.

Thomas, B., & Senith, S. (2021). *An analysis of emotional intelligence of teachers in Bangalore education sector*. This study explored the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in enhancing teachers' professional development and effectiveness in Bangalore. Using Mayer and Salovey's EI framework, it identified four key EI dimensions—perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions—as vital for managing classroom challenges and promoting student success. The findings revealed that EI improves teaching quality, job satisfaction, and stress management. The authors highlighted a gap in EI assessment methods and its measurable impact on students. They recommended incorporating EI training into teacher development programs and recognizing EI as a crucial skill for educators in today's evolving educational environment.

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in three core theoretical perspectives that explain the influence of emotional intelligence on professional development and teaching performance, especially within the higher education context. These include Goleman's Emotional Intelligence Theory, Knowles' Andragogy (Adult Learning Theory), and concepts from Organizational Behavior related to barriers and resistance.

Goleman (1995) expanded on the foundational work of Mayer and Salovey (1997) by identifying five key components of emotional intelligence: Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social skills. These competencies are essential in educational settings, where emotional labor and interpersonal dynamics directly impact classroom effectiveness and faculty well-being. Emotionally intelligent professors are

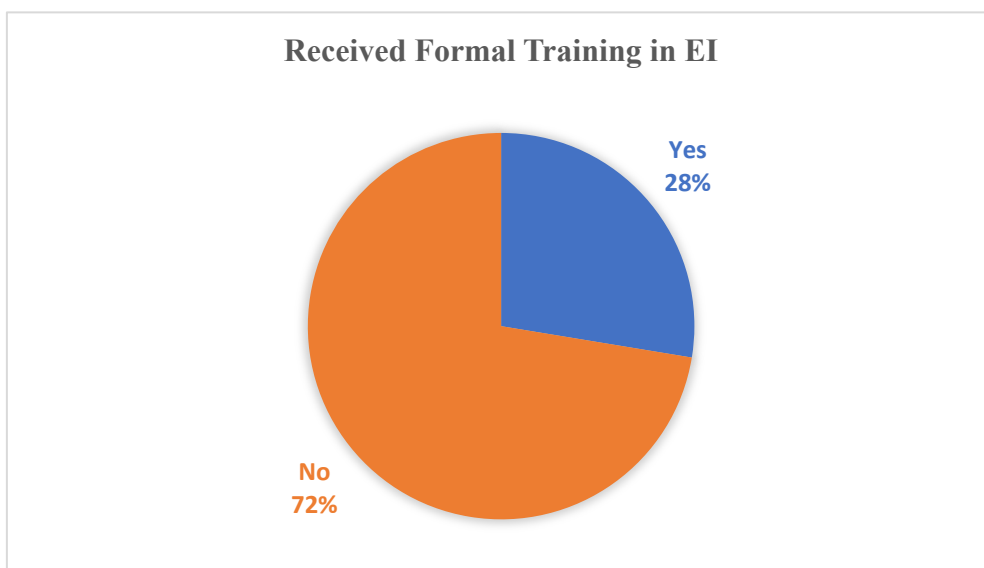
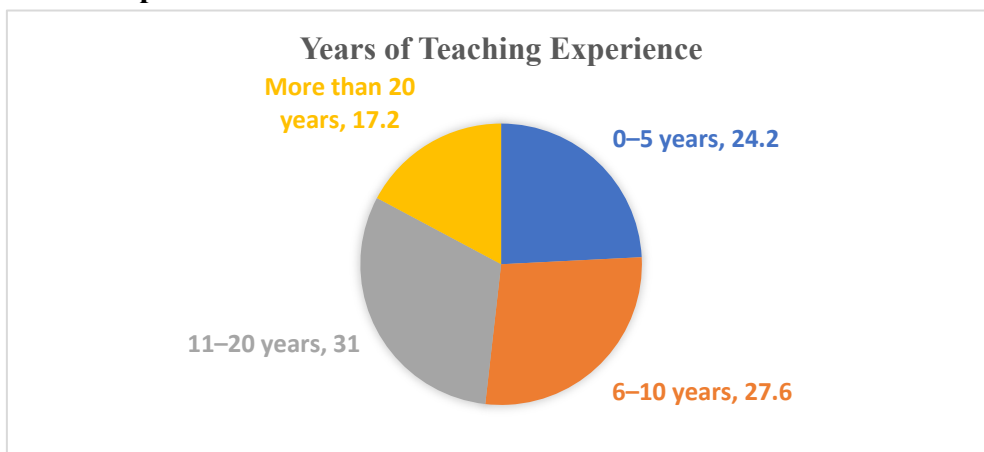
better equipped to manage their responses to stress, engage with students, and participate in collaborative learning environments.

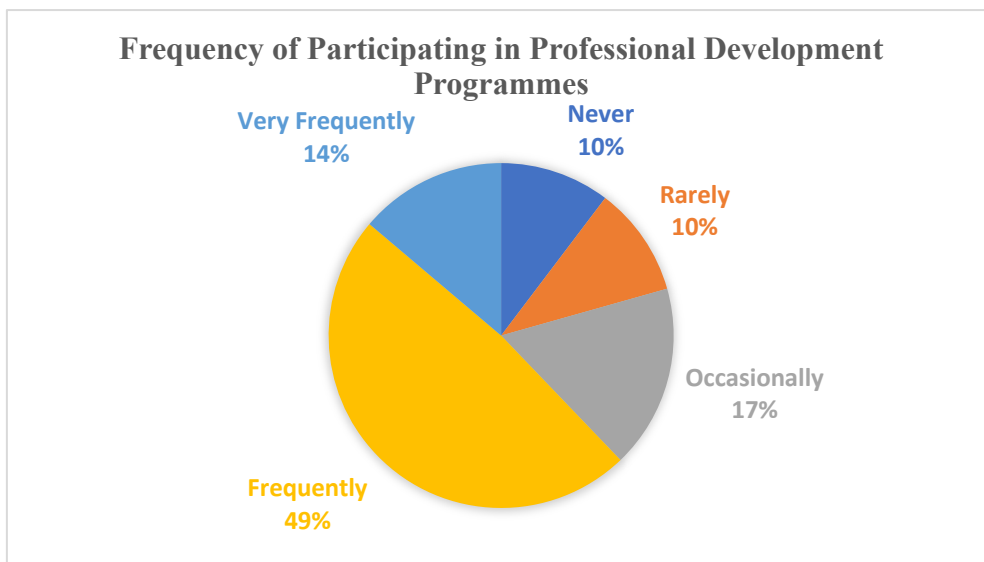
Malcolm Knowles (1980) proposed that adult learners: are self-directed, rely on life experience as a learning resource, need learning to be problem-centered and relevant and are internally motivated. These principles are particularly relevant in faculty professional development, where engagement relies on intrinsic motivation and emotional maturity. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in facilitating reflective thinking, openness to feedback, and adaptive learning.

The study also draws from Organizational Behavior theories, particularly models of workplace stress, resistance to change, and institutional culture (Schein, 2010). These frameworks highlight the barriers—such as lack of time, unsupportive administration, and burnout—that hinder the practical application of emotional intelligence, even among individuals with high EI.

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

##### A. Descriptive Statistics





### B. Reliability Analysis

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	203	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	203	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.836	20

The Cronbach's alpha ensured the reliability at 0.836. It is proved that the data is reliable to proceed to test with various statistical tools.

### C. Multiple Regression Analysis

H1<sub>0</sub>: Emotional intelligence competencies do not significantly affect professional development engagement.

H1<sub>1</sub>: Emotional intelligence competencies significantly affect professional development engagement.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.554 <sup>a</sup>	.307	.271	.995

The regression model shows that  $R^2 = 0.307$ , meaning 30.7% of the variance in professional development engagement is affected by emotional intelligence competencies. Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.271$  indicates a fair model fit after accounting for

the number of predictors. The standard error of 0.995 reflects the average deviation from the regression line.

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	84.231	10	8.423	8.513	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	189.975	192	.989		
	Total	274.207	202			

Source: Primary Data

\*\* significance level at 5 per cent

The ANOVA table indicates that the model is statistically significant ( $F(10,192) = 8.513$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This confirms that the set of emotional intelligence predictors, taken together, significantly affect professional development engagement.

#### Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.820	.878		8.907	.000
I am aware of my emotions even during high-pressure situations at work.	.581	.174	.281	3.346	.001
I understand how my emotions can affect my professional performance.	-1.281	.201	-.524	-6.369	.000
I stay calm and composed even in stressful teaching environments.	.285	.110	.232	2.589	.010
I manage conflict with colleagues or students constructively.	-.145	.091	-.113	-1.602	.111
I adapt my communication style to suit the needs of different stakeholders.	-.224	.163	-.123	-1.380	.169
I empathize with the emotional experiences of students and colleagues.	-.022	.178	-.012	-.124	.902

I actively listen and respond to others' concerns with sensitivity.	.331	.185	.161	1.790	.075
I take initiative to participate in professional development activities.	.724	.130	.508	5.550	.000
My emotional self-awareness helps me set realistic professional development goals.	-1.016	.297	-.619	-3.418	.001
My ability to manage emotions helps me engage more deeply in professional training sessions.	-.139	.188	-.096	-.740	.460

### Interpretation

The multiple regression analysis demonstrates that emotional intelligence competencies significantly affect professional development engagement among professors. Proactive behaviors and emotional composure are key positive influencers. However, some self-awareness aspects may negatively affect engagement, potentially due to overthinking or emotional fatigue. These findings underscore the importance of balancing emotional insight with action-oriented traits in professional development.

### D. One Way Anova

H2o: There is no difference in perceived barriers among different experience groups.

H2i: There is a significant difference in perceived barriers among the groups.

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Institutional workload reduces my ability to focus on emotional regulation.	Between Groups	61.047	3	20.349	31.120	.000
	Within Groups	130.125	199	.654		
	Total	191.172	202			
Lack of support from administration	Between Groups	39.342	3	13.114	21.157	.000

hinders the application of emotional intelligence in classrooms.	Within Groups	123.347	199	.620		
	Total	162.690	202			
Time constraints prevent me from reflecting on or managing my emotions.	Between Groups	39.126	3	13.042	17.983	.000
	Within Groups	144.322	199	.725		
	Total	183.448	202			
I find it difficult to implement emotional intelligence due to lack of training.	Between Groups	67.179	3	22.393	36.946	.000
	Within Groups	120.614	199	.606		
	Total	187.793	202			
Cultural or personal beliefs about emotions limit open emotional expression in my teaching practice.	Between Groups	39.768	3	13.256	25.943	.000
	Within Groups	101.681	199	.511		
	Total	141.448	202			
Stressful student behavior challenges my emotional self-control.	Between Groups	66.467	3	22.156	35.493	.000
	Within Groups	124.222	199	.624		
	Total	190.690	202			
Peer competition or comparison impacts my emotional stability at work.	Between Groups	131.090	3	43.697	67.096	.000
	Within Groups	129.600	199	.651		
	Total	260.690	202			
Lack of recognition or reward for emotionally intelligent behavior discourages me.	Between Groups	87.301	3	29.100	39.831	.000
	Within Groups	145.389	199	.731		
	Total	232.690	202			
I experience burnout that overshadows the positive effects of emotional intelligence.	Between Groups	64.260	3	21.420	25.380	.000
	Within Groups	167.947	199	.844		
	Total	232.207	202			
Emotional intelligence skills are	Between Groups	31.659	3	10.553	12.667	.000



not emphasized in professional development programs.	Within Groups	165.789	199	.833		
	Total	197.448	202			

### Interpretation

The ANOVA results demonstrate that college professors' perceptions of barriers to applying emotional intelligence (EI) significantly differ based on their years of teaching experience, with all tested items showing p-values less than 0.05. This indicates statistically significant variation across experience groups for each of the ten barriers, including institutional workload, time constraints, lack of training, peer competition, and burnout. The findings suggest that the extent to which these barriers are felt and managed depends on teaching tenure. These results emphasize the importance of designing EI support programs that are tailored to the specific needs of different experience levels within the academic workforce.

## V. FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS & CONCLUSION

### A. Findings

- Emotional intelligence (EI) competencies like self-awareness, stress management, and initiative have a positive effect on how actively professors participate in professional development.
- Professors who take initiative and stay calm under pressure are more likely to engage in learning and improvement activities.
- Some aspects of self-awareness may negatively impact engagement—possibly due to overthinking or emotional fatigue.
- There is a clear difference in how professors of different experience levels perceive barriers to using EI in their teaching.
- Common barriers include workload, time pressure, lack of support, stress from student behavior, and peer competition.
- All 10 barriers showed statistically significant differences ( $p < 0.05$ ) across groups, proving that experience affects how these challenges are felt.

### B. Suggestions

- ★ Customised training programs to be organised in order to match the needs of professors at different stages of their careers.
- ★ Emotional intelligence development need to be included in faculty orientation, training, and development programs.
- ★ Institutional support systems should be provided in order to reduce workload and emotional burnout.
- ★ Open conversations about emotional well-being in academic settings should be encouraged.
- ★ Emotionally intelligent behavior should be recognized and rewarded to motivate more professors to develop EI skills.

- ★ Collaborative and empathetic work environments among faculty members need to be promoted instead of competition.

### **C. Conclusion**

This study highlights the important role emotional intelligence plays in enhancing professional development and teaching performance among college professors. It shows that certain EI skills: like staying calm under stress and taking initiative; encourage more active engagement in self-improvement. However, the ability to use these skills is not equal across all faculty members. Professors with different years of experience perceive barriers like workload, burnout, and lack of support differently. This means that training and support programs should not take a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Instead, institutions should design flexible, emotionally supportive strategies that meet professors where they are in their careers.

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