

THE ASCENDENCY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON ACADEMIC TEACHING STAFF STRESS WITH THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

S. Suganya Bharathi¹, A. Celina¹

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¹ Faculty of Management, SRM
Institute of Science and Technology,
Kattankulathur, Chengalpattu District,
Tamil Nadu, India

Corresponding Author:
S. Suganya Bharathi

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: According to the Workplace Health Reports 2023, around 76% of employees worldwide have experienced moderate-to-high stress levels. Around 26% of Indians are stressed due to their current work environment with long working hours, lack of job security, low wages, and growing competition. It is often believed that teaching is an extremely difficult job, in particular, academic staff experience a lot of stress due to several stressors. Emotional intelligence is a set of non-cognitive abilities, to effectively handle environmental demands and stresses. The current investigation seeks to project the effect of psychological capital as a mediator linking emotional intelligence (EI) and occupational stress to academic teaching faculties in Chennai City.

Research Methodology: The proposed study used a questionnaire prepared, and distributed among college faculties of various levels of 325 respondents in Chennai city.

Findings: The research results indicate that while psychological capital acts as a mediating factor in the association between EI and occupational stress, EI itself has a favorable impact on both psychological capital and occupational stress.

Research Limitations: We suggest delving further into this in subsequent research to ascertain the degree to which the findings may be generalized outside the study population. Secondly, we neglected to examine the influence of additional work-related stressors on the degree of work-related stress.

Practical/Social Implications: The investigation's implications can be used by top management authorities of private colleges and universities to concentrate on the enhancement of EI and how it reduces the workplace stress of teaching faculties with the mediating variable as psychological capital, which improves the productivity of the employees.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Emotional Intelligence, Academic teaching faculties, Psychological Capital, Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling

1. INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress, also known as work stress is an intellectual and habitual phenomenon that results from a variety of internal and external circumstances. Job stress can be defined as expected or missed opportunities, objective-directed behaviour, and desires leading to significant and uncertain outcomes. Work stress is the feeling that you are deviating from your normal or

self-directed behavior in the workplace. Occupational stress is a detrimental condition brought on by a lack of effective coping mechanisms for dealing with pressures at work, negatively affects both physical and emotional health, and is poorly appreciated. This suggests that people must first adversely perceive a stressor before they start exhibiting stress symptoms, and they must subsequently demonstrate poor coping skills. Put in another perspective, there are unlikely to be any detrimental impacts on one's mental or physical wellness if a source of stress is perceived as a challenge to conquer rather than a risk to avoid. The phrase describes the way someone perceives a disparity or inadequacy amid the standards or obligations they confront at work and their ability to do those tasks. Significant professional stress is regularly reported by both seasoned academics and those who are just beginning out in their professions (Singh et al., 2019; Munro and Jackson, 2020). The stress levels of young female academics are likewise notably high (Watts and Robertson, 2011; Singh et al., 2020). Moreover, it has been documented that employees making the transfer from the business world to academia have unique pressures related to shifts in cultural identity and organizational objectives, as well as conflicts related to becoming teachers and in addition to starting a research career (Logan et al., 2016).

The academic environment has a variety of work stressors. According to the Job Demand-Control model (JDC), personnel experiencing an unacceptable measure of job wellness frequently hold jobs with high demands, a limited amount of influence over their workplace, and a feeling of loneliness (Maes and Van Der Doef, 1999). Besides variables that trigger workplace stress in universities include a growing culture of managerialism (Shin and Jung, 2014), unrealistic workloads with reduced staffing, a loss of decision-making authority, lengthy hours of work, a lack of prominence in the academic hierarchy, unfit financial compensation (Boyd et al., 2008), and an erosion in a work-life equilibrium as stress from work and demand patterns progress (Rajendran et al., 2017) are additional features which promote to fatigue at the desk.

Workplace anxiety may be caused by an environment in which the number of students is quickly increasing (Watts and Robertson, 2011), placing stress on the institution's meagre budget and resourcefulness (Winefield et al., 2001). Effort-reward equilibrium (De Jonge et al., 2005) is also crucial, as it reduces commitment and raises the threat of negative health, both physical and emotional (Mark and Smith, 2012) when high levels of effort are not followed by rewards or recognition. University staff frequently cite these sources of occupational stress (Kinman, 2019). Reduced job security and a more casualized workforce are two additional environmental variables that might lead to occupational stress (Halcomb et al., 2010; Barrett, 2004).

It has been shown that EI is substantially connected, coupled with an array of handy organizational accomplishments, notably enhanced worker efficiency, job tranquillity, civic engagement in business practices, and organizational commitment (Ismail et al., 2010). To work with people in a pleasant and open environment in pursuit of shared goals, one must manage their emotions and appropriately communicate them. If the employer has sentiments, the employees will too (Gunu, 2014) as demonstrated. Therefore, if the manager is upbeat and confident, the employees will probably reflect these emotions and be imaginative, adaptable, tolerant, courteous, and caring (Shehu, 2019). In today's language, the term "job stress" is often used. Stress at work appears to be the primary factor in all organizations that have low productivity (Ekienabor, 2019). There is proof that EI affects how satisfied representatives are with their jobs. Being aware of one's interpersonal feelings may aid in the control of opposing emotions and feelings, which will improve one's performance in their line of work and set the stage for job satisfaction (Vijayan, 2018).

Stress is a propensity that personnel endure when they are striving to attain benchmarks and are placed under pressure. Being stressed at gigs is an acute issue that hits every facet of the economy and all sorts of labor. In the last 20 years, a great deal of studies such as (Kasey Meeks

et al., 2019; Omneya Eid Amin Hussain et al., 2021; Elham Charoghchian Khorasani et al., 2023) have been conducted on the levels of workplace anxiety experienced by administrators in schools and universities. Workplace stress is becoming more noticeable and contributes to low employee morale. The COVID-19 epidemic has resulted in significant changes to the performance of organizational personnel (Alqudah and Yusof, 2024). Technological advancements, competitive lifestyles, and other societal issues are among the causes of work-related stress (Nisar and Rasheed, 2020). Workplace stress is a two-edged blade that has the potential to be both beneficial and harmful. It may be beneficial when it encourages or enables individuals to work harder and do better. It enables people to investigate possibilities and boosts productivity at work (Khuong and Yen, 2016). For employees to overcome stress, they require certain forms of motivation as well as work-related stress-reduction techniques. There is a growing body of studies suggesting that emotional intelligence might lower work-related stress in managers and staff alike. It has been widely agreed that the anxiety teachers experience is a testimony to the hardships they endure. To be able to wrestle with pressure, professionals ought to get particular sorts of grants and practice stress-reduction techniques. Emotional literacy, according to numerous academia, may assist administrators at all levels of labor to seem less stressed out at work. Thus, the issue that follows is the research's foremost problem:

1. To what extent might EI disrupt the occupational stress that private college and university teaching personnel encounter?
2. In what ways could psychological capital modify the connection between stress at work and EI?

1. 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nishad Nawaz. et.al (2024) many changes have been introduced into the education system by the Union Government's New Education Policy 2020 of India, which is considered a game changer. The influence of the Covid-19 epidemic and this initiative led to several adjustments in the learning system. In this context, it is essential to understand the stress and emotional state of the teaching fraternity. This study examines the relationship between workplace spirituality, emotional intelligence, and occupational stress. The study's conclusions suggest that workplace spirituality and emotional intelligence predict occupational stress in the teaching profession. Workplace spirituality has a negligible and modest mediating influence between emotional intelligence and professional stress. On the other hand, low stress levels are found to be predicted with moderate emotional intelligence and high spirituality.

Sahana Achyutha and Lakshmi Suneetha's (2024) study aims to improve knowledge of the connections among faculty members' performance, emotional states, and stress levels. Emotional intelligence is one of the most significant aspects affecting faculty members' effectiveness as instructors and researchers. the study is descriptive, and data was gathered using a questionnaire approach. Emotional intelligence can mitigate the impact of stress on job performance. People with high EQ could find it easier to cope with stress, which could decrease the negative effects on their performance. There are complex and multifaceted relationships between work performance, stress, emotional intelligence, and work satisfaction. College instructors in India may have more job satisfaction, less stress, and improved emotional intelligence if these aspects are recognized and taken care of.

Zakkia Uzair and Amiya Bhaumik (2023) have researched to examine the impact of occupational stress and emotional intelligence on teacher's job performance. Due to COVID-19, which influenced teacher's performance, educational systems all over the world have seen rapid changes that have altered teachers' emotional intelligence. A two-stage SEM approach was used to assess the model. The results showed that there was a substantial negative relationship between stress

and EI and a significant positive association between EI and work performance. The findings also indicate a slight but favorable correlation between work performance and stress.

Eid Amin Hussain et al (2021) has researched to explore how EI affects stress levels at all three levels of administration staff in the Al Ajami Educational Administration. This research intends to figure out how EI contributes to work-related anxiety and to alleviate that stress. According to this study, there is a clear association between EI and decreased stress at work.

Giusy Danila Valenti et al (2021) has engaged in research among the general public on the relationship between occupational stress and EI, as well as the mediation impact of social support among everyday individuals during the COVID-19 epidemic. The current inquiry strives to gauge the association between occupational stress and employment-related illness (EI) as well as the link between occupational stress and EI that is mediated by three social support components during the pandemic. The results of the research show that EI directly affected psychological consequences and indirectly affected almost every facet of work-related stress. Family and friend support on a social level had a major mediating role.

Zhun Gong et al (2019) contributed to examining the link between emotional intelligence, job burnout, and job performance with the mediating effect of psychological capital. The study surveyed employees of various enterprises through questionnaires. The results revealed that employees' EI has a positive effect on psychological capital and job performance and it is correlating negatively with job burnout.

Ainize Sarrionandia et al (2018) contributed to research on the link between emotional competency and occupational stress, using resilience as a mediator, with undergraduate learners from two American higher education institutions and the Basque Country autonomous community in northern Spain. Research results demonstrated that, in both American and Basque undergraduate students, EI had a detrimental impact on the measurement of experienced stress through the mediating variable resilience. The resultant results imply that perceived stress is lower among college students who exhibit more EI and resilience. Enhancing resilience and EI may assist students avoid feeling stressed out while attending college.

Previous studies have shown how important is to know about the emotional status and stress among the teaching members, especially after COVID-19. In addition to imparting knowledge, teachers have a bright impact on kid's bright futures. Numerous studies with a strong research foundation claimed that occupation stress was the reason why new teachers quit (**Rajendran et al., 2020; Redin and Erro-Garces, 2020; McCarthy, 2019**). Teachers experience long-term, unhealthy stress at work, which has detrimental effects on their ability to perform and deliver their work. (**Kundi et al., 2021**) contend that there is a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stress. consequently, investigating emotional intelligence with professional stress is crucial. Also, most of the studies have focused on examining the relationship between occupational stress and job performance or with EI and job performance very limited studies have concentrated on examining the relationship between EI and occupational stress. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate how emotional intelligence might help teachers feel less stressed about their jobs with the mediating effect of psychological capital.

1. 1. 1. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)/ EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT (EQ)

Given the debut authoritative description of EI in 1990, multiple notions have been proposed, but there is still a lack of consensus on the term. Salovey presented the earliest factual statement. "Having the capacity to gauge the emotions of oneself or others, prioritize among them, and use such knowledge to steer one's thought process and activity" is one phrase that describes EI (**Mayer, 1990**). In 1997, they stipulated an enhanced version of the aforementioned explanation along with an approach consisting of four branches: regulation, comprehending, facilitat-

ing, and feeling perception (Mayer et al., 2004; Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

The hypothesis of emotional quotient was initially given by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990. Theorists have developed several unique EI models in the intervening ten years, including Salovey and Mayer's extensions of their theory. The idea put out by Mayer, Salovey, and Salovey in 1990 EI was framed inside an intelligence model. Emotional acumen (EI) was tied to the psychology of personality by Reuven Bar-On (1988), who specifically employed a psychological model. The theory of performance is how EI is articulated in Goleman's model (Goleman, 1998b). The workplace and organizational success may be immediately impacted by an EI-based theory of performance, especially when it comes to forecasting excellence in all job categories, from sales to leadership roles. However, there are several core concepts that all of these EI models share. Being capable of comprehending and governing a combination of personal and other emotions among others is the most fundamental definition of emotional intelligence. This relatively simplified model suggests the four key EI categories of social consciousness, relationship supervision, conscience, and self-administration.

This study rests on Goleman's basic four EI domains of self-awareness, social abilities, drive, and self-control. The ability to focus on your own emotions, and thoughts and to handle and influence other emotions is important in teamwork. Enhancing our drive to commit to our goals, readiness to act on opportunities, as well as optimism and resilience are significant in the workplace. EI is an important predictor of subjective well-being, social support, job performance, and relationships between colleagues. EI can be improved through training programs and workshops conducted regularly. In contemporary research, the term stress and emotional intelligence are sometimes used interchangeably; nevertheless, emotional intelligence emphasizes the significance of emotional competencies for an individual's personal, social, and interpersonal success (Dambean and Gabor, 2021).

1. 1. 2. PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

With the rising popularity of positive psychology as a recent notation of study and its applications to the management and domains of organizational behavior, a new theoretical idea. The idea of psychological capital has been advanced. Psychological capital, according to Luthans, is an all-inclusive, core intellectual component of the person, which is made up of the psychological condition that meets the criteria for ideal organizational behavior, which is primarily comprised of four traits. The critical aspects of psychology that go beyond financial, social, and human capital are the four positive psychological traits of self-assurance, optimism, faith, and perseverance. People can perform with better efficacy when they are in these four measurable and recognized mental states (Youssef and Luthans, 2007). Since Cognitive abilities are in a good situation, promote positive behavior and attitude of an individual. Research studies have shifted their attention to psychological capital, which is increasingly related to an individual's positive attitude and behavior.

Psychological Capital increases positive attitudes and decreases negative attitudes among employees in the workplace (Karakus and Demir, 2015; Tuzun et al., 2014). Previous research illustrated that psychological capital develops individuals' positive attitudes more easily and also prevents them from developing negative attitudes. According to Karakus and Demir's, 2015 study, there is a positive association between psychological capital and positive attitudes like motivation, work satisfaction, and organizational commitment. According to related studies, psychological capital is negatively correlated with negative attitudes including job stress (Bradley, 2014), burnout (Wang et al., 2012; Ocak and Guler, 2017), and anxiety (Liu et al., 2013).

1. 1. 3. OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

According to Johnson et al. 2005, most instructors view teaching as a very demanding profession. Keeping classroom discipline, dealing with unmotivated pupils, managing time constraints, a hard workload, and a lack of incentives are only a few of the stressful aspects of the teaching profession (Kokkinos, 2007; Mearns and Cain, 2003). According to Kyriacou (2001), each teacher will have different stressors that they deal with depending on how their personality, values, talents, and environment interact with one another.

The main reasons for teachers' work anxiety can be divided into two categories: individual differences that affect teachers' susceptibility to stress (such as age and gender), and administrative variables connected to the management of academic institutions and factors directly related to the traits common to the teaching profession, notably workload, disparities in learning environments, and disputes over discipline (Polychroni et al., 2006). According to some research, stress among college faculties may be predicted by factors including the propensity to feel negative emotions, low self-esteem, a lack of optimism, and a low level of confidence in oneself. In addition to the aforementioned, several research also emphasize the connection between some beneficial characteristics, such as individual variations and stress regulation mechanisms.

1. 2. AIM OF THE STUDY

The initial and secondary goals of this study have their roots in earlier studies on EI and occupational stress. To close the research gap concerning earlier studies, the primary goal is to identify the impact of emotional intelligence on occupational stress of teaching staff working in universities with the mediating effect of psychological capital. Additionally, a deeper comprehension of these linkages might provide a useful application related to stress reduction. Figure 1 depicts the model with occupation stress as the outcome/response variable, psychological capital as the mediating variable, and EI as the predictor variable.

The study hypothesis was formulated as:

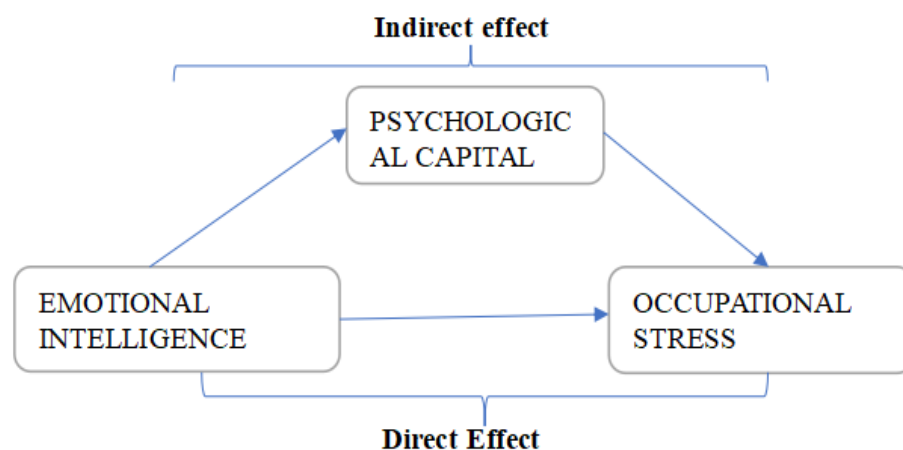
H1: Emotional Intelligence has a significant impact on Psychological Capital.

H2: Psychological Capital has a significant impact on Occupational Stress.

H3: Emotional Intelligence has a significant impact on Occupational Stress.

H4: The impact of EI on Occupational Stress is influenced by psychological capital. In general, EI should give rise to higher psychological capital, which in turn leads to low occupational stress (high EI → high psychological capital → low job stress).

Figure 1: Conjectured Framework



Source: Author's Proposed Model

1. 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. 3. 1. RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Achyutha & Suneetha (2024), leveraging a quantitative investigation approach, a descriptive inquiry structure was put forth.

1. 3. 2. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

According to Achyutha & Suneetha (2024), the attendees of the research study were chosen using a convenience sample technique. This implies that the picking of those attending is based on their suitability and accessibility for the study. In March 2023, the questionnaire was distributed online to respondents who were found in and around Chennai. 385 responses in total were supplied by more than 20 teaching-affiliated institutions in the cities around Chennai.

1. 3. 3. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

According to Nishad Nawaz et al., (2024), a structured questionnaire administered was used to collect samples from the population of teaching faculty members employed by private colleges and universities.

1. 3. 4. DATA COLLECTION

A total of 385 samples were gathered from private colleges and institutions in and around Chennai, of which 325 were determined to be legitimate. There are four parts to the questionnaire. Inquiries concerning the respondents' personal information, including gender, family status, education, job title, and work history, are asked in the first part.

1. 3. 5. DEPENDANT VARIABLE

The second section lists twelve occupational stresses, such as role stagnation, task overload, and work-family conflict. Adams et al. (1996) developed a 4-item work-family conflict scale to measure respondents' levels of conflict between work and family life and its effects. The Pareek and Purohit (2010) scale was used to quantify the 8-item task overload and role stagnation.

1. 3. 6. INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

The final section included nine EI elements, such as self-awareness, motivation, social skills, and self-regulation, all based on the widely used EI framework. The two self-emotion evaluation measuring items were from (Groves et al., 2008) and (Davies et al., 1998). The two measuring items taken from (Davies et al., 1998), (Wong and Law, 2002), and (Law et al., 2004) were used to assess the emotions of others. (Davies et al., 1998), (Law et al., 2004), (Ravi-chandran et al., 2011), (Wong and Law, 2002), and (Jung and Yoon, 2012) were the sources of the three emotion measuring items used in this study. The two items included in the control of emotion measurement were taken from (Groves et al., 2008), (Davies et al., 1998), (Law et al., 2004), and (Wong and Law, 2002). Those who scored highly on EI tests said they could control their feelings and actions when working for their employers.

1. 3. 7. MEDIATING VARIABLE

Six PCQ (Psychological Capital Questionnaire) items made up of two components - self-efficacy and resilience of (Youssef and Luthans, 2007) - make up the fourth segment.

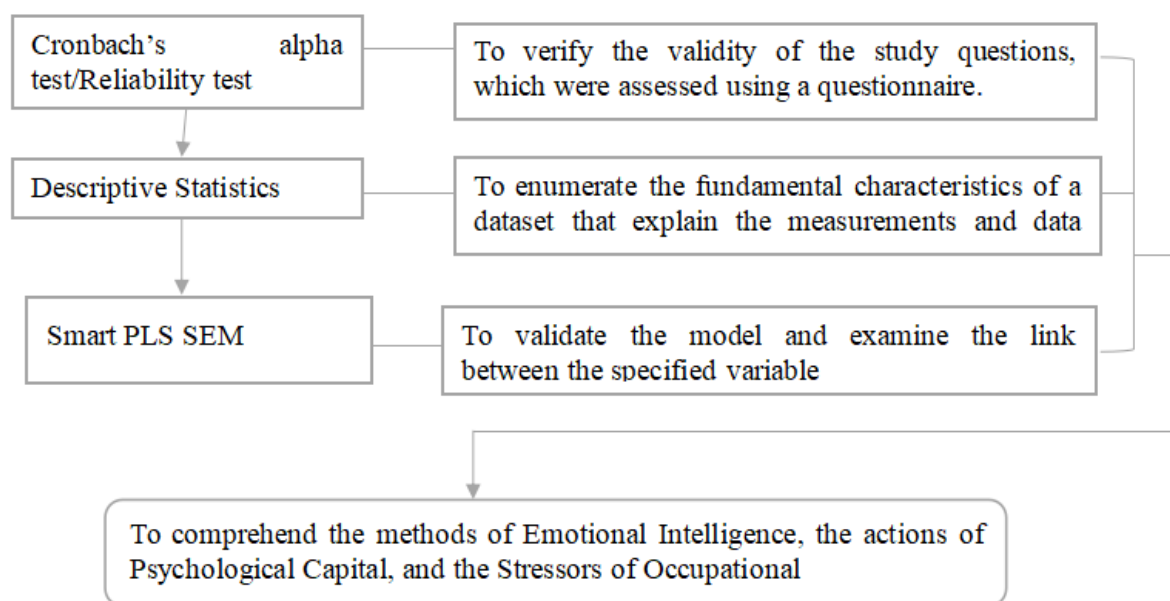
All item responses were anchored on a five-point scale. With the following options: strongly

disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5), a Likert scale was employed to collect data on self-evaluation.

1. 3. 8. ANALYSIS OF DATA

325 valid replies in total (84.67%) were gathered and used for analysis. The remaining questionnaires weren't used since they didn't meet the requirements (missing data, errors, etc.). Statistical computing standards state that the absolute sample size for the lowest SEM model should be 250 instances, according to (Christopher Westland, 2010). Our sample size of 325 questionnaires therefore satisfies the necessary minimal requirement for sampling acceptability. It was initially decided to use Cronbach's alpha test to evaluate the questionnaire's dependability. The research sample and its measurements were then analyzed using descriptive statistics. Lastly, utilizing smart PLS structural equation modelling, hypotheses were investigated and model fit was calculated. The bootstrap approach, which the SMART PLS 4 program offers (with 5000 trials and a confidence interval of 95%), was used. The statistical significance of several PLS-SEM outcomes, including path coefficients, Cronbach's alpha, Heterotrait-Monotrait matrix (HTMT)/discriminant validity, and R^2 values, is tested using this approach. Figure 2. displays the steps in the data analysis process.

Figure 2: Process of Data Analysis



Source: Author's Compilation

2. RESULTS

2. 1. CRONBACH'S ALPHA TEST

In parts two, three, and four of the questionnaires, Cronbach's alpha tests were used to assess the study instrument's reliability. The range of Cronbach's alpha coefficients for occupational stresses is 0.850 to 0.715. The coefficients for psychological capital vary from 0.720 to 0.855, whereas the coefficients for EI range from 0.710 to 0.812. The questionnaire is internally consistent and trustworthy since all coefficients are larger than 0.7 (George and Mallery, 2003).

2. 2. DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1 displays the respondents' demographic information. Overall, there were 166 women and 159 men, or 48.9% and 51.1%, respectively. 198 respondents had postgraduate degrees and

127 had doctorates out of the 325 total respondents. All the respondents were separated into three categories: Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor in terms of designated role. A total of 244 teaching faculties were married and the rest 81 faculties were unmarried. Additionally, their degrees of work experience were divided into four groups: a total of 98 faculties have work experience of 1-3 years which is 30.2%, 27 faculties have experience of 4-6 years which is 8.3%, 66 faculties have work experience of 7-10 years which is 20.3% and 134 faculty, or 41.2% of participants, had more than 10 years of experience.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the study population

Demographic Profile	Categories	Total (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender identity	Male	159	48.92%
	Female	166	51.13%
Family Status	Married	244	75.18%
	Unmarried	81	24.93%
Education	Post Graduate	198	60.95%
	Doctorate	127	39.16%
Designation	Assistant Professor	257	79.19%
	Associate Professor	57	15.71%
	Professor	17	5.25%
Professional Experience	1-3 years	98	30.22%
	4-6 years	27	8.36%
	7-10 years	66	20.30%
	Above 10 years	134	41.25%

Source: Author's calculation

2. 3. STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING

Testing measurement model: Statistical analysis was performed using Smart PLS 4 to ascertain the intersection connecting the given variables. To determine the effectiveness and validate the modelling procedures, we conducted two partial square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) tests: (a) the measurement model test and (b) the structural equation model test. When analyzing data using structural equation modelling (SEM), PLS-SEM is an alternative to the more conventionally employed covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) (Joseph Hair & Abdullah Alamer, 2022). In the beginning, we analyzed the measurement model used in (Lowry et al., 2014) computation of convergent validity. (Hair et al., 2014a) evaluated deleting the items that did not exceed the recommended threshold level after looking at the outer loadings of all latent variables. Following should be the recommendations for the composite reliability and convergent validity test, both of which should have values above 0.5 ($AVE > 0.5$, Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.5$, and $CR > 0.5$) (Hair et al., 2022).

A relevance testing method suggested by (Hair et al., 2014a) suggests that items with loadings below the predefined levels should be considered for deletion if doing so will boost the reliability over the given criteria. The authors authorised the removal of some of the things since causation flows from the construct to the objects and all of the components of a reflective construct are interchangeable. Considering the above, the unwanted elements were eliminated during the trimming process. The reliability results following the trimming operation are displayed in Table 2.

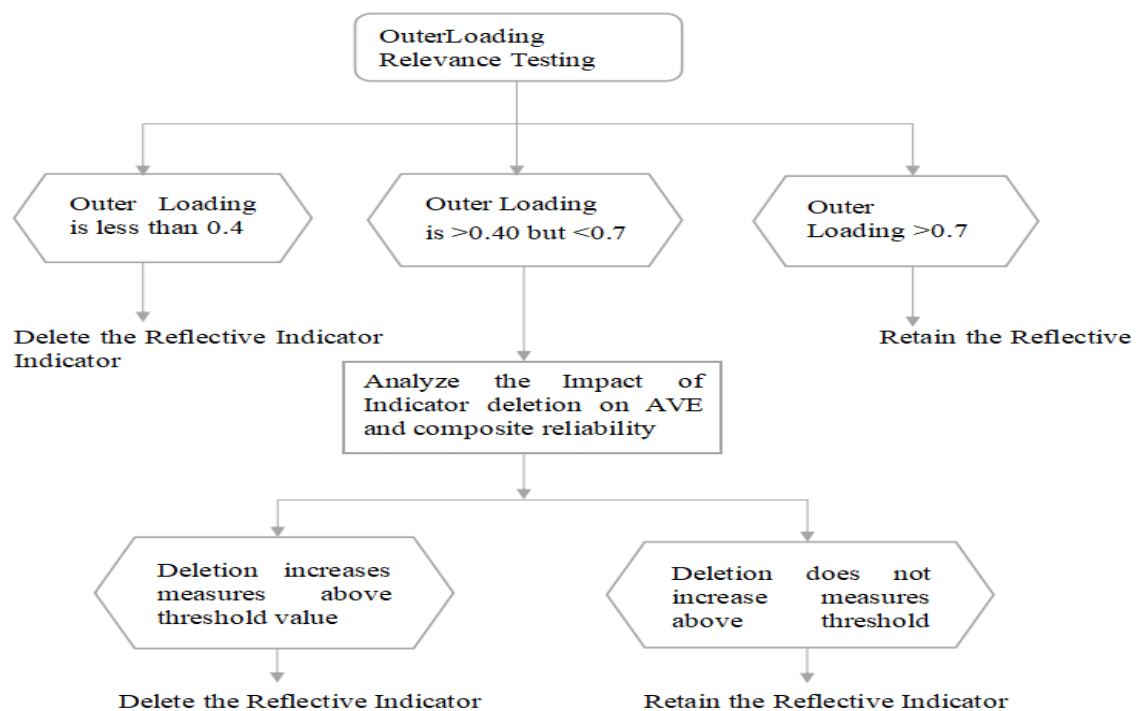
Table 2. Reliability and Validity Test

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Alpha	Average variance extracted	Composite reliability
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)	EI3.A	0.743	0.752	0.576	0.829
	EI3.B	0.641			
	EI3.C	0.784			
	EI4.A	0.742			
	EI4.B	0.641			
	EI4.C	0.629			
OCCUPATIONAL STRESS	OS1.A	0.894	0.918	0.642	0.934
	OS1.B	0.795			
	OS1.C	0.769			
	OS1.D	0.613			
	OS2.A	0.920			
	OS2.B	0.744			
	OS2.C	0.796			
	OS2.D	0.838			
PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL	PC2.A	0.666	0.758	0.603	0.774
	PC2.B	0.796			
	PC2.C	0.620			

Source: Author's calculation

Table 2. When the indications with low loadings in the constructions were removed, this section gives the reliability measurements. Following the elimination procedure, the AVE, CR, and Cronbach's Alpha all exceeded the cutoff. A total of 10 items (OS3.A, OS3.B, OS3.C, OS3.D, PC1.A, PC1.B, PC1.C, EI1.A, EI1.B, EI1.C) were dropped in the trimming stage. All other items were retained as they met the threshold requirement after the trimming process.

Figure 3: Indicator loading relevance testing



Source: Author's calculation

Since composite reliability indicates that all indicator loadings in the population are equal and compatible with the core principles of PLS-SEM, it is seen to be a more trustworthy indication of internal consistency.

2. 3. 1. CONVERGENT VALIDITY AND DISCRIMINANT VALIDITY

Average Variance Explained (AVE) was used to evaluate the constructs' convergent validity. As was previously mentioned, the AVE is a widely used metric to evaluate convergent validity. A criterion of 0.5 or above indicates that the particular notion accounts for more than half of the variation, per Hair et al. (2014b). Following the trimming procedure, all five of the amended model's constructs were greater than 0.5, as seen in Table 2. Consequently, convergence validity was shown to exist.

Through analysis of the Cross loadings and the Fornell-Lacker criteria, discriminant validity was proven. Discriminant validity is established when each idea loads on itself more strongly than on other conceptions. Every item loads more heavily on its respective construct than on other constructs, as seen by the indicator item cross-loadings matrix.

As further evidence of the constructs' discriminant validity, the Fornell-Lacker Criterion matrix in Table.3 shows that all square roots of the AVE of the latent variables indicate the maximum in either column or row.

Table 3: Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	EI	PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL	OCCUPATIONAL STRESS
EI	0.8020		
PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL	0.5749	0.8282	
OCCUPATIONAL STRESS	0.5722	0.4772	0.801

Note: The square root of AVE values is shown on the diagonal and printed in italics; non-diagonal elements are the latent variable correlations (LVC)

Source: Author`s calculation

Raudenbush and Bryk (2002), state that multicollinearity and normality were checked in the data. The collinearity is determined by the variance inflation factor (VIF) value. The research indicates that the VIF number has to be smaller than three or five (Henseler et al., 2015).

The model's collinearity concerns are explained by the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), which was derived using Smart PLS. When the VIF value for each item is less than 3, as shown in Table 4, this model exhibits no collinearity problems.

Table 4: Discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

	Variance Inflation Factor
EI3.A	1.271
EI3.B	1.827
EI3.C	1.320
EI4.A	1.494
E14.B	1.250
EI4.C	1.321
OC1.A	1.092
OC1.B	1.097
OC1.C	1.014
OC1.D	1.872
OC2.A	1.643
OC2.B	1.316
OC2.C	1.070
OC2.D	1.723
PC1.A	1.876
PC1.B	1.780
PC1.C	1.346

Source: Author`s calculation

Examining the model fit indices is the next step in doing an inner model analysis. According to the study, the data match nicely when the SRMR value is 0. On the other hand, if the SRMR is less than 0.05, the fit is deemed adequate (Byrne, 2013). SRMR values of 0.06 or greater may also be obtained with a 100% correct model (Henseler, 2014). PLS models are deemed to have a reasonable model fit when the SRMR score is 0.08 or higher, according to Hu & Bentler (1998) and 1999. The model's fit summary score of 0.065 indicates that the model is well-fitted since research has demonstrated that an accurate model may provide SRMR values of 0.06 or higher (Hair et al., 2019b; Hair et al., 2019c; Byrne, 2013).

2. 3. 2. ASSESSING OVERALL MODEL FIT

Path diagrams are used in structural equation modelling to build route models, which are graphical representations of the hypotheses and component interactions explored (Hair et al., 2019a; Hair et al., 2011). The beta value, f^2 , t-statistics, and p-values are used to examine the pathways. The f^2 impact size quantifies the amount that the latent variable contributes to the endogenous variable as defined by R^2 , whereas the beta value explains how the independent variable influences the variable that is being studied. If the f^2 value is less than or equal to 0.02 it indicates a minor influence. Moderate to considerable influence is indicated by F^2 values ranging from 0.15 to 0.35. According to Hair et al (2019b), the R^2 measures how effectively a model can predict the data. Three tiers are present. Significant values fall into the range of 0.75, 0.5, and 0.2. The impact may be more or less important depending on the R^2 ; the higher the R^2 , the greater the impact. The significance of the routes is shown by the t-statistics and p-value, two indicators in the bootstrapping findings. Research indicates that if the T-statistic is more than 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05, the route coefficient will likewise be significant in rejecting the null hypothesis (Hair et al., 2019a).

The link between variables was investigated using the structural equation model, which was calculated. A PLS-SEM structural model was used to determine the link between the predictor variable, outcome variable, and mediating factors (Lowry and Gaskin, 2014). According to Table 5, the results of Hypotheses 1 and 2 indicate that EI has an influencing impact on Psychological Capital ($\beta = 0.583$, $p < 0.05$) and Psychological Capital has an influencing effect on Occupational Stress ($\beta = 0.212$, $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 3 on the other hand demonstrates no significant detrimental effects of EI on occupational stress ($\beta = 0.252$, $p > 0.05$). Additionally, there are beneficial correlations between the influence of EI on psychological capital and occupational stress ($r = 0.592$, $p < 0.05$). As a consequence, our findings support hypotheses H1 and H2.

Table 5: Hypothetical Relationships

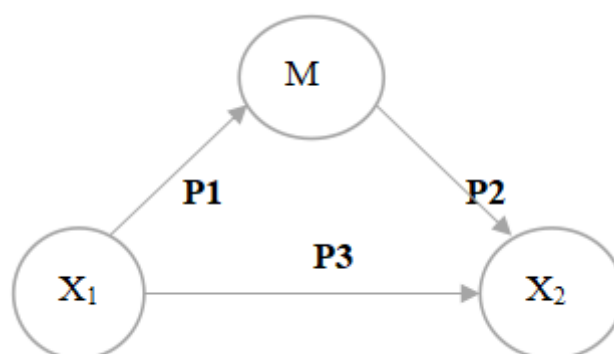
Hypothesis	Beta	T-value	p-value	F Square	Decision
EI→Psychological Capital	0.583	4.942	0.000	0.583	significant
Psychological Capital→Occupational Stress	0.212	2.764	0.000	0.270	significant
EI→Occupational Stress	-0.252	3.823	0.078	0.079	Insignificant
EI→Psychological Capital→Occupational Stress	0.592	3.786	0.000	0.197	significant

Source: Author's calculation

Furthermore, EI explains 68.8% of the variance in work stress ($R^2 = 0.688$). In contrast, EI explains 61.3% of the variance in Psychological Capital ($R^2 = 0.613$), as shown in Figure 4. The Coefficient of determinants R^2 values of 0.688 and 0.613 surpass the advised range of 0.2, indicating a mediating impact (Hair et al., 2019b).

The mediation effect of Psychological Capital between EI and Occupational Stress is analyzed using PLS-SEM. Analyzing the strength of the mediator variable's connections with the other constructs can provide evidence for the mechanisms behind the cause-and-effect relationship between an external construct and an endogenous construct. Figure 4 explains the mediating effect analysis in PLS-SEM in detail.

Figure 4: Mediation analysis

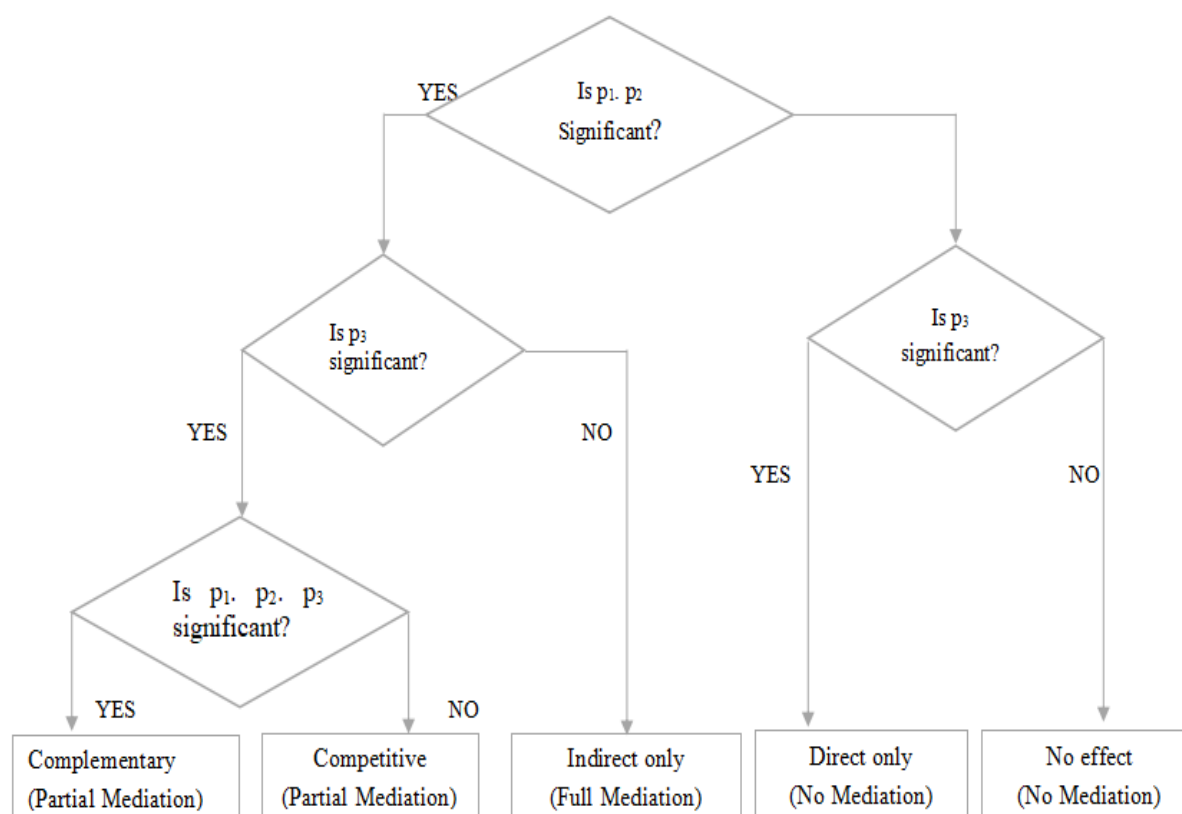


Source: Author's Work

The mediator model is depicted in the picture, where $p1p3$ represents the direct effect, $p1p2$ represents the indirect effect, and $p1p3 + p1p2 =$ the overall effect.

(Zhao et al., 2010) provide the following model to investigate a mediator model, which (Hair et al., 2017) also propose to utilize for PLS-SEM:

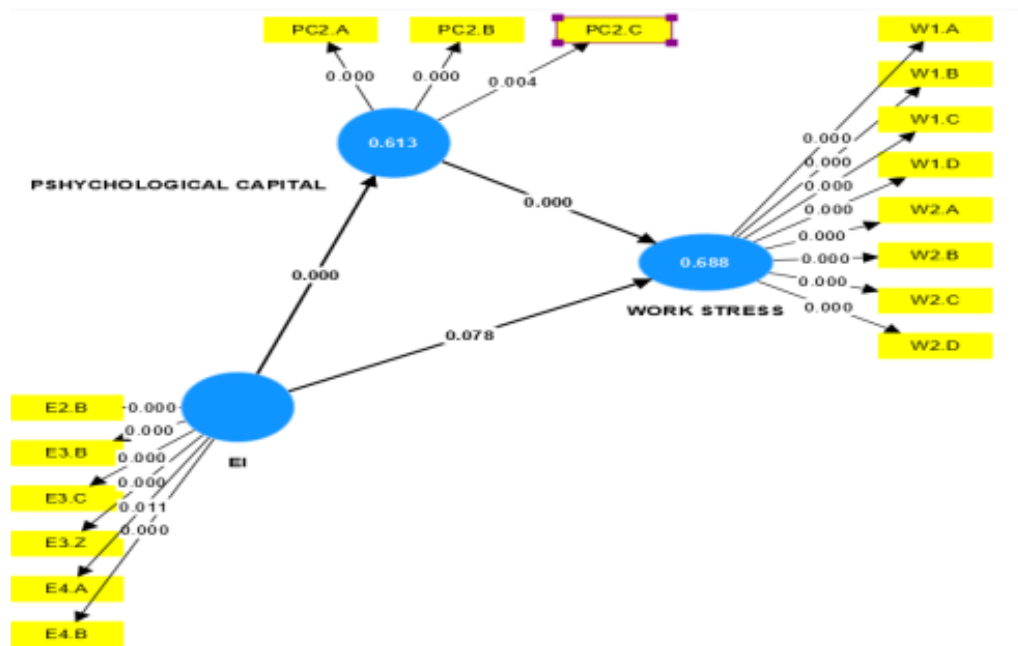
Figure 5: Mediation Process



Source: Zhao et al. (2010)

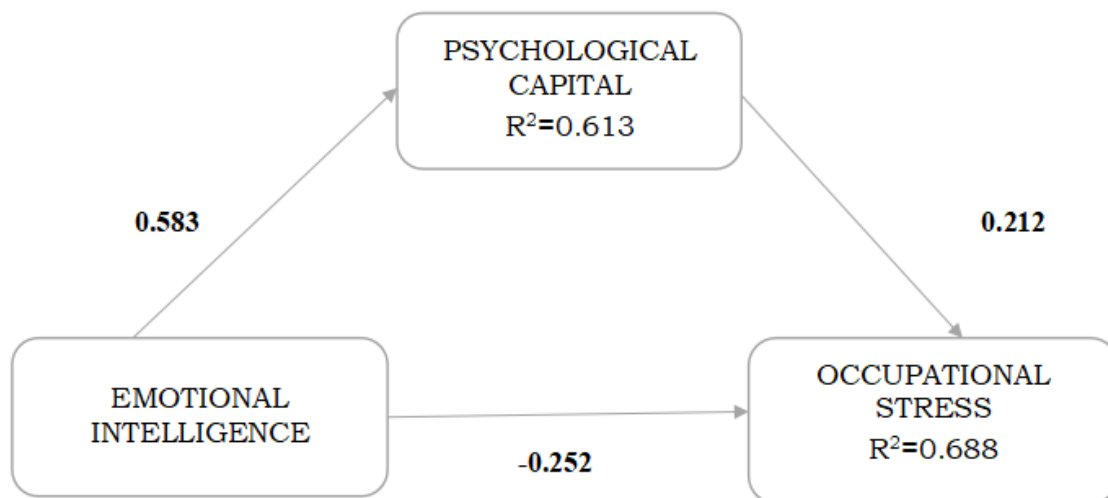
Finally, it was proposed that psychological capital among teaching faculty mediates the association between EI and occupational stress. The total effects are used to describe the strength of the mediator in the appropriate analysis. When the mediator psychological capital was added to the model, the path coefficients were used to analyze the importance of direct and indirect effects. According to the mediation procedure described by (Zhao et al., 2010), the significance values of p_1 and p_2 were examined first and were determined to be significant; when this condition remains true, the significance value of p_3 is analyzed; the p-value is negligible in this case as shown in figure 6. Therefore, the role of mediation in this paradigm is full mediation; EI and occupational stress only have an impact when the psychological capital acts as a mediator. The association between EI and occupational stress is entirely mediated by psychological capital. As a result, the hypothesis H4 is likewise confirmed.

Figure 6: Path coefficients and p values



Source: Author's Work

Figure 7: Schematic diagram of the mediating effect of psychological capital in the influence of Emotional Intelligence on occupational stress



Source: Author's Work

2. 4. FINDINGS

3. It is statistically significant that EI has a detrimental effect on occupational stress, according to research findings. Work-family conflict, job overburden, and role stagnation are statistically significantly impacted by emotional intelligence (resilience and self-efficacy). To assess each construct's robustness and consistency, we employed Cronbach alpha values and adjusted item-total correlations of the gathered data.
4. The study's respondents are 51.1% female and 48.9% male. Thirty-two percent of respondents have one to three years of experience, eight percent have four to six years of experience, twenty-three percent have seven to ten years of experience, and forty-one percent have more than ten years of experience.
5. To ascertain the relationship between the predictor variable, outcome variable, and mediating variables, a PLS-SEM structural model was employed. According to the findings of Hypotheses 1 and 2, Psychological Capital influences Occupational Stress ($\beta = 0.212$, $p < 0.05$) and EI influences Psychological Capital ($\beta = 0.583$, $p < 0.05$). Conversely, hypothesis 3 shows that EI has no appreciable negative impacts on professional stress ($\beta = 0.252$, $p > 0.05$). Only when psychological capital is present does there appear to be an association between EI and professional stress ($r = 0.592$, $p < 0.05$).
6. The independent variable EI (self-efficacy and resilience) on occupational stress (work-family conflict, job overload, and role stagnation) accounted for 68.88% of the variance, according to the R-square (0.531).
7. The model was expanded to include the mediator psychological capital and the significance of the direct and indirect effects was examined using the path coefficients. Thus, in this paradigm, EI and occupational stress only interact when psychological capital serves as the mediator; otherwise, mediation serves as the complete mediator. As a result, there is complete mediation between psychological capital, occupational stress, and emotional intelligence. Therefore, the H4 hypothesis is validated as well.

3. DISCUSSION

Previous research has explored the major influence of EI on job performance and occupational stress on job performance or job satisfaction (Sahana Achyutha and Lakshmi Suneetha, 2024; Zakkia Uzair and Amiya Bhaumik, 2023), but an exploration of EI on occupational stress is lacking. So, the study developed a theoretical model that explains how EI affects work-related stress with psychological capital as a mediator among academic teaching faculties. Moreover, this study also depicts psychological capital's direct and Mediating impact on the link between occupational stress and EI.

Based on the research outcomes, the analysis results prove occupational stress is significantly influenced by the EI of teaching faculties (Omneya Eid Amin Hussain et al., 2021; Regy et al., 2024). The lack of social skills, motivation, and self-regulation can all lead academic teaching faculties to face difficulties in coping with stress. These factors pose challenges for faculties to address the negative impact of occupational stress in their working environment. Moreover, our finding highlights that Psychological Capital is an ideal mediator that influences EI and occupational stress. This indicates the importance of psychological factors in shaping teaching faculties in terms of their managing stress.

(Karasel et al., 1982) proposed the demand-control model often known as the Job Demand Control model, as one of the ideas regarding job stress and psychological well-being. According to this notion, excessive job expectations and little job control lead to job stress. Time constraints, significant workloads, and emotional demands are examples of job demands. On the other hand,

decision-making, time management, and skill utilization are examples of job control. This theory states that job stress and mental health issues like anxiety and depression might result from an imbalance between job expectations and control. On the other hand, workers often feel happier and more content at work when they feel that they have more control over their work and can handle the responsibilities of the position. Numerous research has examined the demand-control theory, and the results consistently show that it has significant empirical support.

Our research showed that faculty members who had lower emotional quotients had more occupational stress than those who had higher emotional quotients. EI can assist individuals in developing psychological abilities that will enable them to control their behavior at work in a challenging working environment. This study also supports the notion that teaching faculties with high EI are less susceptible to the detrimental impacts of occupational stress.

As a result, our research supported the validity of EI with the help of psychological capital and how it improved people's capacity to avoid psychological stress and utilize their EI talents in times of need. As a result, EI training and development programs must be taken into account while designing the teaching faculty's working schedule. These initiatives can provide them with the essential abilities to traverse complicated interpersonal relationships and recognize, comprehend, and control their emotions in a teaching environment. This can improve academic faculty's EI and aid them in fending off detrimental consequences of occupational stress.

High emotional intelligence (EI) and psychological capital abilities enable faculties to better manage the psychological difficulties that come with their jobs. These factors benefit teaching faculties' physical and mental health and help them deal with emergencies successfully, which enhances their effectiveness at work.

4. CONCLUSION

To sum up, this study demonstrates that employees' EI negatively predicts their occupational stress. Employee EI levels are correlated with performance. The study used structured PLS-SEM using SMART PLS 4.0. before estimating the structural model, the validity and reliability of the instrument were evaluated using the measurement model. Thus, hypothesis 1 and 2 was supported, EI impacts on psychological capital and psychological capital influences occupational stress. on the other hand, hypothesis 3 indicates that there are no significant detrimental effects of EI on professional stress. the relationship between EI and professional stress appears to be significant only when psychological capital is present.

Additionally, it may be assumed that workers with greater EI levels will influence low occupational stress and perform better than those with lower levels. Employees with high EI levels face low levels of occupational stress, perform well, and are happier in their careers. The results show that EI has a positive influence on psychological capital and occupational stress whereas psychological capital acts as a mediator in the relationship between EI and occupational stress. This implies that when an increase in EI causes a decrease in occupational stress. So, we can say that academic teaching faculties with high EI skills have a low impact on occupational stress. The current research is an attempt to explore the impact of EI on occupational stress with the intervening role of psychological capital. The results of the study can be used by academic institutions and top management authorities of private colleges and universities to concentrate on the enhancement of EI. The results suggest top authorities implement many EI development programs and workshops to improve EI skills to help and understand each other

- (a) create training programs to enhance EI skills, and resilience that help faculties to improve his or her performance which improves the productivity of the employees.

- (b) Facilitate the workforce's ability to cope with the various techniques of artificial and emotional intelligence and work on determining the scientific and objective foundation on which decision-making should be based.
- (c) Reduce Work Stress by reducing Conflict in a Working Relationship, and reducing workloads in a Working Environment to enhance employee Job Performance.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Our investigation offers important lessons for future practice. The first is that faculty's emotional intelligence (EI) plays a significant role in their job performance. Educators and policymakers should focus on developing and increasing faculty's EI, particularly through professional development. Administrators must create inclusive and inclusive working environments for faculties to share and manage their authentic feelings. Academic institution heads and professionals should take note of this study since it might provide them with insight into the factors that ease academic teaching faculty's psychological stress. The entire study demonstrates a strong positive correlation between EI and psychological capital and a negative relationship with occupational stress. Faculties who have high EI deliver a low level of psychological stress in their working environment under the influence of psychological capital. Therefore, academic institution management professionals need to be aware of how EI improves the stress level of teaching faculties in their reputed institutions.

It appears vital to improve and strengthen the traits that protect faculties from severe psychological stress. The senior administration of academic institutions must develop a program that combines sophisticated EI skills with teaching staff that has strong awareness and EI capabilities credibly and acceptably. For teaching faculty physical and mental health, managing their psychological stress is crucial since it can lead to creative workplace behavior. EI theory elements are covered in training and workshops. Employees may develop trust and confidence by using (self-awareness, self-regulation, self-control, motivation, empathy, and social skills) to help one another when needed.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has certain drawbacks. This study's findings solely considered private colleges and universities in Chennai city. This restricts the applicability of our final results. Therefore, future studies should expand the sample size and include teachers from different regions of Tamil Nadu. Future research can focus on other professions, such as those in the manufacturing industry, the banking industry, or other global corporations, which might use this paradigm. We recommend exploring this further in future studies to determine to what extent the results can be extrapolated from the study population to which it applies. Secondly, we failed to look at the impact of other work stressors on the level of work-based stress.

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