

# EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

**Dr. Ramesh Bhavisetti<sup>1</sup>, Challapalli Ravi<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, R.V.R.R College of Education, Guntur-522006, Andhra Pradesh, India.

<sup>2</sup>School assistant (Physical Science), ZPHS Mallavolu, Guduru Mandal, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, India, Pin code: 521362

## **Abstract:**

The present study investigates the level of emotional competencies among secondary school teachers and examines differences based on gender, age, qualification, and teaching experience. Emotional competencies play a crucial role in teachers' professional effectiveness, classroom climate, and student outcomes. Using a survey method, data were collected from 435 secondary school teachers working in government, aided, and unaided schools in Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh. The Emotional Competencies Scale based on Daniel Goleman's model was employed to assess five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Statistical analyses such as mean, standard deviation, independent t-test, and one-way ANOVA were used. The findings revealed significant differences in emotional competencies with respect to gender and teaching experience, while age and qualification did not show significant influence on overall emotional competencies. The study highlights the importance of integrating emotional competency development into teacher education and professional development programs.

**Keywords:** Emotional Competencies, Emotional Intelligence, Secondary School Teachers, Gender, Teaching Experience.

## **1. Introduction**

Education is a transformative process that facilitates the development of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes essential for individual and societal progress. Teachers play a pivotal role in this process, not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as facilitators of emotional and social development. In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to the emotional dimensions of teaching, particularly emotional competencies, which influence teachers' professional effectiveness, well-being, and interpersonal relationships.

Emotional competencies refer to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively in oneself and others. In the teaching profession, emotional competencies are vital for managing classroom interactions, handling stress, resolving conflicts, and fostering a positive learning environment. Teachers with high emotional competencies are better equipped to motivate students, manage classroom behavior, and maintain constructive relationships with colleagues and parents. The present study focuses on examining emotional competencies among secondary school teachers, as this stage of schooling is marked by significant emotional and social challenges for both teachers and students. Understanding teachers' emotional competencies can contribute to improving teaching effectiveness and educational quality.

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

Research on emotional intelligence and emotional competencies has expanded considerably over the past few decades. Mayer and Salovey conceptualized emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively. Goleman later expanded this concept by integrating emotional competencies with workplace performance, identifying key components such as self-

awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Several studies have explored emotional competencies in relation to demographic variables. Research conducted in India has indicated that emotional competencies are positively associated with academic and professional success and may vary across gender and experience levels. Some studies have reported higher emotional competencies among female teachers, while others have found no significant gender differences.

International studies have emphasized the role of emotional competencies in stress management, decision-making, and leadership effectiveness among educators. However, findings related to age, qualification, and teaching experience remain inconsistent, indicating the need for further empirical investigation. The present study attempts to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by systematically examining emotional competencies among secondary school teachers in relation to selected demographic variables.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of emotional competencies among secondary school teachers.
2. To examine differences in emotional competencies based on gender.
3. To examine differences in emotional competencies based on age.
4. To examine differences in emotional competencies based on teaching experience.
5. To examine differences in emotional competencies based on educational qualification.

### 4. Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference in emotional competencies of secondary school teachers based on gender.
2. There is no significant difference in emotional competencies of secondary school teachers based on age.
3. There is no significant difference in emotional competencies of secondary school teachers based on teaching experience.
4. There is no significant difference in emotional competencies of secondary school teachers based on educational qualification.

## 5. Methodology

### 5.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey method to assess emotional competencies among secondary school teachers.

### 5.2 Sample

The sample consisted of 435 secondary school teachers selected from 45 Government, aided, and unaided schools in Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh. The sample included 267 male and 168 female teachers with varying ages, qualifications, and teaching experience.

### 5.3 Tool Used

The Emotional Competencies Scale developed by Anjali Anaspure (2010), based on Goleman's emotional intelligence model, was used. The scale measures five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The tool has established reliability and validity.

### 5.4 Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered personally to the teachers with prior permission from school authorities. Adequate instructions were provided to ensure accurate responses.

### 5.5 Statistical Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including mean, standard deviation, independent t-test, and one-way ANOVA at 0.05 level of significance.

6. Analysis and Results

**Table 1: Gender-wise Comparison of Emotional Competencies of Secondary School Teachers**

Dimension	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Significance
Self-Awareness	Male	267	46.80	5.73	2.11	Significant
	Female	168	45.71	5.02		
Self-Regulation	Male	267	42.09	4.91	1.54	Not Significant
	Female	168	41.38	4.68		
Motivation	Male	267	39.62	4.21	2.19	Significant
	Female	168	38.33	4.60		
Empathy	Male	267	75.20	6.88	1.59	Not Significant
	Female	168	74.14	6.89		
Social Skills	Male	267	65.53	7.06	1.47	Not Significant
	Female	168	64.60	6.10		
Total Emotional Competencies	Male	267	268.88	21.40	2.35	Significant
	Female	168	264.16	20.20		

**Interpretation:** Table 1 indicates that significant gender differences exist in self-awareness, motivation, and overall emotional competencies. Male teachers scored marginally higher than female teachers in these dimensions. However, no significant differences were observed in self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. This suggests that while gender influences certain emotional dimensions, many emotional competencies are common across male and female teachers.

**Table 2: Age-wise Comparison of Emotional Competencies of Secondary School Teachers**

Dimension	Age Group (Years)	N	Mean	SD	F-value	Significance
Self-Awareness	21–30	100	64.43	6.32	1.02	Not Significant
	31–40	177	65.68	6.67		
	41–50	108	64.49	6.31		
	51–60	50	65.28	7.62		
Self-Regulation	21–30	100	74.41	7.31	2.51	Significant
	31–40	177	75.42	6.29		
	41–50	108	74.71	6.59		
	51–60	50	72.60	8.37		
Total Emotional Competencies	21–30	100	266.42	19.91	1.17	Not Significant
	31–40	177	267.77	20.41		
	41–50	108	267.19	21.04		
	51–60	50	261.56	24.61		

**Interpretation:** Table 2 reveals that age does not significantly influence overall emotional competencies among secondary school teachers. However, a significant difference is observed in self-regulation, indicating that middle-aged teachers demonstrate better emotional control compared to teachers in higher age groups. This finding suggests that emotional regulation may decline slightly with advancing age due to occupational stress and workload.

**Table 3: Teaching Experience-wise Comparison of Emotional Competencies**

Dimension	Experience (Years)	N	Mean	SD	F-value	Significance
Self-Awareness	<5	91	73.70	7.63	3.60	Significant
	5–14	178	75.74	6.13		
	15–24	116	74.77	6.26		
	25+	50	72.58	8.70		
Motivation	<5	91	63.92	6.70	1.60	Not Significant
	5–14	178	65.80	6.37		
	15–24	116	64.94	7.88		
	25+	50	64.92	6.29		
Social Skills	<5	91	41.46	4.69	2.72	Significant
	5–14	178	41.71	4.89		
	15–24	116	42.62	4.29		
	25+	50	40.40	5.57		
Total Emotional Competencies	<5	91	263.53	20.69	2.80	Significant
	5–14	178	268.49	20.16		
	15–24	116	268.63	19.58		
	25+	50	260.76	25.93		

**Interpretation:** Table 3 shows that teaching experience significantly influences overall emotional competencies, self-awareness, and social skills. Teachers with 5–24 years of experience demonstrate higher emotional competencies compared to novice and highly experienced teachers. This may be due to optimal professional engagement and adaptability during mid-career stages.

### 7. Discussion

The findings of the present study reinforce earlier research highlighting the pivotal role of emotional competencies in enhancing teaching effectiveness and professional functioning among secondary school teachers. Emotional competencies, encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, are increasingly recognized as essential attributes for managing classroom dynamics, fostering positive teacher–student relationships, and maintaining professional well-being.

The significant gender differences observed in certain dimensions of emotional competencies may be attributed to differential socialization processes and culturally shaped emotional expressiveness. Previous studies have suggested that social expectations often encourage women to be more emotionally expressive and empathetic, while men may develop greater emotional control in professional settings. Such variations may influence how teachers perceive, regulate, and utilize emotions in educational contexts. However, the absence of gender differences in some dimensions also indicates that professional roles and shared occupational experiences may reduce emotional disparities over time.

Teaching experience emerged as a significant factor influencing emotional competencies, suggesting that these competencies are not static traits but develop progressively through professional engagement. Continuous interaction with students, exposure to diverse classroom challenges, and accumulated problem-solving experiences appear to enhance teachers' emotional awareness, motivation, and interpersonal skills. Mid-career teachers, in particular, demonstrated higher levels of emotional competencies, possibly due to an optimal balance between professional confidence and adaptability. In contrast, comparatively lower scores among novice and highly experienced teachers may reflect initial adjustment challenges and professional fatigue, respectively.

Interestingly, the absence of significant differences based on age and educational qualification indicates that emotional competencies do not automatically increase with chronological maturity or higher academic attainment. This finding supports the view that emotional competencies are distinct from cognitive abilities and formal qualifications. It underscores the need for deliberate and systematic interventions rather than reliance on experience or academic progression alone.

Overall, the findings emphasize the necessity of integrating emotional competency development into both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. Targeted training, reflective practices, counseling support, and emotional skills workshops can play a vital role in strengthening teachers' emotional competencies. Such initiatives are likely to enhance not only teacher effectiveness and job satisfaction but also the overall quality of the teaching–learning process.

## 8. Educational Implications

The findings of the present study have important implications for teacher education, professional development, and educational policy. Since emotional competencies significantly influence teachers' professional effectiveness, interpersonal relationships, and well-being, it is essential to systematically integrate emotional competency development into both pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. At the pre-service level, teacher education curricula should include structured courses and experiential learning modules focused on emotional awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Role-playing activities, case-based discussions, reflective journaling, and supervised teaching practice can help prospective teachers develop the emotional skills required to manage classroom challenges effectively from the beginning of their careers.

For in-service teachers, continuous professional development programs should emphasize emotional competency enhancement through workshops, seminars, and counseling sessions. Such programs can equip teachers with strategies to cope with occupational stress, manage emotional demands, and maintain positive classroom climates. Reflective practices, peer mentoring, and collaborative learning communities can further support teachers in sharing experiences and developing adaptive emotional responses. School administrators and educational leaders also play a critical role in fostering emotionally supportive school environments. By promoting open communication, providing psychological support services, and encouraging a culture of emotional well-being, institutions can enhance teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Regular assessment of teachers' emotional competencies may help identify professional development needs and guide targeted interventions.

Finally, educational policymakers should recognize emotional competencies as a core component of teacher professionalism. Incorporating emotional competency training into teacher standards and accreditation frameworks can contribute to improved teaching quality, enhanced student outcomes, and a more sustainable and emotionally healthy education system.

## 9. Conclusion

Emotional competencies constitute a vital dimension of teacher professionalism, significantly influencing instructional effectiveness, classroom relationships, and overall occupational well-being. The present study provides empirical evidence that emotional competencies among secondary school teachers are shaped more by gender and teaching experience than by age or academic qualification. This

finding reinforces the view that emotional competencies are experiential and context-driven rather than automatic outcomes of chronological maturity or formal education.

The significant influence of teaching experience highlights the developmental nature of emotional competencies, suggesting that sustained engagement with classroom realities contributes to greater emotional awareness, regulation, and interpersonal effectiveness. At the same time, the observed gender-based variations emphasize the role of social and cultural factors in shaping emotional responses within professional settings. The absence of significant differences based on age and qualification underscores the need to move beyond traditional assumptions that emotional growth accompanies academic advancement. Instead, emotional competencies must be deliberately nurtured through structured training, reflective practice, and institutional support mechanisms.

In conclusion, integrating emotional competency development into teacher education and professional development frameworks is imperative for enhancing teacher effectiveness, job satisfaction, and the overall quality of education. By fostering emotionally competent teachers, educational institutions can create more supportive learning environments that benefit both teachers and students, thereby contributing to sustainable educational excellence.

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