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THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, WELL-BEING, AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON TEACHER MENTAL HEALTH IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

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Abstract
This empirical study assessed the impact of stress on the psychological well-being of Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) teachers in and around Hyderabad. The study also assessed the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the nexus among teacher stress and psychological well-being. To assess the role of stress and emotional intelligence in psychological well-being, the three constructs were modeled as lower- and higher-order, and both the lower- and higher-order constructs—teacher stress, emotional intelligence and psychological well-being—were assessed. The SEM results of the lower-order emotional intelligence constructs indicate that self-emotional appraisal, emotion use, and emotion regulation positively and significantly influence the psychological well-being of secondary school teachers. Similarly, the lower-order teacher stress work-related stressors, emotional manifestations, discipline and motivation significantly and negatively influence the psychological well-being of CBSE teachers. Similarly, the higher-order construct teacher stress is significant and negatively influences psychological well-being, whereas emotional intelligence positively impacts the psychological well-being of schoolteachers. Emotional intelligence fully mediates the relationship between teacher stress and psychological well-being. Teachers face high levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and burnout due to long working hours, a lack of support, school violence, and pressure for results, which are exacerbated by pandemic and artificial intelligence advancements. This study has several ramifications for the education industry and suggests enhancing emotional intelligence and reducing the stress of teachers. Teachers' mental health is a public health concern, requiring intersectoral policies, institutional support, and critical educational technology use to promote healthier school environments. Management should consider the modification of policies to enhance the discipline and motivation of students.
Keywords: teacher stress, psychological well-being, emotional intelligence, positive relations, self-emotion appraisal

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INTRODUCTION

In light of job overload, professional devaluation, and unstable teaching circumstances, teachers' mental health has emerged as a crucial concern. This situation was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced teachers to make quick adjustments to remote instruction and increased their emotional and technological demands, further jeopardizing their well-being. Furthermore, educators now face additional demands as a result of artificial intelligence. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "mental health is a state of psychological equilibrium that empowers people to overcome hardship, grow as individuals, work effectively, and support social and economic advancement" (Hammoudi Halat, et al., 2024). Chronic stress disrupts this equilibrium when it is not adequately handled, leading to diseases and mental health issues (Vacchi et al., 2024). Numerous factors, such as stress, heredity, nutrition, sleep patterns, interpersonal interactions, employment, and socioeconomic circumstances, can negatively impact mental health.

Teachers' mental health is strongly influenced by their workplace, which has a direct effect on their performance and general well-being. Burnout, also known as professional tiredness, is a complicated phenomenon associated with occupational stress that can take the form of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and depersonalization. These symptoms are frequently exacerbated by mounting demands and pressure to produce high-caliber outcomes (Lei et al., 2025). Furthermore, a number of issues, including role conflicts, inadequate autonomy, work overload, and deteriorating hierarchical connections, contribute to workers' psychological pain, which is frequently suppressed by power dynamics and institutional norms (Kiaos, 2025). School microcultures and the many pedagogical and emotional demands exacerbate these conditions for teachers, making schools a psychosocial risk setting that has a direct impact on their mental health.

Research indicates that teachers face constant stress in their professional routines, including assaults, disruptive students, task overload, and emotional support for personal cries. A lack of adequate support can significantly increase the risk of depressive disorders among educators due to the pressures they face (Nizri et al., 2024). Resilience to stress is dependent on both external and internal factors, according to the conservation of resources (COR) model. The external factors include a friendly school environment with good interpersonal relationships and a well-organized organization, whereas the internal factors include the capacity to control emotions and adjust to difficult circumstances. Teachers are more susceptible to mental illness and emotional exhaustion when these tools are unavailable. Additionally, a number of aspects of the educational environment, including long workdays, demands for productivity, bureaucracy, and performance pressure, have an impact on teachers' psychological health. In this professional group, anxiety and depression are frequently linked to the inability to manage personal and professional obligations in the face of high demands and the adoption of unhealthy stress-reduction techniques such as avoidance or perfectionism (Vacchi et al., 2024).

The COVID-19 pandemic and school closures have significantly impacted teachers' psychological well-being, leading to increased stress, burnout, and psychological distress. Longer workdays require online instruction, and a lack of administrative support puts instructors under strain, according to studies, which exacerbates symptoms, including anxiety, sadness, and sleep disturbances. The stress caused by a pandemic may have long-term effects, weakening resilience and causing burnout, all of which have detrimental impacts on psychological health (Chen et al., 2024). Studies have shown that teachers experience greater occupational stress due to a lack of visibility and an imbalance between effort and reward. The study highlights the link between occupational stress among teachers and lack of visibility, recommending improved working conditions and a supportive environment, and emphasizing psychological education interventions (Bourgoin Boucher et al., 2024).

Given this, the development of artificial intelligence (AI) is changing a number of industries, including education, and it offers teachers both opportunities and difficulties. The educational landscape is changing as a result of AI's ability to automate administrative duties, personalize learning, and offer data-driven insights. However, this technological change also prompts questions about how teachers' roles are changing, the need for new abilities, and the moral implications of artificial intelligence in the classroom (Colledani et al., 2025). In light of this situation, talking about the mental health of teachers involves more than just acknowledging the suffering that this profession endures; it also entails comprehending how institutional, social, and technological contexts influence its growth. Interventions that go beyond personal responsibility and address the systems that cause such distress are necessary.

Therefore, the authors carried out an empirical study in which data were gathered from the schools of the Central Board of Secondary Education Teachers in and around Hyderabad. The empirical study assessed the effects

of teacher stress and emotional intelligence on the psychological well-being of teachers and assessed their mental health.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the influence of teacher stress on CBSE teachers' psychological well-being
- To assess the influence of emotional intelligence on the psychological well-being of CBSE teachers
- To investigate the mediating effects of emotional intelligence in the relationship between teacher stress and psychological well-being

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

The World Health Organization defines mental health "as a condition of well-being that empowers people to overcome obstacles in life, reach their full potential, work efficiently, and" support socioeconomic and communal development. It involves emotional balance and adaptability and is essential both personally and collectively (Jin et al.,2025). Mental health in the workplace involves managing psychosocial risks and adhering to legal standards to ensure workers' psychological integrity. Stress, a response to an imbalance between demands and capacities, is a key indicator of mental health, indicating emotional and functional well-being, not just the absence of disorders. Furthermore, teachers' performance and well-being are functions of occupational stress (Prasad et al., 2016). Academic settings face challenges such as excessive workloads, productivity pressure, strict deadlines, student tension, work–life imbalance, and the pandemic's impacts on mental health. Environmental factors such as poor working conditions, a lack of recognition, overcrowded classrooms, and overlapping responsibilities heighten burnout risk (Piperac et al., 2024).

STRESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING THEORIES

Stress can refer to an event causing a reaction, a person's reaction, or the relationship between the person and the situation (Hobfoll, 1989; Jex, Beehr, & Roberts, 1992). Researchers distinguish between stressors (events causing reactions), perceived stress (perception of stressors), and strains (emotional, physiological or performance effects). Since its inception, researchers have been conducting research on stress and well-being in various forms. Cannon's "fight or flight" concept, coined in 1915, describes an organism's response to external threats, indicating deviation from homeostasis, which he viewed as self-regulation of physiological processes (Cannon, 1932). Selye's 1936 work on stress research introduced general adaptation syndrome (GAS), a nonspecific body response to stress. The GAS consists of alarm, resistance, and exhaustion stages, with a focus on physiological responses such as adrenaline and cortisol changes. Several theories have been proposed for stress and stress. Lazarus' transactional theory, introduced in 1966, is a significant psychological stress model that emphasizes subjective factors and the cognitive appraisal of stressors, influencing their impact on well-being. Lazarus identified two cognitive appraisal forms: primary appraisal, which assesses potential stressors as harmful, threatening, or challenging, and secondary appraisal, which considers individuals' potential responses to the stressful situation (Lazarus, 1993; Lazarus, Averill, & Opton, 1974). Lazarus' cognitive appraisal theory, exemplified by Hobfoll's conservation of resources (COR) theory, suggests that stress arises when valuable resources are threatened, lost, or foregone, referring to conditions objects, and personal characteristics.

Research on psychological stress parallels workplace stress theories, with Bhagat's 1983 model examining stress effects on individual performance, adjustment and satisfaction, and a checklist distinguishing job and personal stressors (Bhagat et al., 1985). The person–environment fit theory of job stress highlights the crucial role of the fit between the subjective person and the environment in determining psychological, physiological, and behavioral strains (French, Caplan, & Van Harrison, 1982). Other theories include demand control theory (Karasek, 1979), communication theory (Karasek and Theorell (1990)) and several other theories provided by researchers.

Psychological well-being is a holistic concept encompassing positive psychological states such as pleasure, life fulfillment, and purpose, as well as positive relationships, personal growth, self-esteem, and life control. Psychological well-being encompasses a person's overall happiness, contentment, and fulfillment in life, encompassing a sense of purpose, satisfying relationships, and the ability to manage challenges of life, transcending mental illness and

encompassing a person's overall health. Psychological well-being is "a state of mind in which an individual is able to develop their potential, work productively, and creatively, and is able to cope with the normal stresses of life" (WHO, 2021). Ryff (1989) identified six psychological well-being characteristics:" self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal progress, and pleasant connections", promoting self-determination, control over one's surroundings, personal development, and purpose in life.

Diener et al. (2010) defined psychological well-being "as a subjective evaluation of life characterized by positive emotions, engagement, and meaning, encompassing happiness, satisfaction, and fulfillment". Seligman (2002) introduced "positive psychology," recognizing psychological well-being as a combination of fulfillment and enjoyment, characterized by positive emotions, pleasure, and a sense of purpose in life.

STRESS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Rafsanjani and Rahmawati (2019) investigated the nexus among stress exposure and the psychological well-being of 325 senior high school teachers in Malang, with a focus on work enthusiasm and emotional exhaustion. The authors reported that stress exposure negatively impacts work enthusiasm and emotional exhaustion in teachers, indicating a significant impact on their psychological well-being. Katsantonis (2020) explored the correlations among contextual factors, stress, and teachers' psychological well-being in various organizational cultures. The study revealed limited gender-specific structural associations across cultures, with mixed results suggesting within-cluster homogeneity of latent means. Cultural clusters like East Asia exhibit significant differences in workload stress, which can lead to mental and emotional disorders.

Jeon et al. (2018) examined the relationships between teachers' self-perceived depression, stress, and emotional health and possible predictors of their psychological well-being, such as their work environment, professional background, effectiveness and emotional exhaustion. The psychological well-being of early childhood teachers significantly impacts the classroom climate, children's development, and early care education, but predictors of preschool teachers' psychological well-being remain under researched. The authors examined the relationship between stress management and teacher wellbeing among 836 teachers from three diverse public universities, utilizing positive psychology, conservation resources, and broaden-and-build theories. One study revealed that psychological capital positively impacts teacher well-being, coping with stress, and overall well-being, with a fully mediated effect on coping through withdrawal and acceptance (Zewude and Hercz, 2021). Ibrahim et al. (2021) explored the relationships among job control, job demands, and social support, as well as the moderating role of these factors in determining teachers' psychological well-being. The hierarchical linear regression results reveal that job demands, job control, and social support significantly predict teachers' psychological well-being in Malaysia, with job control and social support partially moderating these effects.

Xiyun et al. (2022) investigated psychological well-being in relation to the self-efficacy of teachers and the emotional context of English as a foreign language teacher. The structural equation model indicates that teacher self-efficacy and emotion regulation significantly impact their psychological wellbeing, with self-efficacy showing a stronger correlation than emotion regulation. Yin et al. (2023), on the basis of social cognitive theory, investigated the long-term correlations among kindergarten teachers' psychological well-being, self-efficacy, and commitment to children through a longitudinal study. A study of 782 Hong Kong kindergarten teachers revealed that psychological well-being improved their commitment to their children through self-efficacy mediation over time. On the basis of this discussion, the following hypotheses are formulated

Hypotheses for lower-order constructs

H1: Teacher stress sub-dimensions, emotional manifestations, discipline and motivation, and work-related stressors impact the sub-dimensions of psychological well-being—emotional maturity, positive relationships, and self-acceptance.

Hypotheses for higher-order constructs

H2: Teachers' stress negatively impacts their psychological well-being.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence, which is associated with empathy, enhances mental health, job performance, and relationship maintenance by enabling better self-expression and interpretation of others' emotions. The EI is crucial for effective interaction with others, as it enables us to perceive and understand emotions. Emotional intelligence helps us

understand others' motivations, communicate effectively, and manage our own emotions, as without awareness, we become easily caught up in our emotional states. Goleman made the concepts of emotional intelligence accessible to various societal groups. In 1990, psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey introduced the term emotional intelligence, which they divided into four branches to understand the unitary intelligence underpinning other skill sets. Recognizing emotions through nonverbal cues, using feelings to direct mental processes, recognizing the messages emotions give and the behaviors they inspire, and controlling one's own emotions for one's own gain and the benefit of others. Goleman (1995) described five components of emotional intelligence: "self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social" skills.

Lucas-Mangas et al. (2022) explored the influence of psychological well-being and emotional intelligence on teachers, focusing on their evaluation, motivation, and stress regulation and their regulation of burnout. Three hundred eighty-six teachers' well-being was measured via the psychological well-being scale, the Trait Meta-Mood Scale and the Spanish Burnout Inventory. Multiple regression analysis revealed that enthusiasm for teaching is linked to psychological well-being, particularly in terms of the environment and personal growth, and that well-being is the main adjustment predictor for teaching staff. Kamboj and Gard (2021) explored the impact of intrinsic factors like EI and resilient character traits on the psychological well-being of schoolteachers, emphasizing their mediating role. The study used convenience sampling to recruit 200 schoolteachers in Haryana, India, for a cross-sectional survey. This study reveals that perseverance is a significant predictor of psychological well-being among resilient traits, with self-reliance as an inconsistent mediator. Compared with male teachers, female teachers have greater emotional intelligence and resilience. In another study, the authors examined the effects of teacher well-being, job satisfaction and emotional intelligence in relation to teacher engagement at SDS Pelangi Kasih Jakarta. The Smart PLS SEM results reveal that job satisfaction, the well-being of teachers and emotional intelligence are significant predictors of teachers' employee engagement.

The authors assessed the emotional intelligence and psychological well-being of secondary school teachers, explored the nexus among EI and psychological well-being, and identified predictors. A correlational study using the Schutte Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test and Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale revealed a significant nexus among emotional intelligence and psychological well-being among 328 teachers in five schools. The results reveal that emotional and mood regulations are the best predictors of psychological well-being. Furthermore, the authors explored the correlation between EI, cognitive emotion regulation strategies, and well-being indicators, adjusting for sociodemographic and personality traits. The study involved 378 college students and revealed a significant positive correlation between ability emotional intelligence and well-being outcomes, with cognitive emotion regulation strategies mediating this association. The SEM results reveal that two adaptive cognitive coping strategies partially mediate the relationship between ability emotional intelligence and well-being indicators in college students, supporting theoretical work linking emotion regulation strategies and subjective well-being outcomes. Thus, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H3: Emotional intelligence components (self-emotional appraisal, others' emotional appraisal, use of emotion and regulation of emotion) positively influence the psychological well-being of the central board of secondary education teachers.

Higher order

H4: Emotional intelligence is positively related to psychological well-being

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A MEDIATOR

The role of emotional intelligence in the relationship between psychological well-being and stress is well documented. Molero Jurado et al. (2021) examined the impact of academic performance on burnout among high school students and determined the role of emotional intelligence in this relationship. School burnout in adolescents is linked to emotional intelligence, with low academic performance affecting burnout levels and stress management and emotional intelligence acting as mediators. Batool and Lewis (2020) investigated the role of emotional intelligence in mediation, focusing on both psychological and linguistic perspectives. Emotions shape human minds and behaviors and are embedded in language, influencing verbal and nonverbal communication. The EI is crucial for mediating success (Obeda, 2018). In another study, the authors explored the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and work engagement, using cognitive-motivational-reactional and conservation of resources theories to fill gaps in the understanding of employee EI. This study revealed a positive correlation between employee involvement (EI) and work engagement, with EI indirectly influencing PsyCap through personality structure (POS) and PsyCap through

serial mediation (George et al., 2022). The authors examined the negative impact of customer incivility on employees through the mediating effect of burnout and the moderating effect of emotional intelligence. A cross-sectional study was used for this purpose. The study revealed a direct link between customer and employee incivility, with burnout mediating this relationship and emotional intelligence moderating it. The authors examined the contribution of emotional intelligence in mediating the relationships between personality traits and both optimism and hope. The Big Five Questionnaire, TEIQue-SF, LOT-R, and Hope Scale were administered to 201 Italian workers. Emotional intelligence mediates the nexus among personality traits and optimism and hope, with emotional stability, agreeableness, and extraversion influencing optimism and extraversion, and emotional stability and conscientiousness influencing hope. Therefore, the hypotheses formulated are as follows:
H5: Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between teacher stress and psychological well-being.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The authors followed Goleman's (1995) emotional intelligence theory, Law et al.'s (2001) emotional intelligence concepts, Ryff's (1989) psychological well-being theory, and Fimian and Fastenau's (1990) teacher stress concepts and developed a theoretical model, conceptual model and mediation model. Figure 1 presents the theoretical model between the psychological well-being and teacher stress constructs; Figure 2 presents the conceptual framework for the study; and Figure 3 presents the mediation model of emotional intelligence in the nexus among psychological well-being and teacher stress.

Figure 1: Theoretical framework (authors creation)

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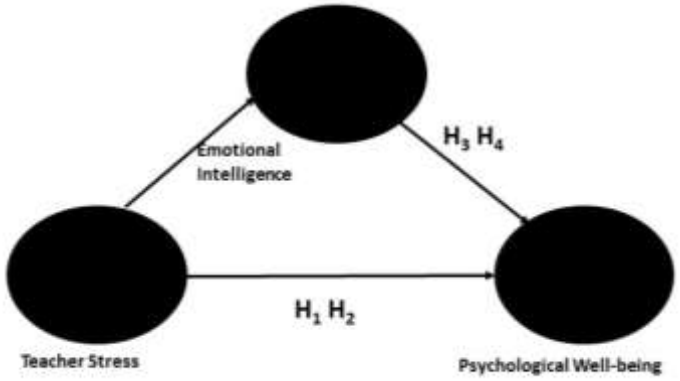

Figure 2: Authors conceptual model

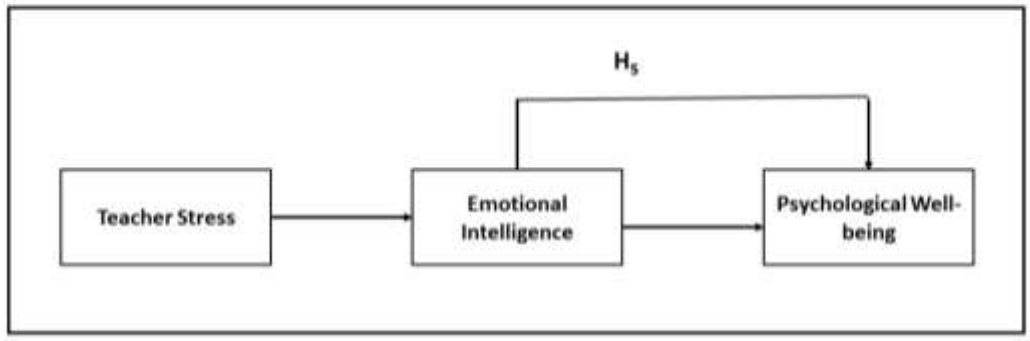

Figure 3. Authors mediation model (Hayes and Preacher, 2014; Metsellaar 2023)

Table 1. Respondent Data

Item	N	Percent
Gender		
Male	288	57.6
Female	212	42.4
Level (Experience in years)		
Beginner Teacher (0-4)	204	40.8
Middle Level Teacher (5-10)	166	33.2
Senior Teachers (11-15)	70	14
Senior Teachers (>15 years)	60	12
Age group (Years)		
20-30	150	30
31-40	180	36
41-50	105	21
>20	65	13

MEASUREMENTS

Teachers' stress was measured via statements from the instrument/scale developed by Fimian and Fastenau (1990). The study assessed three sub-dimensions, discipline and motivation (3 items), emotional manifestations (3 items), and work-related stressors (3 items), to measure teacher stress. Teachers' psychological well-being was measured via statements from the 18-item scale of Ryff and Keyes (1995) and Ryff et al. (2010). The present empirical research considered three sub-dimensions of the instrument Environmental Mastery, Positive Relations with Others and Self-Acceptance and included 3 items each. The emotional intelligence scale was adopted from the instrument of Law et al. (2004). This instrument has four sub-dimensions and 3 items each for each sub-dimension: self-emotional appraisal (SEA); others' emotions appraisal (OEA use of emotion (UOE); and regulation of emotion (ROE items).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sample Design and Data Collection

This empirical research was adopted a quantitative design. To reach the target respondents, purposive sampling was used, and a questionnaire was used to measure 10 reflective constructs with 30 items; this questionnaire was developed and published on Google Forms. The questionnaire link was shared with 700 respondents who were teachers on the Central Board of Secondary Education Schools in and around Hyderabad city, an Indian Metro/. The sample consists of teachers in a variety of categories on the basis of their experience level, diverse cultural and education backgrounds and income levels. A total of 523 responses were received, and 500 valid responses were used for analysis. Twenty-three (23) responses were removed from the study because of misbehavior, and some were incomplete.

DATA ANALYSIS

Exploratory factor analysis was performed via IBM SPSS 29, and confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the gathered data, and hypotheses were tested via SEM analysis via IBM AMOS version 28. To understand the associations among the subdimensions of emotional intelligence, psychological well-being and teacher stress, both the lower- and higher-order constructs were assessed for reliability, validity, and model fit. Many researchers have suggested various methods for defining and evaluating higher-order constructs via IBM SPSS AMOS. Among all the suggested methods, a two-stage approach was followed to analyze the nexus among the constructs. In the first stage, the measurement and structural model of all lower-order constructs are examined. Similarly, in the second stage, after the latent variable scores of the dependent lower-order constructs are computed, the measurement and structural model of the higher-order construct are analyzed.

RESULTS

The valid data were examined for exploratory factor analysis, and the relationships between the variables were examined prior to modeling the lower and higher constructs. The 30 items were divided into 10 components using exploratory factor analysis, which explained 79.75 percent of the total variance—much higher than the suggested threshold of >50%. With a Bartlett's sphericity value <0.001 and a Kaiser–Meyer Olkin adequacy static of 0.835, the sample was deemed adequate for factor analysis.

Item	Factor loading	Cronbach α	CR	AVE
Emotional intelligence				
SEA1	0.96	0.960	0.960	0.889
SEA2	0.94			
SEA3	0.93			
UOE1	0.89	0.911	0.911	0.773
UOE2	0.86			

UOE3	0.88	0.897	0.900	0.751
ROE1	0.89			
ROE2	0.89			
ROE3	0.82			
OEA1	0.77	0.849	0.853	0.660
OEA2	0.80			
OEA3	.0.82			
Psychological well being				
EM1	0.90	0.926	0.927	0.809
EM2	0.92			
EM3 7	0.88			
SELA1	0.75	0.834	0.836	0.629
SELA2	0.89			
SELA3	0.80			
POSR1	0.76	0.792	0.972	0.56
POSR2	0.75			
POSR3	0.75			
Teacher Stress				
WRS1	0.96	0.846	0.859	0.67
WRS2	0.77			
WRS3	0.74			
DIMO1	0.77	0.775	0.792	0.56
DIMO2	0.76			
DIMO3	0.77			
EMAN1	0.71	0.825	0.842	0.64
EMAN2	0.81			
EMAN3	0.80			

SEA: Self-emotion appraisal; UOE: Use of emotion; ROE: Regulation of emotions; OEA: Others emotion appraisal; EM: Environmental Mastery; SELA: Self-acceptance; Positive relations; WRS: Work related stress; EMAN: Emotional manifestations; DIMO: Discipline and motivation

Measurement Model: Analysis of the Lower-Order Constructs

The proposed measurement model comprises ten reflective constructs, as previously mentioned. The goodness-of-fit indices presented excellent fits for the CMIN, and the values of $\chi 2(30, N=500) = 410.711$, df=360, $\chi 2/df = 1.141$, $p<0.001$, RMSEA=0.017, SRMR=0.029, CFI=0.94, NFI=0.957, TLI=0.993 and PClose=1.000 are excellent, as suggested by Kline (2023). The outer loadings for the Items are presented in Table 2. All the outer loadings are >0.7, and the Cronbach's alpha values are >0.70. "Convergent and discriminant validity were measured using composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), and correlations among the latent configurations". According to Table 2, the composite reliability values for the variables (>0.70) are acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1978). Table 3 indicates correlations, all the AVE values are >0.50, and the respective composite reliabilities are >0.70 (Table 2). The discriminant validity of the variables was met when comparing the AVE and cross-correlation factors, which were < the square root of the AVE (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) (Table 3).

Table 3. "Validity analysis (Fornell and Larcker, 1981 Criterion)"

	SEA	UOE	ENVM	ROE	OEA	WRS	EMAN	SELA	DIMO	POSR
SEA	**0.943**									
UOE	0.490***	**0.879**								
ENVM	0.662***	0.504***	**0.899**							
ROE	0.402***	0.324***	0.361***	**0.867**						
OEA	0.385***	0.425***	0.476***	0.328***	**0.812**					
WRS	0.038	-0.082†	-0.034	0.020	0.049	**0.821**				
EMAN	-0.004	-0.047	0.006	0.010	-0.013	0.366***	**0.801**			
SELA	-0.053	0.036	-0.054	-0.023	-0.028	0.056	-0.006	**0.793**		
DIMO	-0.028	-0.092†	-0.042	0.051	0.043	0.446***	0.299***	0.028	**0.748**	
POSR	0.014	0.070	0.047	-0.020	0.000	0.032	-0.046	0.497***	-0.044	**0.748**

SEA: Self-emotion appraisal; UOE: Use of emotion; ROE: Regulation of emotions; OEA: Others emotion appraisal; EM: Environmental Mastery; SELA: Self-acceptance; POSR: Positive relations; WRS: Work related stress; EMAN: Emotional manifestations; DIMO: Discipline and motivation
Correlations were found to be significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$).

The heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratio, a novel technique for evaluating discriminant validity, has been applied. However, when the HTMT ratio was used to evaluate the ratios, all of them fell below the necessary 0.86 threshold (Henseler et al., 2015), indicating the establishment of discriminant validity (Table 4).

Table 4. Heterotrait–Monotrait analysis (discriminant validity)

	SEA	UOE	ENVM	ROE	OEA	WRS	EMAN	SELA	DIMO	POSR
SEA										
UOE	0.460									
ENVM	0.625	0.462								
ROE	0.376	0.294	0.327							
OEA	0.351	0.373	0.420	0.278						
WRS	0.026	0.107	0.054	0.010	0.043					
EMAN	0.006	0.029	0.002	0.016	0.013	0.330				
SELA	0.049	0.027	0.048	0.026	0.025	0.040	0.002			
DIMO	0.020	0.078	0.034	0.052	0.048	0.396	0.273	0.026		
POSR	0.013	0.061	0.038	0.019	0.001	0.009	0.034	0.410	0.033	

SEA: Self-emotion appraisal; UOE: Use of emotion; ROE: Regulation of emotions; OEA: Others emotion appraisal; EM: Environmental Mastery; SELA: Self-acceptance; POSR: Positive relations; WRS: Work related stress; EMAN: Emotional manifestations; DIMO: Discipline and motivation

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LOWER-ORDER STRUCTURAL MODEL

The structural paths were used to investigate the goodness-of-fit of the hypothesized structural model. The results of the model fit support the hypothesized model at the lower-order construct level because it fits the data excellently: "χ2(30, N=500) =410.711, df=360, χ2/df=1.141, p<0.001, RMSEA=0.017, SRMR=0.029, CFI=0.94, NFI=0.957, TLI=0.993 and PClose=1.000". The squared multiple results indicate the following four subdimensions of emotional intelligence SEA: self-emotion appraisal; UOE: use of emotion; ROE: regulation of emotions; OEA: and three subdimensions of teacher stress; WRS: work-related stress; EMAN: emotional manifestations; DIMO: discipline and motivation; other emotion appraisal; and explained 52% of environmental mastery, 20% of self-acceptance and 22% of positive relations.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESES – LOWER-ORDER CONSTRUCTS

The emotional intelligence component of self-emotional appraisal positively and statistically significantly (p<0.001; p<0.05) positively influences the psychological components of environmental mastery, self-acceptance and positive relationships. However, the use of emotion component is statistically significant for both environmental mastery and self-acceptance. However, the relationship is positive but statistically insignificant for positive relationships with others. The regulation of emotion does not influence the psychological well-being of teachers. However, the construct other emotional appraisal (OEA) construct is positive and statistically significant (p<0.001). p<0.050) influencing all the components of psychological well-being. The teacher stress component of workplace relations is statistically significant (p<0.001; p<0.05); however, it negatively impacts the psychological well-being of teachers. Similarly, the teacher stress components emotional manifestations discipline and motivation also negatively impact the psychological well-being of teachers (Table 5).

Table 5: Testing of hypotheses

Relationship	ß	SE	t value	p value	Result
ENVM ← SEA	.334	.031	10.912	***	Supported
SELF ← SEA	.144	.030	4.800	***	Supported
POSR ← SEA	112	.044	25.545	.036	Supported
ENVM ← UOE	.247	.071	3.480	***	Supported
SELF ← UOE	.226	.071	3.183	.031	Supported
POSR ← UOE	.172	.105	1.635	.102	Not supported
ENVM ←ROE	.038	.034	1.121	.262	Not supported
SELF ← ROE	-.007	.034	-.207	.836	Not supported
POSR ← ROE	.131	.050	2.620	.038	Supported
ENVM ← OEA	.250	.053	4.751	***	Supported
SELF ← OEA	.135	.052	2.596	.044	Supported
POSR ← OEA	.237	.077	3.077	.029	Supported
ENVM ←WRS	-.158	.039	-4.051	.***	Supported
SELF ← WRS	-.157	.039	-4.025	.***	Supported
POSR ← WRS	-.187	.058	-3.221	.034	Supported
ENVM ← EMAN	.056	.052	1.083	.279	Not supported
SELF ← EMAN	-.135	.052	-2.596	.032	Supported
POSR ← EMAN	-.179	.077	-2.324	.041	Supported
ENVM ← DIMO	-.111	.048	-2.331	.042	Supported
SELF ← DIMO	.001	.048	.030	.976	Not supported
POSR ← DIMO	-.156	.050	-3.120	.023	Supported

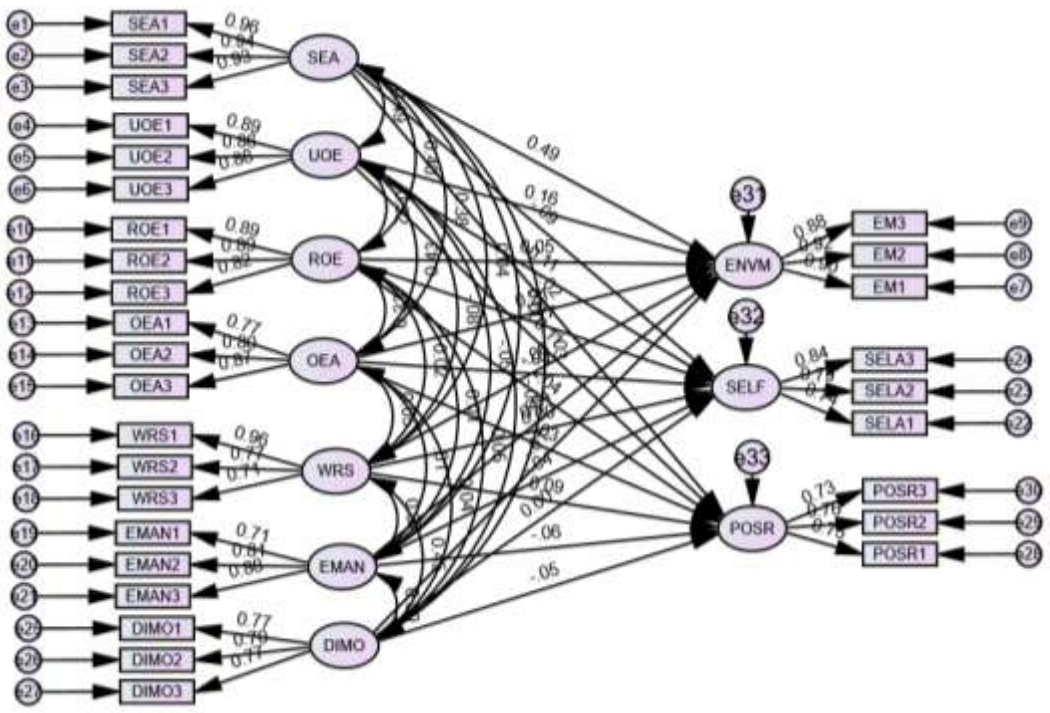

Figure 4: Structural model: Testing of hypotheses

HIGHER-ORDER CONSTRUCTS VALIDATION

The second step involved validating higher-order constructs and evaluating lower-order constructs, with outer loadings of all variables exceeding 0.7 (Table 6). According to (Ullah et al., 2023), the initial step in assessing reflective higher-order constructs involves evaluating multi-collinearity issues concerning the reflective tolerance value of the independent variables, which exceeds 0.20. The study revealed no multi-collinearity issue, as the variance inflation factors, eigenvalues, and condition index values for the independent variables were less than 4, indicating no need for further analysis.

The reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the higher-order constructs were assessed, with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.70, indicating consistency and reliability.

Table 6 shows the reliability and convergent validity, where the discriminant validity results (Fornell & Larcker, 1981 criterion), whereas the HTMT analysis results are presented in Table 7.

Table 6. "Reliability and Convergent validity of the higher-order constructs" Fornell and Larcker, 1981 criterion

Construct	Teacher Stress	Psychological well-being	Emotional Intelligence
Teacher stress	**0.773**		
Psychological well-being	0.010	**0.752**	
Emotional intelligence	0.038	0.091	**0.794**

Table 7. HTMT analysis

Construct	Teacher Stress	Psychological well-being	Emotional Intelligence
Teacher stress			

Psychological well-being	0.012		
Emotional intelligence	0.075	0.057	

Measurement model of higher-order constructs

The higher-order construct has three lower-order constructs: emotional maturity, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. The model fit is excellent, "CMIN or χ^2 =750.768, df=651 χ^2/df=392=1.915, p<0.001, RMSEA=0.047, SRMR=0.038, CFI=0.961, NFI=0.922, TLI=0.57 and PClose 0.885". The squared multiple correlation R^2 = 0.54 indicated that 54% of the variance in psychological well-being was explained by emotional intelligence and teacher stress.

HIGHER-ORDER CONSTRUCTS: STRUCTURAL MODEL ASSESSMENT AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

After validating the measurement model for both higher-order and lower-order constructs, the structural relationships between these constructs examined and validating the initial study hypotheses.

This empirical research explores the multidimensional nature of emotional intelligence through four first-order latent variables: self-emotion appraisal, use of emotion, emotion regulation, and other emotion appraisal. Similarly, psychological well-being is measured by environmental mastery, self-acceptance and positive relationships, whereas teacher stress is measured by work-related stress, emotional manifestations, discipline and motivation.

Path analysis revealed that emotional intelligence significantly predicted psychological well-being (ß=0.149, t=3.686, p<0.05). Similarly, teacher stress negatively influenced the psychological well-being of teachers (ß=-0.115, t=-3.108, p<0.001). Therefore, H_5 is not supported (Table 8).

"Table 8. Testing of hypotheses – Higher-order constructs"

Relationship	ß	SE	t value	p value	Result
H2: Teacher stress → Psychological well-being	-0.115	0.037	-3.108	***	Supported
H4: Emotional intelligence → Psychological well-being	0.149	0.052	2.865	0.031	Supported

MEDIATION ANALYSIS

The research examined the role of emotional intelligence as a mediator in the nexus between teacher stress and psychological well-being. The direct relationship was positive and statistically insignificant, and whereas the indirect relationship was positive., statistically significant, indicating emotional intelligence fully mediated the relationship between teacher stress and psychological well-being, supporting H_5 (Figure 5).

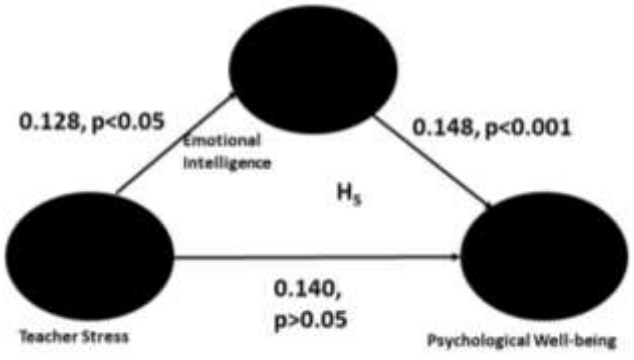

Figure 5: Mediation analysis

.Table 9. "Summary of the mediation analysis"					
"Relationship"	"Direct effect"	"Indirect effect"	"Confidence Interval"	"P value"	"Conclusions"

			"Lower bound"	"Upper bound"		
Teacher Stress → Emotional intelligence → Psychological well being	0.140 (P>0.5)	0.148 (0.000)	0.112	0.318	0.000	Full mediation

DISCUSSION

The study carried out was unique because we modeled higher- and lower-order constructs to assess the influence of teacher stress and emotional intelligence on the psychological well-being of the Central Board of Secondary Education teachers in and around Hyderabad, an Indian Metro. A structured questionnaire published on Google Forms, and a link was provided linked in WhatsApp e-mail to collect the data. The respondents actively participated once the purpose of the study was explained in detail. Although this study followed a cross-sectional approach, the data were collected from several secondary board education school teachers with diverse cultures and educational and economic backgrounds to avoid sample bias. The study reported a negative influence of teacher stress on the psychological well-being of the central board of secondary education teachers. Poormahmood et al. (2017) examined the associations among psychological well-being, perceived occupational stress and happiness among primary school teachers in Iran. The authors reported a significant negative correlation between occupational stress and overall psychological well-being, life satisfaction, spirituality, joy and optimism, individual development and positive relationships with others, and autonomy. Our results are in line with the authors' findings, as we also reported significant negative correlations of teacher stress with the psychological well-being components of positive relationships with others, environmental mastery and self-acceptance. The authors used data from the 2016 Stockholm School Survey and Teacher Survey to examine the relationships between teacher-reported stress, fatigue, and depressed mood in schools and student satisfaction and perceived teacher caring. One study revealed a negative correlation among teacher stress, psychological well-being, depressed mood and among students' satisfaction and perceived teacher caring, despite controlling for sociodemographic factors (Ramberg et al., 2020). . These results concur with the findings of our study. In another study, the authors investigated teacher stress, efficacy, and school connectedness, examining the validity of three single-item measures and their correlations with the Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire. Kamboj and Gard (2021) explored the impact of intrinsic factors like EI and resilient character traits on the psychological well-being of schoolteachers, emphasizing their mediating role. The study revealed a significant correlation among teaching efficacy and school connectedness, with teacher stress increasing by 20% from October to June, suggesting potential interventions for teacher wellness. We have presented similar results for teacher stress and well-being.

The authors analyzed 1316 university teachers in Spain, focusing on stress perception, burnout syndrome dimensions, emotional intelligence, and nonverbal communication, and compared their experiences. The study utilized various measurement instruments, including the Perceived Stress Scale, Maslach Burnout Inventory, Trait Meta-Mood Scale, and Nonverbal Immediacy Scale. The structural equation model results revealed that stress positively impacts emotional exhaustion and personal fulfillment but negatively affects emotional clarity and repair. Emotional intelligence and body language can help prevent burnout syndrome and ensure university teachers' mental well-being (Puertas-Molero et al., 2018). Another study using partial least-structural equation modeling investigated the relationship between student teachers' personal resources and their ability to mitigate practicum stress and involved 200 selected teachers from Sabah, Malaysia. The study revealed that emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and well-being effectively explain resilience but struggle with practicum stress. Our results are in line with those reported by previous authors, who reported that emotional intelligence significantly enhances teachers' psychological well-being (Ngui & Lay (2020)). The authors examined the link between emotional abilities and burnout syndrome among 200 schoolteachers aged 22--64 years via a SEM framework. The study revealed that mood clarity and emotional repair significantly impact burnout, whereas attention does not predict teacher burnout. Emotional abilities are linked to lower work-related stress, but negative affect hinders this (Schoeps et al., 2021). The empirical study investigated the relationships among teachers' emotional intelligence, social support, and burnout levels, hypothesizing that emotional intelligence and perceived social support contribute to low burnout levels. Structural equation modeling analysis revealed a strong association between teachers' emotional intelligence and burnout, with internal social support being more effective than external context-based support. The empirical data partially support the mediation hypothesis,

revealing a correlation between teachers' emotional competence and their school burnout experience (Fiorilli et al., 2019). Our results concur with the authors' findings in relation to psychological well-being and emotional intelligence.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Investigating a causal relationship among the studied variables is not the sole focus of the research. However, to improve teachers' emotional and psychological integration at work, this study makes useful recommendations for enhancing their persistent and emotionally intelligent behavior. It recognizes how important it is for school administrators and education policymakers to support teachers' psychological well-being to enhance their effectiveness and performance. Additionally, leadership development, stress management, and cooperation seemed to be beneficial factors in increasing teachers' emotional intelligence and tenacity. The psychological welfare of schoolteachers is rarely a priority in studies on school management. The study explores the influence of intrinsic factors on psychological well-being.—which are not causally tied to any psychological variables and are not well conceptualized in Indian studies—is highlighted in this study. As such, it makes a noteworthy contribution to the literature on educational management and leadership by offering a glimpse into the minds of educators from CBSE schoolteachers.

The findings of this study indicate that to lessen teachers' psychological load, it is critical to assist them in developing their teaching competency and efficacy as well as providing them with the skills necessary to manage workplace pressures. Furthermore, we propose that at the program level, favorable work environments for educators and children must be established. This study explores the factors influencing teachers' psychological well-being among Indian respondents from a collectivistic Eastern culture and contributes to the existing literature

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, emotional intelligence programs should be developed in the educational setting as a way to reduce burnout when faced with unfavorable high school academic outcomes, including failing or repeating a year. In the context of improving the psychological aspects of sustainable development, these findings create new avenues for research and interventions aimed at boosting workers' personal resources in the dynamic 21st-century environment by encouraging optimism and hope, which are made possible by emotional intelligence. EI training prevents teacher burnout by enhancing classroom management skills and is recommended as a systemic component of professional development for teachers throughout their careers. The study revealed that self-focused dimensions of emotional intelligence (EI) are crucial predictors of subjective happiness in Spanish teachers, beyond stress. This knowledge could enhance professional development training for well-being prevention.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The study was a cross-sectional, convenience sampling-based empirical study, resulting in results that may not be generalizable due to the single point of collection. However, the sample size was very large, and samples were collected from various schools around Hyderabad. Furthermore, the data are gathered from different cultures and educational and income backgrounds. Thus, the results can provide insight for researchers to carry out further studies with large datasets from several Indian cities. Longitudinal studies with large sample sizes are beneficial for laying further theoretical foundations for dissecting the role of teacher stress and emotional intelligence in teachers' mental health and psychological well-being.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data set generated through this research is available as a supplementary file

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COMPETING INTERESTS

"The authors declare no competing interests. This study is author independent research without institution help or financial assistance"

FUNDING

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CLINICAL TRIAL NUMBER

Clinical Trial Number: Not applicable

CONSENT TO PUBLISH

Consent to publish declaration: Not applicable

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Consent to participate declaration: Not applicable

ETHICS DECLARATION

"Ethical review and approval were exempted vide Letter No IRC/14/2024 from The Secretary, Institute Research Committee, dated 25 July 2024. The study was conducted in accordance with the Helsinki Declaration as revised in 2013, and the authors followed the following steps: • Informed consent from participants. • The purpose of the survey is clearly explained. • The participants were fully informed about the purpose of the survey. They clearly understand how their data would be used and the extent of their involvement. This allowed the participants to agree and voluntarily participate and provide honest feedback."

"INFORMED CONSENT"

Participants provided written informed consent for the empirical research, which was collected through a survey questionnaire. The study's background, purpose, proposed activities, benefits, risks, discomfort, and confidentiality of records were explained to all participants. Participants were informed about the research's aim, anonymity of data, and consent was obtained. Participation was voluntary, without compensation, and participants were free to withdraw at any time.

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