

Emotional Intelligence, Perseverance and Purpose in Life among Teachers

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This article aims to highlight the relevance of the direct and indirect impact of various psychological variables on the performance of the school teachers. The present study, therefore, attempts to explore the mediating effect of perseverance on the relationship between emotional intelligence and purpose in life of school teachers. A sample of 200 school teachers from sub-urban cities of Haryana (India) participated in the present study. The collected data was pertinent to Pearson's correlation and mediation analysis by Preacher and Hayes (2004). The results deduced a significant positive correlation among the key study variables. The article illustrated partial mediation between the key study variables (emotional intelligence, perseverance and purpose in life), hence justifying the study hypothesis. The authors discussed the necessary implications and prospects of the study.

Keywords: Purpose in life, emotional intelligence, perseverance, positive organisational psychology

The Indian cultural legacy considers teachers ('guru') at par with the Supreme God, while the current trends are changing. The change in perception towards educational institutes and the educational stakeholders have taken a drastic turn, wherein emphasis lies primarily on catering to the needs and problems of the students (Santrock, 2011). Studies and surveys by Central Board of Secondary Education (India) revealed that school teachers are increasingly worried about their job security, especially in the private sector. This tension is leading to issues like work overload and workplace harassment, underreported in the Indian education system. Additionally, the poor academic performance, demands, and attitude of parents, and students' non-serious attitude towards education makes it difficult for teachers to cope with this societal pressure.

Ignat and Clipa (2011) suggested that if teachers develop their emotional and professional competencies, then their professional adjustment would become more manageable. In this regard, emphasising on emotional intelligence (EI) among school teachers serves as an essential tool. Besides, researchers like Alam and Ahmad (2018), Konrad and Gabrijelcic (2014) and many more have insisted on the importance of

studying the role of emotions within classrooms. Higher EI among school teachers may not only facilitate better student-teacher relationship, but may also have a positive influence on the classroom environment, students' motivation, and sense of achievement by improvising overall school performance (Ponmozhi & Ezhilbharathy, 2017). While several corporates have adopted training and development techniques for emotional competency of their staff, schools, and other academic institutions are not paying due attention to their faculty's psychological needs.

As Lazarus (1999) described, the stress process involves evaluations or appraisals (implying our interpretation of any stressful situation), which may depend on an individual's dispositions. Schneider, Lyons, and Khazon (2013) revealed ability-based EI as a stress resilience factor, claiming that EI ability facilitates increased positivity while facing challenging situations. Several other academicians have highlighted similar findings (Magnano, Craparo & Paolillo, 2016; Frajo-Apor, Pardeller, Kemmler, & Hofer, 2016)). However, little have researchers delved into 'teaching' profession and educational management addressing their perseverance, tolerance, and coping mechanisms in stressful situations.

Furthermore, studies have revealed that people who bounce back from their adversities easily are those with clear purpose and direction for their lives (Schneider, Lyons, & Khazon, 2013). Anderson (2010) found that the majority of the elementary school teachers entered this profession either because they wanted to become a change-maker, or because their teachers inspired them. Such reasons provide meaningfulness and a sense of purpose in one's work-life despite harsh circumstances and adversities. Therefore, to find a sense of purpose in one's work as a teacher creates a bridge for better student-teacher relationship and improved student and school performance, by enhancing their levels of well-being at work.

Studies regarding emotional competencies and well-being in the Indian context have focused on either the corporates, adolescents, or the healthcare system predominantly (Mishra & Mohapatra, 2010) (Sharma, 2012). Occupational stress (Kaur & Kumar, 2017), burnout (Shukla & Trivedi, 2008), organizational commitment and psychological empowerment (Hamid, Nordin, Adnan, & Sirun, 2013), organizational citizenship behavior and climate profile (Garg & Rastogi, 2006) have been the focus of psychological studies on school teachers and their mental health. However, little emphasis on an individual's strengths, coping, and adaptability in diverse Indian organisations leads to a significant research gap. Hence, this paper aims to explore the impact of a school teacher's intrinsic factors like emotional intelligence and perseverance on their sense of purpose in life, based on their work dynamics.

Conceptualisation of Variables

Emotional intelligence (EI). This variable has been conceptualised in two different ways by different theorists: as a set of abilities for processing sensitive information (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000), and as a set of personality traits (Bar-On, 2000; Cooper, 1996/1997; Goleman, 1995). Based on the recent conceptualisation of EI, its usefulness is in the processing of information about one's own and other's emotions. It plays a vital role in healthy interpersonal relationships and management of conflicts. The present study utilises Mayer,

Caruso, and Salovey (2000)'s description of EI as a social ability to regulate one's personal and others' emotions. Their model emphasised on four branches of EI namely

- emotional perception (ability to register, attend to and decipher emotional messages as they express in different contexts),
- emotional integration (ability to access and generate feelings which facilitate thought),
- emotional understanding (ability to regulate emotions to choose to be open to experience emotions and to control how one experiences them), and
- emotional management (ability to regulate emotions, to want to be open to experience emotion and to monitor how one expresses them)

Perseverance. It is a process or ability to adapt well or "to bounce back" to the rational self. As Robinson (2012) writes, "*perseverance means determination at working hard regardless of any odds or obstacles that may exist.*" Wagnild and Young (1993) listed five different character traits of resilient people, which include meaningfulness of life, perseverance, self-reliance, equanimity, and existential aloneness. Nonetheless, the focus of the present study is to study the specific role of 'perseverance' as a character trait of a resilient person, described as the act of persistence despite adversity or misfortune. While several researchers have discussed the importance of resilience among individuals, yet majority explanations highlight the significance of the ability of 'bouncing back' from adverse circumstances (McAllister & McKinnon, 2009; Stephens, 2013), referred to as 'perseverance,' a character-trait of resilient person (Wagnild & Young, 1993).

Purpose in life. It implies a belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful proposed by Ryff (1989) as one of the significant components of psychological well-being. As a concept, the origins of 'purpose in life' lies in Frankl's (1963) explanation of the 'will to meaning' and the cores of existentialism. According to Ryff, a high sense of purpose in life has goal-orientation

and a sense of directedness, feels meaning in present and experience, holds beliefs that give life purpose, and has aims and objectives for a living (Bhambri & Sharma, 2015). The roots of this concept also share common grounds with ideas like religiosity and spirituality (French & Joseph, 1999). Nevertheless, Ryff and Singer (1998) prioritise 'sense of meaning and purpose in life' as a significant contributor to mental resources for one's optimal functioning. However, it requires attention because life purpose governs one's major life decisions, and shapes the behaviour with a sense of direction and meaning to their work contributing to one's well-being.

Theoretical Framework

Inspired by the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions by Fredrickson B. L. (2004), the complexities of emotional development govern our decision of studying its impact on one's well-being. It postulates that over time, positive emotions build one's skills and resources, by broadening their awareness and encouraging novelty and exploratory thoughts and actions. Studies have revealed that positive emotions can help an individual develop the capacity to cope with the difficulties of life and become resilient in the face of adversity (Fredrickson, 2001). Furthermore, Fredrickson and Joiner (2002) suggested that the upward spirals of positive emotions usually counterbalance the impact of any adverse circumstances on an individual, ultimately resulting in emotional and psychological well-being. This theory forms the conceptual background for the present study to finally investigate the impact of emotional intelligence developed henceforth, on perseverance and purpose in life.

Other theoretical perspectives like self-determination theory by Ryan and Deci (2000) have emphasised on the presence of persistent positive resources for behavioural regulation and personality development leading to the repeated effort, agency and commitment, referring it as "inherent growth tendencies." These include - the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy - facilitating one's personal growth and optimal functioning through well-being. This theory provides additional support to the

proposed model by validating the usefulness of emphasising on the teacher's strengths and competencies as antecedents to their sense of 'purpose in life,' which acts as one of the contributors to their overall well-being.

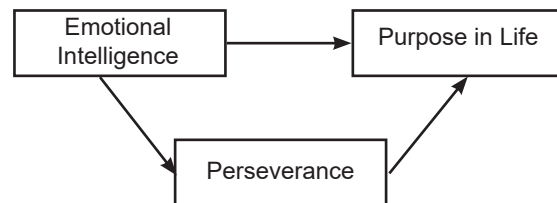


Figure 1. The hypothesised model

Hypotheses development

The central idea that emotions play a crucial role in the stress process has been increasingly recognised over the years and suggests that an emotionally sensitive and stressed person is likely to perceive the situation as negative or stressful. Armstrong, Galligan, and Critchley (2011) found that emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, emotional self-control, and particularly emotional self-management were significantly contributing to perseverance in the aftermath of multiple adverse life events. Other studies have found similar results, while considering emotional intelligence as a set of personality traits, instead of a set of abilities (Yemm, 2017). Faculty from the University of Delhi researched exhaustively about the development of human capital through emotional intelligence and personal competencies of employees in Indian business organisations (Singh, 2010). However, a shortage of studies highlighting the relationship between the teacher's emotional intelligence and perseverance, in the Indian context, has led to the present study.

Additionally, studies have related teacher's emotional intelligence with factors like student's academic achievement (Rust, 2014; Azimifar, 2013), teacher's job performance (Naqvi, Iqbal, & Akhtar, 2016), teacher's burnout (Thornqvist, 2011). However, little do researchers relate a teacher's EI with his/her abilities, competencies, and traits assisting him/her in becoming perseverant, which leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: Emotional Intelligence (EI) will be positively related to the perseverance of school teachers.

Our perceptions reflect the role of teachers in schools as 'the easiest job,' undermining the challenges they face, which has led to the neglect of addressing their mental health concerns. A study by Spilt, Koomen, and Thijs (2011) reviewed that teacher's well-being is significantly affected by the quality of the teacher-student relationship. The student's misbehaviour has been correlated with teacher's stress levels and self-esteem, even leading to experiencing burnout and choosing to quit. However, some teachers take such challenges quite sportingly and improvise professionally. Studies have revealed that low perseverance among teachers relates to an increased emphasis on the problems instead of solutions, and the environmental factors as a cause, instead of internal factors (Leroux & Theoret, 2014). It is essential to emphasise perseverance as a primary source of the sense of directedness at work, which ultimately increases their well-being and engagement at work (McKnight & Kashdan, 2009). In occupations with highly stressed and demanding organisational context, for instance, doctors and surgeons, police professionals and militants perseverance play a crucial role in maintaining the purposeful life leading to the well-being of their employees (Eley, Cloninger, Walters, Laurence, & Synnott, 2013). Studies reveal that people with higher levels of perseverance have greater psychological well-being and life satisfaction (Smith & Smith, 2015; Sagone & Caroli, 2014). Lack of Indian studies investigating the connection between perseverance and purpose in life among school teachers motivates the authors to delve deeper into its understanding.

H2: Perseverance will be positively related to the purpose in life.

Success in interpersonal and career domain is not only determined by one's hard work, but also by their ability to understand and manage emotions in social contexts (Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2004). Naurzalina and her colleagues (2015) suggested that higher EI among individuals affects their cognition, which

ultimately affects their overall enhancement and growth. However, no direct relationship among variables signifying the interconnection between EI and purposefulness in life was witnessed, culminating the dearth of literature in this arena. Other studies have shown the significant relationship of variables like subjective well-being (Schutte & Malouff, 2011), job performance (Jr., Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011; Mohammad & Jais, 2016), and affective well-being (Hosie & Sevastos, 2010) with emotional intelligence.

Carmeli, Yitzhak-Halevy, and Weisberg (2009) studied the relationship between emotional intelligence and psychological well-being showing a significant association between the two constructs. This perspective aroused several essential questions, yet most of them are still unanswered, primarily from the indigenous perspective. Some Indian studies raised concerns about the lack of serious thought on the current issue, beyond the direct empirical connections (Shaheen & Shaheen, 2016; Rathnakara, 2014). However, the present study hypothesises about the direct relationship between emotional intelligence and the purpose in life as a contributor to one's well-being, which has been under-represented, especially in workplaces like school.

H3: Emotional Intelligence will be positively related to the purpose of life.

Based on the review of the literature, various gaps have emerged out prominently, which can significantly contribute to the field of educational management and administration. Tetric and Winslow (2015) argued about the shallow methodology and a lack of long-term effectiveness of workplace stress management techniques in different organisations. However, for the majority of the researches reviewed by them considered workplaces as specifically corporate companies. Few investigations have highlighted mental health or psychological concerns in diverse organisational settings, for instance, educational institutes, targeting their employees. Although researchers and academicians in India are concerned about the growing need to assist teachers in building a better student-teacher relationship, most

lack insight into the need to understand the teachers, like any other employee. Kodad and Kazi (2014) are one of the few researchers to highlight the importance of emerging counselling interventions and their scope in schools for students. The trends in the Indian education system are presently observed to be student-centric. The realisation that school teachers form a significant stakeholder in the context of a student's learning environment is imperative, as it might have considerable implications for their sense of meaningfully contributing to their societies, and consequently the education system.

Additionally, there are some significant researches on the psychological health of school teachers in the Western countries, followed by a few Indian studies as a trendsetter (Ahuja, 2014; Leroux & Theoret, 2014). It is, however, difficult to find any substantial voice in the Indian context regarding the psychological status of school teachers. Therefore, little research evidence in Indian context highlighting the direct relationship between emotional intelligence, perseverance, and purpose in life has motivated the formation of the following hypothesis:

H4: Perseverance will mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and the sense of purpose in life among school teachers.

Method

Participants

This cross-sectional survey study includes a sample of 200 school teachers from Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) schools and public schools affiliated to the Haryana Board of Education. Other inclusion criteria for the sample was of having teachers on a regular payroll of the institutions. Both the genders were considered for data collection, using convenience sampling techniques.

Measures

Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998). In order to measure the emotional intelligence of school teachers, the present study uses Schutte's Self-report of Emotional Intelligence Test (SSREIT, 1998). The scale has four sub-scales, namely emotion perception,

utilising emotions, managing self-relevant emotions, and managing one's feelings. It includes a 33-item self-report using the five-point format of scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale's internal consistency was 0.87, whereas reported internal consistency for the sub-scales is: Perception of emotions (0.76), managing own emotions (0.63), managing other's feelings (0.66) and utilisation of emotions (0.55) respectively. The test-retest reliability of SSRI was 0.78 for total scale score. Some of the examples of the statements include "I am aware of my experiences as I experience them," and "I have control over my emotions."

Perseverance Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993). Wagnild and Young's (1993) resilience scale included three character-traits of resilient people, namely, meaningfulness, perseverance, and self-reliance (Oladipo & Idemudia, 2015). The sub-scale of perseverance includes three items on this scale, which reflects in the present study. By perseverance, it means as the ability to keep going, even after setbacks. The reliability coefficient of the perseverance scale is 0.86 alpha. The sample statement on the scale is "I feel that I can handle many things at a time."

Purpose in Life Scale (Ryff, 1989). Ryff (1989) classified the concept of psychological well-being into six distinct categories, namely, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. However, the present study aims to address one of these categories called 'purpose in life' which means the belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful. A six-point answering format used for all the nine items on the scale, ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 6 (totally agree), with the alpha coefficient of 0.88 ($p < 0.001$). Some of the items on the scale also include reverse coding. Sample statement included on this scale is like "I am quite good at managing the responsibilities of my daily life."

Statistical Analysis

The analysis involved descriptive and correlations study using SPSS 24vs., along with mediation analysis of the variables using

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and correlation matrix

Measures	Mean	SD	Emotional Intelligence	Perseverance	Purpose in Life
Emotional Intelligence	95.72	12.16	--		
Perseverance	11.66	2.60	.58**	--	
Purpose in Life	35.10	6.92	.24**	.17*	--

Note: N = 200. M, mean; SD, standard deviation; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

SPSS PROCESS macro software based on the Preacher and Hayes (2004) concept of mediation analysis for all the quantitative measures.

Results

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive statistics and correlation presented in table 1 show the preliminary support for the study hypothesis. The relationship between the study variables is in the expected direction.

Hypothesis Testing

Mediation analysis by Preacher and Hayes (2004) was employed to test the study hypothesis. The baseline hypothesised model, shown in figure 1, is a full mediation model, which includes paths between the independent variable (emotional intelligence) and hypothesised mediator (perseverance) and the outcome variable (purpose in life). Mediation is evident when the independent variable significantly correlates with the mediating variable as shown in table 1. Secondly, independent variable corresponds with the dependent variable (refer to figure 3). Thirdly, the independent variable significantly correlates with the dependent variable without the influence of a mediator (see table 2). Lastly, the correlation of the independent variable upon the dependent variable decreases when the mediator is added to the model, as shown in table 2 (Preacher & Hayes, 2004).

Table 2. The indirect effect of emotional intelligence on purpose in life via perseverance.

	Perseverance (β^a)	Purpose in Life (β^c)	Indirect effect ($\beta^{c-c'}$)
Perseverance ^b	--	.10	--

Emotional intelligence	.12**	.12**	.01**
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Notes: N = 200.

** $p < 0.01$.; aEffect of emotional intelligence on perseverance.

bEffect of perseverance on purpose in life.

cEffect of emotional intelligence on purpose in life.

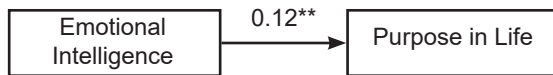
c-c' Standardized indirect effect.

*As per (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) method.

Sobel test, considered as one of the ways to test the significance of the indirect effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable, but its vulnerability to breach data normality compels Preacher and Hayes (2004) opt for another method known as a bootstrap method. The macros facilitate a bootstrap estimate of the indirect effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable with confidence intervals of both 95% and 99%. Accordingly, the present study utilised this method by using bias-corrected bootstrap with confidence intervals (99 per cent) for the indirect effect of the independent variable (emotional intelligence) on the dependent variable (purpose in life) through the mediator (perseverance) with 1,000 bootstrap samples.

Bootstrap estimates of the mediation model path coefficients (as shown in table 2) showed that the model's existing paths were significant, highlighting partial mediation among the study variables. Results for the relationship between emotional intelligence and perseverance ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$) provides support for H1, as the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and perseverance is significant. Evidence suggested that emotional intelligence held a significant positive association with a purpose in life ($\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.01$), providing

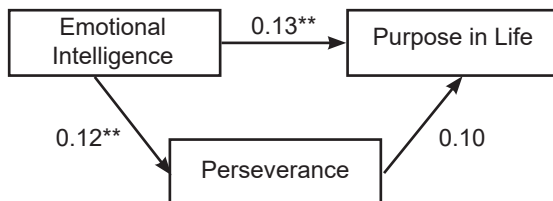
support for H3. H2 presumed perseverance as positively associated with the purpose in the life of school teachers ($\beta = 0.10$). However, this relationship was not statistically significant.



Note: ** $p < 0.01$

Figure 2. The unmediated model

About the hypothesised mediating relationship in H4, which stated that perseverance among school teachers would mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and purpose in life received partial support. The effect of emotional intelligence on purpose in life among school teachers remains significant despite a significant inclusion of a mediator (perseverance) in this relationship implying that both indirect and direct effect of the independent variable (emotional intelligence) on the dependent variable (purpose in life) is significant, as evident from figures 2 and 3.



Note: ** $p < 0.01$

Figure 3. The mediated model

Discussion

The results from the present study reveal partial mediation by perseverance between EI and purpose in life. By partial mediation, it means that the direct effect of EI on purpose in life is closer to zero than the total effect of EI on purpose in life (including mediator perseverance). However, the direct effect is statistically different from zero. It implies that teachers with higher levels of EI will have a higher purpose in life, which is not only affected by the presence of mediators like the character-trait of perseverance but also directly influenced by the mere presence of EI. Studies have also shown the growing interest of researchers in appreciating the role of emotions and their

implications on the work-related issues on the relationship between emotional intelligence and wellbeing at work (Hosie & Sevastos, 2010; Schutte & Malouff, 2011). The increased inclination is due to the theoretical and practical implications and richness of this relationship. However, little research evidence substantiating the relationship of emotional intelligence to one of the significant contributors to wellbeing, namely 'purpose in life' has effectively contributed to the gaps in the existing literature.

Goleman (1995) emphasised the importance of emotional intelligence as a crucial aspect of human development, highlighting self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy, and social skills as its components. It implies that someone who can understand and recognise their emotions and actions better than others would have an advantage, despite the differences in their intelligence quotient, as emotional competencies have direct implications on one's social and interpersonal relationships and communication. Therefore, it is equally applicable to the student-teacher relationship and a teacher's performance as an employee in any educational institution. While emphasising the role of epistemic emotions, Muis, Chevrier, and Singh (2018) highlighted that importance of recognition and interpretation of one's epistemic emotions, especially during classroom management. They revealed a significant relationship of such emotions with the learning process and ultimately reversed the fact that educational institutions, management, and school teachers need to understand its importance in order to contribute appropriately to the society.

Teaching, as a profession, has always been massively demanding regarding establishing a trusted and committed relationship with the students and managing them in huge numbers at the same time. Communication and relationship building has been a challenge in workplaces nowadays, especially while dealing with a varied age range. However, teachers are required to maintain these standards with children, who are more fragile as compared to adults. There is little confounding to the fact that the set of challenges a school teacher has to undertake during her job are more delicate and different. It has not only

an impact on their psyche but also inner strength and self-confidence. The results from this paper imply that a perseverant teacher would be able to stay motivated, productive, efficient, aligned, and committed to her work while being active, confident, and happy. It, henceforth, reveals a significant association between perseverance and the sense of purpose in life, contributing to their overall well-being.

Perseverance has a significant role in alleviating an employee's performance, self-esteem, commitment, and well-being. Steward (2014) highlighted that some educational leaders engage in self-defeating behaviour and thought patterns about themselves and others are depleting their well-being and consequently, their perseverance to manage their responsibilities as leaders and vis-a-vis. Therefore, it is indispensable to focus on developing perseverance and the sense of purpose and meaning in one's work life, practically leading to more than a quick-fix solution to the issue raised. Another series of seminar published in 2012 highlights the need to focus on building perseverance for a healthy workplace and nurturing learning environment, rather than focusing on stress management within schools.

Results also indicate that there is a relatively stronger positive association between emotional intelligence and perseverance among school teachers, thus supporting H1. Magnano, Craparo, and Paolillo (2016) highlight that emotional intelligence caters to the need to make adjustments for the individual, group and organisational goals through self-regulatory emotional and motivational processes; forming a necessary antecedent to perseverance among employees. Other researchers revealed a stronger and positive relationship between emotional intelligence and perseverance among employees and their job performance (Maulding, Peters, Roberts, Leonard, & Sparkman, 2012; Trapp, 2010). However, little research evidence from the Indian context is visible, which reinforces the need to delve deeper into the dynamics of emotions and perseverance in Indian workplaces. The present study bridges the gap by finding the evidence validating the researches from other parts of the globe;

therefore, motivating the Indian education system and policy-makers to consider this issue with serious thought.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence is positively related to the sense of purpose in life among school teachers, thus supporting H3. This finding highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in maintaining the purposefulness in work-life of school teachers, which would directly impact their performance as employees, and indirectly facilitate the better student-teacher relationship. Studies related to emotional intelligence and purpose in life were not as direct and precise in their conceptualisation as the present study attempts to enhance. These results bridge the gap in the literature related to educational management and psychology. Research trends have observed that emotionally intelligent individuals are likely to feel more psychologically well than individuals who are low on emotional intelligence (Carmeli, Yitzhak-Halevy, & Weisberg, 2009). A study by Burger and Ekermans (2009) suggests that emotional intelligence serves as a buffering role against the teacher's occupational stress, and teachers with higher emotional intelligence experience better sense of directedness leading to overall health. Furthermore, Ahuja (2014) conducted a cross-sectional survey study on the university faculty in North India, suggesting that emotional intelligence is one of the compelling predictors of purpose in life, consequently their wellbeing. However, there is little evidence to further enhance this finding especially in the Indian context, but the latter gives a reasonably good idea about the significance of emotional health while talking about one's purpose in life (Shaheen & Shaheen, 2016), hence their wellbeing.

Conceptually, purpose in life is a very complex and dynamic construct, which might be impacted by many other phenomena. These chance factors may include organisational culture and work-related policies and management. Poverty in the work culture of an organisation may lead to inadequate wellbeing and a sense of purpose of its employees, despite higher perseverance and other dispositional characteristics (Garg & Rastogi, 2006). Through the informal interaction with the participants, the authors realised that

most of them believed that teaching is either an interim job or an escape route to other life problems, impacting the work quality and productivity of school teachers. The realisation unravels another chain of unhappy and unhealthy work-life situation. Therefore, this study plays a crucial role in highlighting that higher emotional intelligence leading to higher perseverance among school teachers would lead to an enhanced sense of purpose in their work-life, ultimately helping them contribute better as more engaged and productive employees.

Practical Implications

Apart from the study variables, it is imperative to understand and account the impact of other confounding variables, especially the demographic details of the sample structure in the study. The present study does not emphasise on these variables. However, the requirement of detailed analysis in this domain is dominant. Selvi (2017), in *The Hindu* (English news daily in India), emphasises the need for addressing issues about academic leadership development, which needs a healthier and happier workforce in the education system. Researchers have highlighted that emotionally intelligent leaders led to a more robust organisational commitment and engagement among workers (Bhalerao & Kumar, 2016; Chen & Gua, 2018; Agasisti et al., 2018). Therefore, the present study implies that the need to focus on improving emotional intelligence of school teachers which would not only build a better youth but will also provide India with quality educational leaders.

An approach to undertake initiatives for better mental health and well-being of school teachers focus on the improvisation of their personal strengths and competencies through workshops like leadership building (Chen & Gua, 2018; Agasisti et al., 2018), stress-reduction (Murta et al., 2007), self-enhancement (Rafaeli-Mor & Steinberg, 2002), and resilience-building may help a great deal. These well-researched psychological factors have been observed to not only enhance an employee's performance but also have a spill-over effect on their lives. It will, therefore, contribute significantly to their work-life enrichment, and hence, to the formation of happier families and brighter youth in India.

Moreover, such strategies would provide the Indian educational system with a competitive edge in the field of education management, administration, and leadership (Davis, 2010). Additionally, proper induction of the school teachers in the educational set up before commencing their job, along with specific ice-breaking sessions for better communication by the institute leaders would help a great deal in improving their performance and commitment to the profession (Schad, 2017). Some other strategies to improve the school teacher's sense of purposeful life and perseverance are listed as follows:

- Making use of techniques like meditation, mindfulness, learned optimism, creative visualisation
- Involving governance in the management of staff's psychological concerns by undertaking a risk-analysis of their emotional resilience, and formulating a plan to mitigate the adverse outcomes
- Promoting coaching for academic leaders to develop a conducive professional, non-judgmental, and confidential environment for the faculty and other staff members.
- Long-term approach of policy-making for educational goals to mitigate the impact of constant workload and pressure on the teaching staff

Conclusion

From a pragmatic point of view, the present study emphasises the need to improve school teacher's emotional intelligence and perseverance for better work-related outcomes. A plethora of researches has claimed that emotionally intelligent people are balanced, curious for learning, empathetic, and self-aware, leading to becoming change agents in society (Paulo & Lopes, 2016). Additionally, support for the claims that personal dispositions like perseverance have a significant role in handling stressful work environment, which contributes to the maintenance of purpose in life and a sense of directedness. The study results and their implications for policymakers and educational leaders serve an essential bridge in the gap within literature of educational psychology and positive organisational behaviour.

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