



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG MALE AND FEMALE GENERAL DEGREE COLLEGE TEACHERS OF PURULIA DISTRICT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is considered a crucial psychological attribute that enables teachers to manage emotions, cope with occupational stress, and maintain professional effectiveness. College teachers working in districts like Purulia face multiple academic and contextual challenges that demand emotional competence alongside intellectual ability. The present study examines the level of emotional intelligence among male and female general degree college teachers of the Purulia district, West Bengal, and compares their overall emotional intelligence across five dimensions based on Goleman's framework. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from 396 college teachers (292 males and 104 females) through a validated Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire. Statistical analysis revealed that both male and female teachers possessed high levels of emotional intelligence ($M = 4.03$ and 4.05 respectively), with no statistically significant gender difference ($t = -0.43$, $p = 0.67$, Cohen's $d = 0.08$). The findings suggest that emotional intelligence among college teachers of the Purulia district is a shared professional attribute rather than a gender-specific characteristic. Implications for teacher professional development and institutional support systems are discussed.

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Introduction

Teaching in higher education is widely recognized as an emotionally demanding profession, as teachers are required to balance academic instruction, student mentoring, administrative responsibilities, and institutional expectations simultaneously (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Beyond subject delivery, college teachers play a crucial role in motivating students, managing classroom dynamics, and responding to students' emotional and academic needs. These multifaceted responsibilities often expose teachers to considerable occupational stress, making emotional competence an essential professional attribute.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to an individual's ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and effectively use emotions in oneself and others (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). In the teaching profession, emotional intelligence has been associated with better stress management, higher job satisfaction, effective classroom management, and positive teacher-student relationships (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011). Teachers with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more capable of maintaining emotional balance, adapting to challenging situations, and sustaining professional commitment in demanding work environments.

In recent years, growing attention has been paid to gender differences in emotional intelligence, as socialization patterns and professional experiences may influence how male and female teachers perceive and manage emotions. However, empirical evidence on gender-based differences in emotional intelligence among college teachers remains limited, particularly in district-specific contexts. Examining emotional intelligence among male and female college teachers is therefore important for understanding their emotional functioning and for designing targeted professional development and institutional support mechanisms. In this context, the present study seeks to examine emotional intelligence among general degree college teachers, with specific emphasis on gender-based differences.

Review of Related Literature

The concept of emotional intelligence has evolved significantly since its introduction. Salovey and Mayer (1990) first coined the term, defining it as "the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (p. 189). This ability-based model was later refined by Mayer and Salovey

(1997), who described emotional intelligence as a set of four interconnected abilities: perception of emotions, use of emotions to facilitate thought, understanding of emotions, and management of emotions.

Goleman (1995) popularized emotional intelligence through a mixed model that emphasized its importance in determining success in personal and professional life. Goleman's framework comprises five core components: (1) self-awareness – recognizing one's emotions and their effects; (2) self-regulation – managing disruptive emotions and impulses; (3) motivation – using emotional factors to achieve goals; (4) empathy – sensing others' emotions and perspectives; and (5) social skills – managing relationships and building networks. This framework has been widely adopted in educational research due to its practical applicability and comprehensive nature.

In the field of education, emotional intelligence has been widely acknowledged as an essential component of effective teaching. Research consistently demonstrates that teachers with higher emotional intelligence experience lower levels of occupational stress and burnout (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Yin, Lee, Zhang, & Jin, 2013). Jennings and Greenberg (2009) highlighted that emotionally intelligent teachers are more capable of creating supportive classroom environments, maintaining positive relationships with students, and implementing effective classroom management strategies.

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) reported that emotional competence enhances teachers' resilience in demanding work situations and contributes to higher levels of self-efficacy. Similarly, Sutton and Wheatley (2003) emphasized that teachers' emotional experiences significantly influence their instructional practices, student motivation, and overall classroom climate. Corcoran and Tormey (2012) found that emotional intelligence among teachers positively correlates with student achievement and engagement.

Recent studies have also explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and various aspects of teacher effectiveness. Rastgar, Pourebrahim, and Talebi (2012) found a positive correlation between teachers' emotional intelligence and their job performance. Chang (2009) demonstrated that emotionally intelligent teachers exhibit better classroom management skills and more positive attitudes toward their profession.

Studies examining gender differences in emotional intelligence have reported inconsistent findings. Some researchers have identified minor differences between males and females, with women generally scoring higher on empathy and emotional expression, while men score higher on stress tolerance and impulse control (Bar-On, 2006; Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

However, many researchers have found no significant gender-based variation in overall emotional intelligence among teachers (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Pena & Extremera, 2012). A meta-analysis by Joseph and Newman (2010) concluded that gender differences in emotional intelligence are minimal and context-dependent. Similarly, Yahyazadeh-Jeloudar and Lotfi-Goodarzi (2012) found no significant gender differences among Iranian teachers.

Indian studies have also yielded mixed results. While Garg, Leekha, and Kaur (2012) reported higher emotional intelligence among female teachers, other studies by Chand and Singh (2019) and Kumar and Muniandy (2012) found no significant gender differences. These inconsistent findings suggest that contextual and professional factors often play a more significant role than gender in shaping emotional intelligence among teachers.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To assess the level of emotional intelligence among male and female college teachers in Purulia district,
2. To compare male and female teachers across five dimensions of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills
3. To examine whether gender significantly influences overall emotional intelligence among college teachers.

Hypotheses of the Study

Based on the objectives and literature review, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference between male and female general degree college teachers with respect to overall emotional intelligence.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between male and female general degree college teachers across the five dimensions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills).

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey method with a quantitative approach. This design was considered appropriate for examining existing conditions and comparing groups on specified variables without manipulation (Creswell, 2014).

Population and Sample

Population: The population of the study consisted of all general degree college teachers working in government and government-aided colleges in Purulia district, West Bengal.

Sampling Method: A stratified random sampling technique was employed. Colleges were first stratified based on location (urban/rural) and type (government/aided), and then teachers were randomly selected from each stratum proportionate to the college size.

Sample Size: The final sample comprised 396 general degree college teachers from 12 different colleges across Purulia district. The sample distribution is given in Table 1:

Table 1: Sample Profile

SAMPLE	MALE	FEMALE
	292	104
TOTAL	396	

Research Tool

Emotional Intelligence was assessed using the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ) based on Goleman’s (1995) five-component model, adapted and validated for the Indian educational context. The tool contains 50 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale, covering Self-Awareness, Self-Regulation, Motivation, Empathy, and Social Skills (10 items each). Dimension and overall EI scores were calculated using mean scores. Scores were interpreted as Low (1.00–2.00), Moderate (2.00–3.00), High (3.00–4.00), and Very High (4.00–5.00).

Psychometric Properties:

Reliability: Cronbach’s alpha coefficient = 0.89 (overall scale), ranging from 0.76 to 0.84 for individual dimensions, indicating high internal consistency

Validity: Content validity was established through expert review by five educational psychology professors. Construct validity was confirmed through confirmatory factor analysis (CFI = 0.92, RMSEA = 0.06)

Data Collection Procedure

After obtaining permission from college principals and informed consent from participants, data were collected with assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to ensure clear and complete responses.

Statistical Techniques

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 20. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to assess levels of emotional intelligence. An independent samples *t*-test examined gender differences. All analyses were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Intelligence:

The mean scores of overall emotional intelligence and its five dimensions for male and female general degree college teachers of Purulia district are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Gender-wise Mean and Standard Deviation of Emotional Intelligence

Dimension	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Self-Awareness	Male	292	4.09	0.34	Very High
	Female	104	4.15	0.32	Very High
Managing Emotions	Male	292	3.87	0.35	High
	Female	104	3.86	0.37	High
Motivating Oneself	Male	292	4.13	0.38	Very High
	Female	104	4.20	0.34	Very High
Empathy	Male	292	3.98	0.26	High
	Female	104	3.97	0.30	High
Social Skills	Male	292	4.10	0.38	Very High
	Female	104	4.05	0.45	Very High
Overall Emotional Intelligence	Male	292	4.03	0.24	Very High
	Female	104	4.05	0.27	Very High

Table 2 reveals that both male and female teachers of Purulia district possess high to very high levels of emotional intelligence across all dimensions. The mean scores of overall emotional intelligence are remarkably similar (Male = 4.03, Female = 4.05), indicating minimal gender variation. Among the five dimensions, both groups scored highest on “Motivating Oneself” (Male:

4.13, Female: 4.20) and lowest on “Managing Emotions” (Male: 3.87, Female: 3.86), though even the lowest scores fall in the “high” category.

Inferential Statistics

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test Results for Gender Differences in Overall Emotional Intelligence

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence	Male	292	4.03	0.24	-0.43	394	0.67
	Female	104	4.05	0.27			

The obtained “t”-value (-0.43) is “not significant at the 0.05 level” ($p = 0.67 > 0.05$).

The independent samples t-test revealed that the difference between male and female teachers in overall emotional intelligence was not statistically significant ($t = -0.43, p = 0.67 > 0.05$). The effect size (Cohen’s $d = 0.08$) is considered negligible according to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines (small = 0.20, medium = 0.50, large = 0.80). “Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{01} is accepted”.

Table 4: Dimension-wise t-test Results for Gender Differences

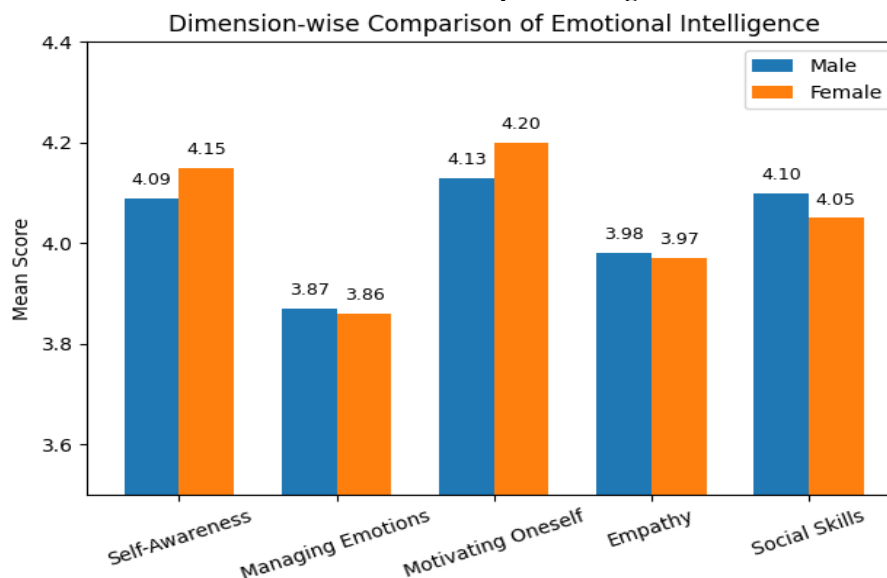
Dimension	t-value	df	p-value	Cohen’s d	Interpretation
Self-Awareness	-1.58	394	0.115	0.18	Not Significant
Managing Emotions	0.24	394	0.810	0.03	Not Significant
Motivating Oneself	-1.63	394	0.104	0.19	Not Significant
Empathy	0.32	394	0.749	0.04	Not Significant
Social Skills	1.07	394	0.286	0.12	Not Significant

Table 4 shows that across all five dimensions of emotional intelligence, no statistically significant differences were found between male and female teachers (all p-values > 0.05). Effect sizes ranged from 0.03 to 0.19, all falling below the threshold for even a small effect. “Therefore, the null hypothesis H_{02} is also accepted”.

Visual Representation of Findings

The comparative emotional intelligence profile of male and female teachers across dimensions is illustrated below:

Dimension-wise Comparison: Figure 1.



Discussion

The study shows that emotional intelligence among general degree college teachers in Purulia district is independent of gender, with both male and female teachers scoring above 4.0 on a five-point scale. This aligns with previous research reporting no significant gender differences in teachers’ EI (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Pena & Extremera, 2012; Chand & Singh, 2019) and challenges assumptions that females are inherently more emotionally intelligent. High scores in self-motivation reflect the drive needed to sustain teaching in a resource-constrained district, while slightly lower scores in managing emotions indicate the profession’s emotional demands. The overall mean EI (4.03–4.05) exceeds urban teacher populations (Kumar & Muniandy,

2012: M = 3.67; Rastgar et al., 2012: M = 3.82), suggesting enhanced resilience. These findings support Goleman's (1995) view of EI as learnable and align with social role theory, emphasizing occupational demands over gender (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Conclusion

Based on comprehensive statistical analysis, this study concludes that male and female general degree college teachers of Purulia district do not differ significantly in terms of overall emotional intelligence or across any of its five dimensions. Emotional intelligence emerges as a common professional strength among teachers regardless of gender, enabling them to manage occupational demands effectively in a challenging educational environment.

The consistently high levels of emotional intelligence observed among both groups suggest that Purulia's college teachers possess the emotional competencies necessary for effective teaching despite working under resource constraints. This finding is encouraging from an institutional perspective, as it indicates that teachers have developed robust emotional coping mechanisms. However, the absence of gender differences does not diminish the importance of emotional intelligence in teaching. Rather, it emphasizes that professional development initiatives should focus on enhancing emotional competencies universally rather than targeting specific gender groups.

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