

# Exploring the Influence of Teacher Professionalism on University Students' Emotional Resilience

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## Abstract

The current research investigates the impact of teacher professionalism on students' emotional stability at the university level. Employing a descriptive research design, the study involved a stratified random sample of 300 participants from six universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, encompassing both public and private institutions. Through a combination of tailored questionnaires assessing teacher professionalism and standardized tools for gauging students' emotional stability, the study revealed a significant correlation between the two variables. Key findings indicate that higher levels of teacher professionalism, encompassing factors like responsibility, empathy, and professional conduct, are associated with increased emotional stability in students. Additionally, the study uncovered notable differences between public and private university environments in terms of teacher professionalism and student emotional well-being. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on the role of educators in shaping the emotional landscape of university students and underscore the need for comprehensive teacher training programs that extend beyond academic instruction to include emotional intelligence and empathetic teaching practices.

## Keywords

Teacher Professionalism, Emotional Stability, University Education, Emotional Intelligence in Teaching, Student Well-being, Educational Psychology, Teacher-Student Dynamics

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Emotional Intelligence and Its Role in Education**

Emotional intelligence, fundamentally, is the ability to recognize and understand one's own feelings as well as those of others, particularly in challenging situations. This capability is essential for accurately interpreting emotions, allowing emotionally intelligent individuals to comprehend and adapt to various circumstances, and foster smooth interpersonal relations. Key attributes of emotionally intelligent people include flexibility in managing personal emotions and responding empathetically towards others. Such individuals are typically perceived as more positive and enjoyable to interact with compared to those with lower emotional intelligence.

In the educational context, an often overlooked aspect is teaching students about emotional stability. Despite its importance, this area is frequently neglected or underemphasized, possibly due to a lack of awareness or effective communication strategies. This research aims to address this gap by focusing on fostering emotional growth and nurturing empathetic, emotionally mature adults.

#### **1.1.1 The Necessity of Emotional Maturity in Education**

Enhancing emotional maturity through education and training is crucial. Without the development of such skills, individuals might find it challenging to form and maintain respectful relationships and positive social interactions. This not only affects personal relationships but also extends to professional conduct and collaborations in the workplace.

For educators, imparting the benefits of emotional maturity to students is an integral part of their role. Every profession, including teaching, requires specialized training and analytical skills. However, the teaching profession is laden with unique challenges and responsibilities, demanding a significant commitment from those who enter this field. Wallis (1994) notes that teaching, while a profession requiring continuous learning and professional development, is often perceived differently compared to professions traditionally receiving high public esteem.

Prate and Rury (1991) argue that, in a conventional context, teachers are not regarded as specialists. Unlike professionals who are expected to have a 'conceptualized' or established knowledge base for their roles, teachers are often believed to rely on 'personalized' or experiential knowledge in their practice. This 'conceptualized knowledge' refers to comprehensive understanding acquired through formal training, essential for performing

specialized tasks. In contrast, 'personalized knowledge' is experiential, developed through hands-on practice rather than systematic academic learning.

Pratte and Rury (1991) also describe the profession as a means by which individuals and occupational groups strive to distinguish themselves from other workers. This distinction is vital in understanding the unique place of teaching within the broader spectrum of professional work.

## **1.2 Contextualizing the Problem**

Emotional intelligence, a crucial aspect of students' well-being, especially at the university level, has garnered increasing attention in educational research. However, the role of teacher professionalism in influencing students' emotional stability remains an under-explored area. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions and those of others, is vital in challenging academic environments. The current state of emotional stability among university students is a concern, as it significantly impacts their academic performance, social interactions, and overall mental health.

### **1.2.1 Research Gap**

Previous research has extensively explored the direct factors affecting students' emotional stability, such as personal circumstances, academic stress, and peer relationships. However, there is a noticeable gap in understanding how the professionalism of teachers – encompassing their training, demeanor, and teaching methodologies – impacts the emotional resilience of university students. This aspect is critical, as teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience and, by extension, the emotional landscape of their students.

## **1.3 Study's Purpose**

The primary objective of this study is to examine the connection between teacher professionalism and students' emotional stability at the university level. This research aims to provide insights into how teachers' professional conduct, expertise, and emotional intelligence contribute to the emotional well-being of university students. By comparing the discipline of public and private university teachers and the emotional stability of their graduates, this study seeks to highlight the importance of teacher professionalism in educational settings and its far-reaching implications on student outcomes.

## **1.4 Review of Literature**

### **1.4.1 Professionalism and Emotional Intelligence in Education**

The esteemed status of professional specialists is rooted in distinct traits such as a unique body of knowledge, membership strength, and institutional commitments. A

profession's reputation is partly derived from its association with an extensive body of expertise and organizational skills. Unlike some professions focused mainly on supervisory authority, teaching emphasizes mutually respectful interactions among peers and relies on the professional authority often derived from practical experience. Central to educational improvement, teachers are pivotal in shaping the entire educational framework.

The efficacy of teachers is influenced significantly by their training, encompassing both pre-service and in-service education. The experience and quality of teacher education directly correlate with their ability to impart knowledge effectively and foster emotional maturity in students. Therefore, the pedagogical approach, characterized by thoughtfulness, honesty, and integrity, is crucial in developing a nurturing and supportive learning environment.

#### **1.4.2 The Evolution from Amateur to Expert in Education**

Transitioning from amateur to expert, especially in the university setting, is a complex process involving several factors. Teacher professionalism, marked by clear and reliable conduct, is essential for student development. It encompasses personal skills, teacher preparation, and adherence to organizational policies. Professionalism in teaching is not just about subject matter expertise; it extends to creating an atmosphere conducive to supportive learning. Educators, as authority figures, must be adept in their field and skilled in interpersonal communication.

Sociological research into the professions began in the 1930s, aiming to identify characteristics that distinguish certain jobs as professions. These characteristics include academic knowledge, university-affiliated training, structured organization, and a commitment to ethical conduct and service. A professional is seen as an individual with specialized knowledge, focusing on technological culture, ethics, and professional autonomy.

#### **1.4.3 Characteristics of Professionalism in Education**

Key characteristics of professionalism in education include specific skills for specialized services, practical and analytical preparation, and a personal approach to responsibility. Direct and personal relationships with students based on trust, a strong sense of duty, and ethical leadership are crucial. Additionally, fostering student creativity, promoting diversity, and implementing curriculum effectively are fundamental aspects of a professional teacher's role.

#### **1.4.4 Emotional Intelligence in Teaching**

Emotional intelligence (EI) is pivotal in education, enabling individuals to interpret and manage emotions effectively. Mayer & Solvay (2004) emphasize the importance of EI in understanding and communicating feelings and emotions. Jaeger (2003) further explores EI's

role in diverse situations, highlighting its impact on workplace loyalty and adaptability. Goleman (2004) and Lamothe (2009) identify five competencies of EI: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, motivation, and relationship management. These competencies are essential for effective teaching and managing adult education.

Dulewicz and Higgs (2004) examine various approaches to developing EI, suggesting that it is a skill that can evolve over time. This evolution is critical as emotional stability plays a vital role in managing life's challenges and inspiring others.

#### **1.4.5 Multiple Intelligences and Their Implications**

Gardner's (1983, 1999) Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory posits that intelligence is multi-faceted, going beyond the traditional IQ concept. This theory, which encompasses at least nine types of intelligence, suggests that understanding a learner's unique intelligence profile can enable teachers to tailor their instructional approach effectively. The theory also highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in achieving academic success and addressing students' holistic needs in the educational journey.

This literature review establishes the fundamental role of teacher professionalism and emotional intelligence in shaping the educational environment and influencing students' emotional stability. It underscores the need for comprehensive teacher training that encompasses both pedagogical skills and emotional intelligence development.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study holds significant implications for improving educational outcomes by enhancing teachers' professional skills and their ability to foster positive relationships with students. It provides crucial insights for educational institutions to develop targeted professional development programs, directly impacting teacher effectiveness and student emotional well-being. Additionally, this research serves as a valuable resource for future studies, offering a foundation for further exploration into the dynamics of teacher-student interactions. By highlighting the importance of teacher professionalism in student emotional stability, the study contributes to the broader discourse on educational quality and effectiveness, potentially influencing future educational policies and practices.

## **2. Research Methodology**

### **2.1 Research Design**

This study adopts a descriptive research design to examine the impact of teacher professionalism on students' emotional stability at the university level. The approach focuses

on collecting data to understand respondents' perceptions of the existing issues and offers suggestions for improvement. Descriptive research is particularly suited to exploring various educational problems due to its effectiveness in detailing and interpreting complex relationships and trends.

## **2.2 Population**

The research population comprises two distinct groups: university lecturers and university graduates. The lecturer group includes faculty members from both public and private universities located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi, teaching in Master's and Bachelor of Science programs. The student group consists of candidates enrolled in these programs at the respective universities.

## **2.3 Sampling Techniques**

A stratified random sampling method was employed, drawing from six leading universities (three public and three private) in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The sample included 300 individuals, evenly split between 150 professors and 150 students from both public and private institutions. Gender representation was balanced, with 50% male and 50% female participants. Out of 360 distributed questionnaires, 300 were returned and deemed useful, establishing the sample size.

## **2.4 Instrumentation**

Given the complexity of the research inquiry, a specialized questionnaire was developed to assess the professionalism of university-level teachers. This was complemented by standardized research questionnaires, specifically those developed by Schutte and Malouff (1998), to evaluate students' emotional stability and health. The questionnaire consisted of 44 items, divided into four subscales: Sharing, Feeling, Impressions, and Experience. Prior to its widespread application for data collection, the instrument underwent preliminary testing on a limited sample to ensure its reliability and effectiveness.

## **2.5 Data Collection Procedure**

Data were collected via email and fax, following the procurement of necessary permissions from respondents. The distribution and retrieval of questionnaires were conducted in a manner ensuring confidentiality and compliance with ethical research standards.

## **2.6 Data Analysis**

The data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistical methods, including Standard Deviation, Mean, and Coefficient of Correlation. These analyses were performed using SPSS version 24, focusing on identifying and interpreting the relationships between various research variables.

### 3. Findings & Discussion

#### Objective 1: Examining the Connection between Teacher Professionalism and Students' Emotional Stability

The analysis revealed a significant correlation between teacher professionalism and students' emotional stability. Various subscales of emotional stability demonstrated strong associations with aspects of professional conduct. Specifically, the growth in emotional stability was notably linked with a sense of responsibility in the profession. Understanding others, a key facet of emotional stability, showed a healthy association with professional demeanor. Intuition in emotional balance also indicated a strong relationship with professional development. The findings thus suggest that the hypothesis stating "Emotional stability of university students is not greatly impacted by the professionalism of the teachers" should be rejected, as a notable impact was observed.

#### Objective 2: Comparing the Discipline of Public and Private University Teachers and the Emotional Stability of University Graduates

University Type	Professional Practice Level
Public	8.2
Private	6.5

Table 1: Professional Practice Level by University Type

Table 1 indicates that teachers from public universities exhibit higher levels of professional practice compared to their counterparts in private universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

University Type	Emotional Stability Score
Public	7.8
Private	6.3

Table 2: Emotional Stability Scores by University Type

Table 2 shows that students from public universities scored higher on emotional stability compared to students from private institutions.

University Type	Mean Emotional Stability	Standard Deviation
Public	7.8	1.2
Private	6.3	1.5

Table 3: Emotional Stability Mean and Standard Deviation by University Type

Table 3 further elaborates on the emotional stability scores, with students from public institutions demonstrating a higher mean score and a lower standard deviation, indicating more consistent emotional stability compared to students from private institutions.

## 3.2 Discussion

### 3.2.1 Interpreting the Findings: The Impact of Teacher Professionalism

The results of this study offer compelling insights into the relationship between teacher professionalism and students' emotional stability. The strong correlation found between various aspects of teacher professionalism and emotional stability indicators in students underscores the profound impact that educators have on their students' emotional well-being. This aligns with the growing body of research emphasizing the importance of teacher-student relationships in educational outcomes.

1. **The Role of Professional Conduct and Responsibility:** The finding that emotional stability in students correlates with a sense of responsibility in their teachers suggests that when educators display a high level of professional commitment and conduct, it positively influences the emotional resilience of students. This could be due to the creation of a secure and supportive learning environment where students feel valued and understood.
2. **Understanding and Intuition in Teaching:** The association between teachers' abilities to understand and intuit students' needs and the emotional stability of students highlights the importance of empathy and emotional intelligence in teaching. Teachers who are adept at perceiving and responding to students' emotional states can better support their mental health and academic engagement.

### 3.2.2 Comparison between Public and Private University Environments

The study also sheds light on the differences in teacher professionalism and student emotional stability between public and private universities.

1. **Higher Professional Practice in Public Universities:** The higher scores of professional practice among public university teachers could be indicative of more rigorous professional development standards or different recruitment criteria in these



institutions. This might contribute to a more structured and supportive educational environment, as reflected in the higher emotional stability scores of students.

2. **Emotional Stability among Students:** The findings that students from public universities exhibit higher emotional stability than those from private universities raise important questions about the varying educational cultures and support systems in these two types of institutions. It suggests that the more consistent and possibly more supportive environment in public universities may play a role in fostering emotional resilience among students.

### **3.2.3 Implications for Educational Practice and Policy**

1. **Teacher Training and Development:** The findings underscore the need for comprehensive teacher training programs that emphasize not only pedagogical skills but also emotional intelligence, empathy, and professional ethics. This is crucial for creating an educational environment that supports both the academic and emotional needs of students.
2. **Institutional Policies and Support Systems:** Educational institutions, particularly private ones, may need to reevaluate their support systems and policies to ensure that they are conducive to both teacher professionalism and student emotional well-being. This includes revisiting criteria for teacher recruitment, evaluation, and ongoing professional development.

## **4. Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **4.1 Conclusion**

This research has illuminated the significant impact of teacher professionalism on students' emotional stability at the university level. The findings clearly demonstrate that teachers' professional conduct, empathy, and responsibility significantly influence the emotional resilience of their students. Moreover, the study highlights notable differences in the emotional stability of students and the professionalism of teachers between public and private universities. These insights are crucial for understanding the broader implications of teacher-student interactions in higher education settings.

### **4.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to enhance both teacher professionalism and student emotional stability:

**Enhanced Teacher Training Programs:** Educational institutions should invest in comprehensive teacher training programs that emphasize not only academic instruction but also emotional intelligence, empathy, and ethical professionalism. These programs should be designed to equip teachers with the skills necessary to understand and respond to the emotional needs of their students.

**Institutional Policy Reforms:** Both public and private universities should reevaluate their policies and support systems to foster an environment conducive to emotional stability. This may include revisiting recruitment criteria for teachers, implementing continuous professional development, and establishing robust support systems for students' mental health.

**Regular Assessment of Teacher Performance:** Institutions should introduce regular assessments of teachers' professional practices, focusing not just on academic performance but also on their ability to create a supportive and empathetic learning environment.

**Research and Development:** Continuous research and development in the field of educational psychology and teacher-student dynamics are vital. Further studies should explore the nuances of how different aspects of teacher professionalism impact various dimensions of student well-being.

**Collaborative Initiatives:** Encourage collaborations between educational institutions, mental health experts, and policymakers to develop strategies and programs that support both teacher professional development and student emotional stability.

**Student-Centered Approaches:** Universities should adopt more student-centered approaches, ensuring that curricula and teaching methodologies not only impart knowledge but also cater to the emotional and psychological needs of students.

The study contributes significantly to the understanding of the vital role teacher professionalism plays in shaping students' emotional well-being. The recommendations provided aim to guide educational institutions, policymakers, and educators towards creating a more supportive and effective learning environment that recognizes and addresses the emotional needs of university students alongside their academic development.

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