

A STUDY OF TEACHERS' EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ITS ROLE IN MANAGING STUDENTS' BEHAVIOUR AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

The current study examined teachers' emotional intelligence and its role in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level in District Bannu. Specifically, it focused on two dimensions of emotional intelligence, role in effective classroom management and students' behaviour management. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, and a self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data from secondary school teachers. The questionnaire consisted of two domains related to teachers' emotional intelligence—while the classroom management section focused on promoting student engagement and managing students' behaviour. The population comprised 1,113 teachers from 64 secondary schools in District Bannu, from which a sample of 286 teachers was selected using a statistical sampling calculator. The collected data were analyzed to examine teachers' emotional intelligence and its role in effective classroom management and students' behaviour management. The findings showed that teachers demonstrated positive emotional intelligence and effective behaviour-management skills. They were able to recognize emotions, maintain motivation, understand students' emotional needs, promote accountability, and manage discipline fairly. However, emotional self-reflection remained an area requiring further improvement. It is recommended that schools and teacher training institutions emphasize emotional intelligence and behaviour-management training, while teachers engage in self-reflection and use positive, fair, and respectful strategies to manage students' behaviour and create supportive classroom environments.

Keyword: Teachers' Emotional Intelligence, Students' Behaviour, Secondary School, Bannu, Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

It is well known that education is one of the key elements of social development, contributing significantly to individuals' intellectual, emotional, and social growth. Teachers serve as the hub of educational success in the classroom, not just as transmitters of information, but as facilitators of the classroom's culture that affects learning, behaviour and socialization (Day & Qing, 2009). This role is even more important in

secondary school when young people experience significant cognitive, emotional and social changes which directly influence their learning involvement and behavior.

Emotional intelligence (EI) has become an important teacher skill in recent decades and is related directly to classroom management and support of students (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Emotional Intelligence as a concept was first put forth by Goleman (1995) who defined the intelligence as five components:

self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. Emotional intelligence is the capacity to recognize, understand, manage and utilize emotions, in both themselves and others.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers at secondary school level encounter various challenges in their day-to-day teaching activities. They are not only expected to deliver lessons effectively but also to maintain discipline, promote student engagement, and create a conducive classroom environment for learning. Effective classroom management is considered one of the most challenging aspects of teaching because it directly influences teachers' effectiveness, students' participation, and the overall learning environment. Despite teachers' efforts, disruptive student behaviour, low engagement, lack of attention, and difficulties in maintaining a positive classroom environment remain significant challenges at secondary school level.

Teachers' emotional intelligence may play an important role in addressing these challenges, particularly through self-awareness and motivation. Self-awareness enables teachers to recognize and regulate their emotions, understand their strengths and weaknesses, and respond appropriately to challenging classroom situations, while motivation may encourage teachers to remain committed, patient, and focused on achieving instructional goals. However, limited attention has been given to how these dimensions of teachers' emotional intelligence contribute to effective classroom management and the management of students' behaviour, particularly at secondary school level. This gap in the existing literature makes it difficult to fully understand the role of teachers' emotional intelligence in maintaining positive classroom environments and promoting student engagement. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to examine teachers' emotional intelligence and its role in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level in District Bannu, with particular focus on self-awareness, motivation, classroom management, and student engagement.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were

1. To determine the level of teachers' emotional intelligence at secondary school level.
2. To assess the role of teachers' emotional intelligence in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study were:

1. What is the level of teachers' emotional intelligence at secondary school level?
2. What is the role of teachers' emotional intelligence in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level?

Significance of the Study

The study was significant because it provided insights into the role of teachers' emotional intelligence in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level. The findings helped teachers understand the importance of emotional awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, and positive interpersonal interactions in maintaining a supportive and disciplined classroom environment. The study also provided useful information to school heads and educational administrators for developing professional development programs aimed at strengthening teachers' emotional intelligence and classroom management abilities. Furthermore, teacher educators and policymakers could use the findings to incorporate emotional intelligence competencies into teacher training and professional development programs. The study also provided a useful reference for future researchers interested in emotional intelligence, classroom management, and students' behaviour in secondary education.

Delimitation of the study

This study was delimited to male secondary school teachers (SSTs) of public schools in District Bannu.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This part of the study deals with review of previous literature conducted by professionals and researchers on the concerned study. A growing body of literature emphasizes the

importance of emotional intelligence that manage students behaviour etc.

Teachers' Emotional Intelligence at secondary School Level

Emotional intelligence has become an important area in educational research because teachers regularly deal with students' emotions, classroom pressures, interpersonal relationships, and challenging behaviours. Teachers with stronger emotional intelligence are better positioned to recognize their own emotions, remain motivated, respond appropriately to classroom situations, and develop positive relationships with students.

Shah, Aman, and Zubairi (2025) examined secondary school teachers' perceptions of emotional intelligence and highlighted its importance in contemporary education. Their work emphasized emotional intelligence as an important competency for teachers and considered its relevance to teachers' professional practices at secondary level.

Bibi, Siddique, and Hameed (2025) found a significant positive relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and professionalism among public secondary school teachers in Lahore. They emphasized the importance of developing teachers' self-reflective abilities, empathy, emotional control, and other emotional competencies through professional development.

Irum (2025) also indicates that teachers' emotional intelligence is associated with students' classroom experiences and engagement however teachers' emotional intelligence among female teachers and students in public secondary schools in Lahore and found a positive influence of teachers' emotional intelligence on students' cohesiveness and teacher support within the classroom learning environment.

Naeem, Mehmood, and Batool reported that teachers' emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, contributed to positive teacher-student interactions and classroom conditions conducive to learning at secondary level. These studies demonstrate that emotional intelligence is not limited to teachers' personal characteristics but is also relevant to their

professional interactions and classroom practices.

Teachers' Emotional Intelligence and Students' Behaviour Management

Tabbasum and Shabbir (2023) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and classroom management among 585 public secondary school teachers in Punjab, Pakistan. Their findings showed a positive relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and classroom management and further indicated a significant effect of emotional intelligence on teachers' classroom management. This evidence directly supports the view that teachers' ability to understand and manage emotions can contribute to maintaining orderly and productive classroom environments.

Channa, Noorani, and Muzaffar (2025) investigated teacher emotional intelligence among secondary school teachers in Karachi and found that emotional intelligence strongly influenced classroom management and was associated with fewer behavioural incidents among students. Their study further showed that classroom management played an important role in the relationship between teacher emotional intelligence and student behaviour.

Ilyas et al. (2024) highlighted the importance of teachers' emotional intelligence and resilience in addressing bullying and supporting positive student behaviour in school settings. These findings provide strong support for examining teachers' emotional intelligence as a factor in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level. However, much of the available Pakistani research has focused on Punjab, Lahore, and Karachi, which indicates a need for further investigation in other educational contexts such as District Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This contextual gap provides a basis for the present study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This portion outlines the research methodology adopted for the study. It explains the design of the research, the population and sample, and the tools and procedures used for collecting and analyzing data. The methodology ensures that the findings are valid, credible, and can

contribute meaningfully to the field of education.

Research Design

The current study adopted a descriptive research design. A survey method was considered appropriate and reliable because it enabled the researcher to collect data systematically and describe existing conditions, perceptions, and relationships among the variables under investigation. Descriptive survey research was particularly suitable for examining teachers' emotional intelligence and its role in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level (Creswell, 2012; Kothari, 2004).

Population of the Study

The population of the present study comprised of all male secondary school teachers (SSTs) working in government boys' high schools in District Bannu. According to ASER (2024-2025), there were 62 government boys' high schools in District Bannu, with a total of 1,096 male secondary school teachers working in these schools. The teachers were directly involved in classroom teaching, student interaction, classroom management, and the management of students' behaviour at secondary school level.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A simple random sampling technique was used to select a representative sample from the target population of male secondary school teachers in District Bannu. Each teacher had an equal opportunity to be selected for participation in the study. To determine the appropriate sample size, an online sample size calculator was used to ensure adequate statistical representation of the total population of secondary school teachers in District Bannu. Based on the population of 1,096 teachers, a sample of 286 teachers was selected for the study. The use of simple random sampling helped reduce selection bias and ensured that the selected sample adequately represented the target population.

Sample of the Study

The sample of the study was selected through a multistage sampling technique. In the first stage, 29 government boys' high schools were randomly selected from the total of 62

government boys' high schools in District Bannu. In the second stage, 10 teachers were randomly selected from each of the selected schools. To determine the appropriate sample size, an online sample size calculator developed by Raosoft (2004) was used. Consequently, a total of 285 male secondary school teachers were included in the sample of the study. The selected sample represented approximately 26% of the total population of 1,096 teachers.

Research Instrument

The research instruments consisted of two self-administered questionnaires. The emotional intelligence questionnaire consisted of 9 statements, The classroom management skills questionnaire, consisted of 8 statements providing relevant information regarding teachers' emotional intelligence and their classroom management skills in managing students' behaviour.

Validation of Instrument

The instruments were validated using the assistance of six subject experts. The questionnaires were reviewed by the experts and their recommendations were made on how to improve them. First of all, the both questionnaires had 23 items which were reduced to 17.

Reliability of the Instruments

The reliability of the research instruments was assessed through a pilot study. The pilot test was conducted with 30 teachers who were not included in the actual sample of the study. Both of the questionnaires had high Cronbach's Alpha values exceeded the generally acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instruments had satisfactory internal consistency and were reliable for use in the main study.

Data Collection Mode

In this study, data were collected personally by the researcher. The researcher physically visited each of the selected schools that represented the target population. After obtaining permission from the respective school heads, the questionnaires were distributed to the sampled teachers with their informed consent. The participants were clearly informed about

the purpose and objectives of the study and were assured that the information they provided would remain confidential and would be used solely for academic purposes. Participation was voluntary, and the teachers were given adequate time to complete the questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the teachers were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), Version 27. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were used to determine the general

tendencies and variations in teachers' responses regarding emotional intelligence and classroom management skills. The results were presented in tables and interpreted according to the objectives and research questions of the study

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This part of the study presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from secondary school teachers in District Bannu. The data are presented in tabular form and interpreted in detail according to the objectives and research questions of the study.

Table 1: Mean Values Cut-off

Strongly Disagree=1, Disagree=2, Undecided=3, Agree=4, Strongly Agree=5,

SCALE	RANGE
Very Low	1.00 - 1.80
Low	1.81 - 2.60
Moderate	2.61 - 3.40
High	3.41 - 4.20
Very High	4.21 - 5.00

Research Question 1: What is the level of teachers' emotional intelligence at secondary school level?

Table No. 2 Teachers' Perceptions Regarding Their Emotional Intelligence

S. No.	Statements	N	M	SD
1	I remain aware of my emotions when dealing with challenging classroom situations.	286	4.00	0.78
2	I understand how my emotions influence my interaction with students.	286	3.92	0.81
3	I remain motivated to perform my teaching responsibilities effectively.	286	3.84	0.85
4	I recognize when my emotions begin to affect my classroom decisions.	286	3.76	0.88
5	I remain positive when I face difficulties in managing students' behaviour.	286	3.68	0.91
6	I understand my emotional strengths and weaknesses as a teacher.	286	3.59	0.86
7	I use my emotions positively to maintain good relationships with students.	286	3.51	0.89
8	I remain committed to achieving my teaching goals despite classroom challenges.	286	3.42	0.93
9	I reflect on my emotional responses to improve my classroom practices.	286	3.31	0.96
Overall		286	3.67	0.88

Table 2 indicates that teachers generally demonstrated a positive level of emotional intelligence, as reflected by the overall mean score of M=3.67 (SD=0.88), which falls in the

Agree category. The highest-rated statement was "I remain aware of my emotions when dealing with challenging classroom situations" with M=4.00 (SD=0.78), falling in the Agree

category. The statement “I understand how my emotions influence my interaction with students” obtained $M=3.92$ ($SD=0.81$), which also falls in the Agree category, showing that teachers agree that their emotions influence their interactions with students. The statement “I remain motivated to perform my teaching responsibilities effectively” recorded $M=3.84$ ($SD=0.85$) and falls in the Agree category, indicating that teachers agree that they remain motivated to perform their teaching responsibilities effectively. Similarly, “I recognize when my emotions begin to affect my classroom decisions” obtained $M=3.76$ ($SD=0.88$), which falls in the Agree category, showing that teachers agree that they recognize the influence of their emotions on classroom decisions. The statement “I remain positive when I face difficulties in managing students’ behaviour” had $M=3.68$ ($SD=0.91$) and falls in the Agree category, indicating that teachers agree that they maintain a positive attitude when dealing with behavioural difficulties. The statement “I understand my emotional strengths and weaknesses as a teacher” obtained $M=3.59$ ($SD=0.86$), which falls in the Agree category, showing that teachers agree that they

have an understanding of their emotional strengths and weaknesses. The statement “I use my emotions positively to maintain good relationships with students” recorded $M=3.51$ ($SD=0.89$), falling in the Agree category, indicating that teachers agree that they use their emotions positively in maintaining relationships with students. The statement “I remain committed to achieving my teaching goals despite classroom challenges” obtained $M=3.42$ ($SD=0.93$), which falls in the Agree category, showing that teachers agree that they remain committed to their teaching goals despite classroom challenges. The lowest-rated statement, “I reflect on my emotional responses to improve my classroom practices,” had $M=3.31$ ($SD=0.96$), which falls in the Undecided category, indicating that teachers were undecided about regularly reflecting on their emotional responses for improving classroom practices. Overall, the findings indicate that teachers generally agree that they demonstrate emotional intelligence in their teaching practices, particularly in recognizing emotions, maintaining motivation, managing challenging situations, and maintaining positive relationships with students

Research Question 2: What is the role of teachers’ emotional intelligence in managing students’ behaviour at secondary school level?.

Table No.3 Teachers’ Level of Managing Students’ Behaviour

S. No.	Statements	N	M	SD
1	I address disruptive behaviour immediately and calmly.	286	3.42	0.91
2	I use positive reinforcement to encourage good behaviour.	286	3.58	0.88
3	I maintain fairness when applying consequences for mis-behaviour.	286	3.75	0.82
4	I use non-verbal cues, such as eye contact and gestures, to manage student behaviour.	286	3.46	0.90
5	I effectively de-escalate conflicts among students.	286	3.63	0.86
6	I avoid public criticism and handle discipline privately when possible.	286	3.89	0.79
7	I use restorative practices to resolve conflicts and repair relationships.	286	3.71	0.84
8	I create a classroom culture where students hold each other accountable.	286	4.02	0.76
Overall		286	3.68	0.85

Table 3 shows the level of teachers’ skills in managing students’ behaviour. The highest mean is recorded for creating a classroom culture where students hold each other accountable ($M=4.02$, $SD=0.76$), followed by

handling discipline privately ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.79$) and maintaining fairness when applying consequences ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.82$), all falling in the Agree category. Teachers also agree that they use restorative practices

($M=3.71$, $SD=0.84$), de-escalate conflicts ($M=3.63$, $SD=0.86$), and use positive reinforcement ($M=3.58$, $SD=0.88$) to manage students' behaviour. The statement regarding the use of non-verbal cues obtains $M=3.46$ ($SD=0.90$), while addressing disruptive behaviour immediately and calmly obtains $M=3.42$ ($SD=0.91$), both falling in the Agree category. The overall mean of $M=3.68$ ($SD=0.85$) falls in the Agree category, indicating that teachers generally demonstrate a good level of skill in managing students' behaviour at secondary school level.

RESULTS

The findings showed that teachers demonstrated a positive level of emotional intelligence with an overall mean of $M=3.67$ ($SD=0.88$). The highest mean was reported for awareness of emotions during challenging classroom situations ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.78$), while understanding emotional influence on student interaction ($M=3.92$, $SD=0.81$) and maintaining motivation ($M=3.84$, $SD=0.85$) were also highly rated. The lowest mean was found for reflecting on emotional responses ($M=3.31$, $SD=0.96$), which fell in the Undecided category.

Teachers also demonstrated a good level of skills in managing students' behaviour, with an overall mean of $M=3.68$ ($SD=0.85$). The highest mean was found for creating a classroom culture of accountability ($M=4.02$, $SD=0.76$), followed by handling discipline privately ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.79$) and maintaining fairness ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.82$). Restorative practices ($M=3.71$, $SD=0.84$), conflict de-escalation ($M=3.63$, $SD=0.86$), and positive reinforcement ($M=3.58$, $SD=0.88$) were also rated positively. Overall, teachers demonstrated effective emotional intelligence and behaviour-management skills.

Discussion

The findings showed that teachers demonstrated a positive level of emotional intelligence, with an overall mean of $M=3.67$ ($SD=0.88$). Teachers particularly agreed that they remained aware of their emotions during challenging classroom situations ($M=4.00$, $SD=0.78$) and understood the influence of emotions on their interaction with students

($M=3.92$, $SD=0.81$). This finding is consistent with Bibi, Siddique, and Hameed (2025), who reported a positive relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and professionalism among secondary school teachers in Pakistan. Similarly, Shah, Aman, and Zubairi (2025) emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence for teachers' professional practices and effective educational environments.

The findings further revealed that teachers possessed effective skills in managing students' behaviour, with an overall mean of $M=3.68$ ($SD=0.85$). Teachers performed particularly well in creating a classroom culture of accountability ($M=4.02$, $SD=0.76$), handling discipline privately ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.79$), and maintaining fairness when applying consequences ($M=3.75$, $SD=0.82$). These findings are consistent with Tabbasum and Shabbir (2023), who found a positive relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and classroom management among secondary school teachers in Punjab. Likewise, Channa, Noorani, and Muzaffar (2025) reported that teacher emotional intelligence contributed to effective classroom management and was associated with improved student behaviour.

The findings also indicated that teachers used restorative practices ($M=3.71$, $SD=0.84$), conflict de-escalation ($M=3.63$, $SD=0.86$), and positive reinforcement ($M=3.58$, $SD=0.88$) in managing students' behaviour. This suggests that emotionally competent teachers are better positioned to respond calmly and constructively to behavioural challenges. Irum (2025) similarly reported that teachers' emotional intelligence positively influenced teacher support and classroom cohesiveness at secondary school level. However, reflection on emotional responses received the lowest emotional-intelligence mean ($M=3.31$, $SD=0.96$), indicating an area requiring greater attention. This suggests that teachers may benefit from professional development activities that encourage emotional reflection and self-evaluation.

Conclusions

1. The study concluded that teachers demonstrated a positive level of emotional

intelligence, particularly in recognizing their emotions, understanding their influence on students, and maintaining motivation during teaching.

2. The study concluded that teachers possessed a good level of skills in managing students' behaviour, particularly in promoting accountability, handling discipline privately, and applying fair consequences.

3. The findings indicated that teachers used positive approaches such as restorative practices, conflict de-escalation, and positive reinforcement to manage students' behaviour.

4. The study concluded that strengthening teachers' emotional intelligence could contribute to more effective classroom management and the development of positive teacher-student relationships at secondary school level.

Recommendations

1. Emotional intelligence training should be incorporated into teachers' professional development programs to strengthen teachers' awareness and management of their emotions.

2. School heads should organize workshops on behaviour-management strategies, particularly positive reinforcement, conflict de-escalation, and restorative practices.

3. Teachers should be encouraged to engage in regular self-reflection to identify their emotional strengths, weaknesses, and responses to challenging classroom situations.

4. Teacher training institutions should include emotional intelligence and student behaviour management as important components of pre-service and in-service teacher education.

5. School administrations should promote a positive and supportive classroom environment where teachers use fair, respectful, and constructive approaches to manage students' behaviour.

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