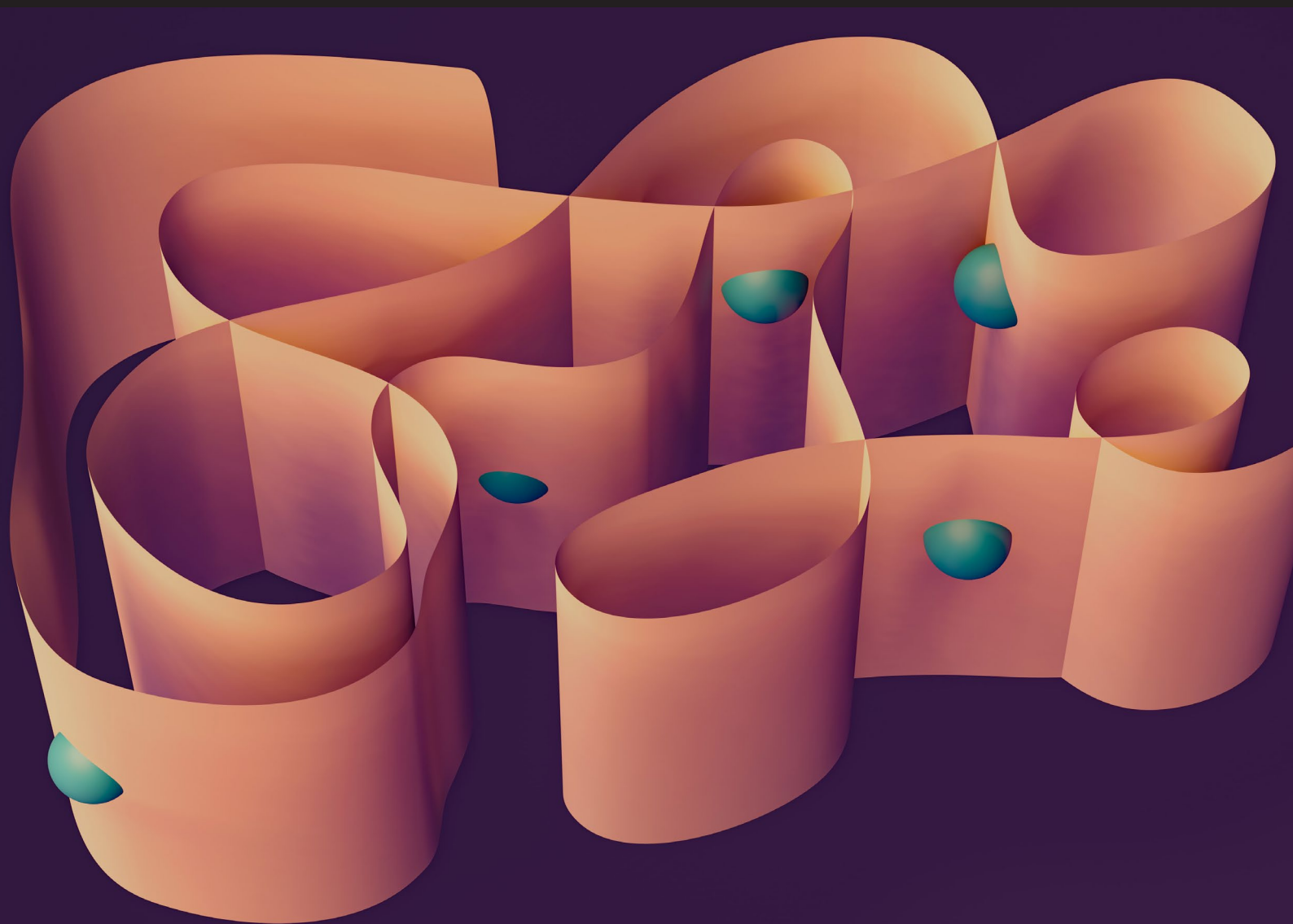


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Volume 8 – Issue 2 – Autumn 2022

Editors: Sharo Shafaie & Deborah G. Wooldridge



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Volume 8 – Issue 2

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**IAFOR Journal of Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences**

**Volume 8 – Issue 2 – Autumn 2022**

Edited by Dr Sharo Shafaie & Dr Deborah G. Wooldridge



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## The IAFOR's Journal of Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences

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Volume 8 – Issue 2 – 2022

Editors' Note:

We are happy to present to you the 2022's Autumn issue of our journal. The *IAFOR's Journal of Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences* covers a variety of empirical studies about applications of psychological theories in educational and mental health settings. Moreover, the journal showcases studies that investigate topics regarding human development, psychological outreach services, family studies, as well as articles addressing the needs of at-risk children, youth and families, and vulnerable populations.

The *IAFOR Journal of Psychology & the Behavioral Sciences* is a peer-reviewed, editorially independent, and an interdisciplinary journal associated with the IAFOR (The International Academic Forum) conferences on Psychology and the Behavioral Sciences. This issue is devoted to several interdisciplinary studies which represent diverse topics, cultures, and disciplines in the fields of psychology and the behavioral sciences. All manuscripts published in the journal have been subjected to the thorough and accepted processes of academic peer review. Some of the articles are original, and some are significantly revised versions of previously presented papers or published reports in the IAFOR's conferences and proceedings.

We want to express our sincere appreciation to all reviewers for taking time from their busy schedules to review each assigned manuscript and offer their professional expertise and recommendations for improvement of these published articles. Also, we like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work of our support staffs at the IAFOR who were involved with the publication of this journal.

Please note that we are seeking manuscripts for our upcoming 2023 issues. Below is the link to the journal's web page for your attention; please review this web page to become familiar with the journal's objectives and the submission guidelines for authors:

<http://iafor.org/publications/iafor-journals/iafor-journal-of-psychology-and-the-behavioral-sciences/>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us, otherwise please send your manuscript to the journal's editors below. Thank you for considering this invitation, and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best Regards,

Journal Editors

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Article 1:

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Article 2:

#### **Cross-Cultural Social Skills Instruction and Indirect Expressions: Psychoeducation in Japan's High-Context Culture**

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Article 3:

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Article 5:

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## **Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness of Heads of Academic Departments in Public Polytechnics in South West Nigeria**

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### Abstract

The study examined the emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness of HODs in public Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 confidence level. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all the 394 HODs in all the 18 public owned Polytechnics in South West Nigeria. The sample size comprised 197 HODs selected from 11 public Polytechnics using stratified and non-proportionate sampling techniques. Self-designed 25 items validated and reliable instrument,  $r = .89$  titled “Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire” (EIAEQ) was used for data collection. Data analysis was done using multiple Regression Analysis and Analysis of Variance. The result showed that emotional intelligence indicators jointly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness in the following descending order: self-awareness, social-awareness, relationship awareness, and self- management significantly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness and that there was no statistically significant sex difference on emotional intelligence of HODs in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The result further showed that gender was not statistically significant on administrative effectiveness as male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on administrative effectiveness. It was recommended inter alia that the appointment of HODs should be democratized to enable members of the department to have opportunity of assessing the emotional intelligence level of the aspiring HODs.

*Keywords:* administrative effectiveness, emotional intelligence, head of academic departments, public polytechnics, South West Nigeria



Polytechnics in Nigeria are tertiary educational institutions established to train skilled, middle and high-level manpower in vocational and technical education and training, to enhance industrial productivity and promotion of better quality of life of the citizenry as well as in the enhancement of the socio-economic development of the country. Arising from the nature of programs offered by Polytechnics, the institutions are becoming more and more complex and high-tech driven. The effective functioning of Polytechnics has a direct link with the availability of human resources, especially, the academic staff who are expected to carry out the tasks of teaching, research and community service. These set of people are grouped into departments based on their areas of specialization. The department is the smallest academic unit in any tertiary educational institution. Every department is headed by a senior academic staff designated as the Head of Department. Oyebade, Oladipo and Adeyanju (2020), describe the Head of Department as the administrative and academic helmsman of a department who contributes to the realization of the institution's strategic plans through the provision of appropriate management and academic leadership within the department.

As observed by Ada and Okoli (2019), an educational institution is regarded as being successful if it has a clear sense of direction and is administered by heads who are efficacious instructional leaders. There is no doubt therefore, that the roles of heads of departments are increasingly becoming complex and movement through the academic carrier ladder to become an administrative staff is not adequate a preparation for overseeing the day-to-day administration of a department. Institutional heads are therefore, required to be abreast of the proficiency needed to operate successfully in the complex environment (Adedokun, 2014).

At the departmental level, the HOD has the responsibility of enhancing the learning outcomes of students and the effectiveness of academic members of staff in the discharge of their academic responsibilities by way of partnership with all those concerned with the system (Nzomo, 2012). As human beings, the HODs have feelings which usually represent their psychological and emotional state of mind, and these feelings and dispositions have been shown to determine the intellectual power of the administrator, attachment to accomplishments and setbacks as well as logical and analytical propositions. Perhaps, emotion is a very crucial factor in institutional management (Cook, 2006). These feelings and mood potentialities have been handled by Emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is the capacity of an individual to recognize, examine and be in charge of his/her feelings and to acknowledge them in others, occasioned by an amalgam of self-consciousness, self-management, humanitarian and interpersonal management. In certain circumstances, emotions have an overriding influence on the behavior of people than reasoning (Bradberry & Greaves 2009). Lash (2009) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to recognize one's feelings and those of others, to inspire oneself towards the effective management of feelings and in one's interaction with people. Similarly, Oyakhilome (2009) asserted that emotional intelligence is an integral part of basic human characteristics that are instrumental to keeping a check on the behavioral patterns of an individual. The major emphasis is on the identification and observance of emotions during a person's interaction with others, observe his/her responsibilities and conform with the environment or situations.

Emotional intelligence therefore, has to do with the capability to identify and guide one's emotional tendencies, indicating understanding and reasonableness for the purpose of finding out mind-boggling impediments with flexibility and reasonableness. There is the need for educational leaders to evolve competence in emotional intelligence of self-management to enable them manage others effectively, since, it will be difficult to give to others what one does

not have. In a nutshell, self-management has to do with the individual's capability to manipulate deplorable emotions, such as apprehension, anger etc., in addition to curb emotional thoughtlessness.

The emphasis of this study is on the Goleman's (2002) four indicators of emotional intelligence which are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Self-awareness is crucial to getting to know others and showing understanding. It encompasses the emotional intelligence capabilities of motivation, confidence and emotional check. Social awareness helps to regulate the way one copes with relationships in terms of empathy, organizational consciousness and service orientation. Self-management denotes the propensity to regulate the disturbing reactions such as worries and displeasures. Relationship management involves the control of emotions in others. It has direct impact on relationship with other people. In fact, the effectiveness of one's work personal skills is based on the ability to accommodate or control the emotions of another person.

Onote (2020) asserted that management of educational institutions in Nigeria has been characterized by high level of exhibition of amenable psychological state. Obviously, many institutional administrators in Nigeria seem to be at best be bothered about things affecting them and their kinsmen. A significant relationship is therefore, found to exist between institutional administrators' emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness, such that an emotional intelligent administrator tends to be thoughtful and sympathetic in relating with the staff members.

Effective institutional administration in the contemporary societies is measured by the extent at which the administrators carry on themselves and how well they treat others. Efficacious leadership is not only determined by cerebral capability or professional competence, it is connected with the individual's distinctive attributes and personal idiosyncrasies, such as compassion and insight, resilience and influence. Present leaders should therefore have the capability and flexibility to adjust to the dynamic nature of human resources, because, it is these human capabilities that distinguish effective administrators (Liman, et al, 2019).

Research has shown that the level of emotional intelligence has direct and positive relationship with administrative effectiveness. Jones (2012) discovered that a significant statistical association existed between emotional intelligence and administrative practices among senior university administrators, as evident in the display of moderate requisite emotional ability. The study further showed that the Administrators' overall emotional intelligence and other elements of emotional intelligence were significantly connected with the "enabling others to act" constituent of the administrative operation inventory.

Similarly, Adeniyi and Omoteso (2014) reported that a significant proportion of school administrators in the sampled area were highly efficacious, such that a large number of them possessed dominant emotional intelligence, and that there was a significant correlation between the extent of emotional state and administrative effectiveness. The study therefore, concluded that the administrators had a very high level of emotional intelligence and that had significantly influenced their administrative effectiveness. Nelson and Low (2011) found that a large number of effective managers possessed a high level of emotional intelligence and that emotional intelligence is an important factor in the identification of effective managers, nevertheless, it can also be associated with effective task accomplishment. Studies (Oke, 2019 and Oparaji, *et al.*, 2020) indicated that the connection between the mind and emotions appears to be ambiguous to a great number of people. This is because of the feeling that acceptable ideas can

be attainable without emotions. Nevertheless, sincere emotions have been found to have significant association with positive thinking.

The foregoing is an indication that the contemporary institutional administrators have crucial roles to play in providing appropriate administrative and instructional leadership, there is therefore, the need to sustain the lofty ideology in professional affirmation, communication prowess, relational ability and academic responsibility. The prosperity of any educational institution is hinged on the commitment, good thinking and proficiency of the administrator, hence, the indispensability of emotional intelligence of the administrator in the success of any organization.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The head of any academic department in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions, especially, Polytechnics as applicable in this study is expected to provide both administrative and academic leadership that enhance effective and efficient day-to-day operation of the department. Experiences and observations of the researchers have however, shown that in some of the tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria, the administration at the departmental level is occasionally characterized by frictions among the head, the staff members and students, thereby impeding the healthy interpersonal connections and team spirit among members of the department with regards to the accomplishment of goals. Some of the departmental heads seem to be unconscious of their emotional states as regards others and this has implications on how well they are able to carry on their emotions and those of others. Equally, some of them appear to be emotionally unintelligent especially in the areas of planning, decisions making and conflict management.

It is as a result of these that the study examined the emotional intelligence of heads of departments in relation to administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study was to examine the nexus between the emotional intelligence of heads of Department and administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the joint contributions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to administrative effectiveness of heads of Departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.
2. Assess the relative contributions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to administrative effectiveness in the Polytechnics.
3. Investigate the difference in administrative effectiveness and emotional intelligence of male and female HODs in Polytechnics

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study at .05 confidence level:

- Ho1: There is no significant joint contributions of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to the prediction of administrative effectiveness of HODs in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.
- Ho2: There is no significant relative prediction of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics.
- Ho3: There is no significant difference in administrative effectiveness and emotional intelligence of male and female HODs in Polytechnics.

### **Methodology**

The design for this study was descriptive survey. The population comprised all the 394 heads of Department in all the 18 public owned Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The sample size comprised 197 HODs selected from 11 Polytechnics (five Federal, seven States) using stratified sampling technique. The stratification was based on institutional location, ownership and gender of the HODs. Non-proportionate sampling technique was used to select the departments in each of the institutions sampled for the study.

A self-designed instrument titled “Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire” (EIAEQ) was used in collecting data for the study. The instrument was a 25-item questionnaire with five sub-scales that sought information on HODs’ self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management as well as administrative effectiveness. The instrument was validated by Senior Academic Staff in Educational Psychology and Educational Management in University of Lagos, and Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was determined using split half method with the application of Spearman Brown Prophecy formula, and a reliability coefficient of .89 was obtained. Arising from the high value of the co-efficient, the instrument was adjudged to be reliable for use in the study. The services of four trained research assistants were employed in the administration of the instrument.

Data collected were analyzed using Multiple Regression Analysis and Analysis of variance statistical tools at .05 confidence level.

### **Results**

Ho1: There is no significant joint contribution of emotional intelligence (self- awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to the prediction of administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses, the result is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1***Joint Prediction of HODs Administrative Effectiveness by Emotional Intelligence*

Multiple R= .625

Multiple R<sup>2</sup> = .556Multiple R<sup>2</sup> (Adjusted) = .554

Standard Error of Estimate = 1.93247

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	18254.530	4	2281.816	611.018	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	3073.451	192	3.734		
Total	21327.981	196			

a. Predictors: (Constant), self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management

b. Dependent Variable: administrative effectiveness

From Table 1 the administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments by the independent variables was tested using Multiple Regression Analysis. The regression table reveals that multiple R = .625, R<sup>2</sup> = .556, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .554, Standard Error of Estimate = 1.93247 and p-value = .000. Specifically, the independent variables jointly made 55.6% of the variance of administrative effectiveness. This means that emotional intelligence examined in this study (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) had significant joint prediction of HODs administrative effectiveness.

H02: There is no significant relative contribution of emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to the prediction of administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria.

Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses, the result is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2***Relative Prediction of Independent Variable to the HODs Administrative Effectiveness*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-6.755	.744		-9.078	.000
	Self-awareness	.740	.155	.068	4.778	.000
	Self-management	.057	.014	.069	4.242	.000
	Social awareness	.585	.025	.478	23.496	.000
	Relationship Management	.120	.025	.089	4.850	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Administrative effectiveness

Table 2 shows the relative prediction by the independent variables (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) to dependent variable

(administrative effectiveness). In the following descending order, the result shows that self-awareness ( $\beta = .740$ ,  $p < .000$ ), social-awareness ( $\beta = .585$ ,  $p < .000$ ), relationship awareness ( $\beta = .120$ ,  $p < .000$ ), and self-management ( $\beta = .057$ ,  $p < .000$ ) significantly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness.

H03: There is no significant difference in administrative effectiveness and emotional intelligence of male and female heads of departments in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. Two-way Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis; the result is presented in Table 3

**Table 3**

*Summary of Sex, Emotional Intelligence and Administrative Effectiveness of HODs in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria*

Source	Type III Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	408.425 <sup>a</sup>	11	37.130	.539	.616
Intercept	574086.064	1	574086.064	8336.277	.000
Sex	4.154	1	4.154	.060	.762
Emotional intelligence	6.817	3	2.273	.040	.841
Admin effectiveness	5.780	2	2.890	.041	.938
Sex*emotional intelligence	5.798	3	1.932	.128	.720
Sex* administrative effectiveness	30.545	2	15.273	.222	.713
Sex*emotional intelligence*administrative effectiveness	197.446	4	49.361	.717	.114
Error	13429.046	195	68.866		
Total	713560.000	197			
Corrected Total	13837.471	196			

The Result in Table 3 shows that, there was no statistically significant sex difference on emotional intelligence of HODs in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria  $F(1,196) = .060$ ,  $P > .05$ . Specifically, male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on emotional intelligence. This rejects the hypothesis that, male HODs will differ significantly from their female counterparts on emotional intelligence.

The result of the analysis equally revealed that, gender was not statistically significant on administrative effectiveness  $F(3,196) = .040$ ,  $P > .05$ . Male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on administrative effectiveness. This implies the rejection of the hypothesis which stated that, there is no significant gender difference on administrative effectiveness of HODs in polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. The result of the ANOVA statistic computed also indicated no interactive effect of gender and emotional intelligence  $F(3,196) = .720$ ,  $P > .05$  the same way no interactive effect of gender and administrative effectiveness  $F(2,196) = .720$ ,  $P > .05$  of HODs in polytechnics in South West Nigeria. The result of the analysis further showed that, there was no interactive effect of sex, emotional intelligence and administrative effectiveness of HODs in polytechnics in South West Nigeria  $F(4,196) = 2.191$ ,  $P > .05$ .

## Discussion of Findings

The first result showed that the indices of emotional intelligence examined in the study (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management) had significant joint prediction of HODs administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. This is indicative of the fact that the efficaciousness of departmental administrators with regards to the day-to-day operation was significantly influenced by all the components of their emotional intelligence which is evident in the capacity to be conscious of the way and manner in which interpersonal relationships are handled among the staff members. This present study confirms the earlier studies, such as Bonnyventure, Cheluget and Ngala (2022) who reported that emotional intelligence of administrator had an enhancing cushioning impact on the association between collaborative management and task accomplishment. Relatedly, Cayaks and Eskili (2021) discovered that a positive, moderate and significant association existed between administrators' leadership disposition and emotional intelligence. Also, reviewing the place of emotional intelligence in educational institutions, Danilor and Mihailora (2020) declared that emotional intelligence occupies a strategic place in the educational institutions like every other organizations. This is due to the fact that thoughtful school administrators are capable of controlling their emotions and show positive feelings towards the conducts of staff members and students, and this goes a long way in creating a better institutional environment.

The study also showed that in the descending order, self-awareness, social awareness, relationship management and self-management significantly predicted HODs administrative effectiveness. This means that self-awareness mostly predicted administrative effectiveness, while self-management minimally predicted administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. The present study upholds the earlier one by Kim and Wee (2020) which showed that self-awareness had a direct positive link with job satisfaction and effective task accomplishment among various individuals in different organizations. Furthermore, Iroabuchi and Madumere-Obike (2019) found that the performance of teachers in secondary schools was greatly determined by the principals' self-awareness component of emotional intelligence. Also, Diamond (2013) declared that self-awareness has been identified as predictor of service delivery as it is instrumental to understanding the significance of an individual's feelings in relation to task accomplishment. This is because of the fact that successful administrative fulfillment is to a large extent hinged on self-control, and administrators need to control their feelings, conducts, convictions and emotions with a view to paying appropriate attention to administrative functions, they are saddled with.

The last result indicated that there was no statistically significant sex difference on emotional intelligence of HODs in Polytechnics in South West, Nigeria. This means that the male HODs did not differ significantly from their female counterparts on emotional intelligence. The study further showed that the sex of HODs was not statistically significant on administrative effectiveness. This suggests that the sex of the HODs was not a determinant of administrative effectiveness in Polytechnics. The study is inconsistent with the earlier study by Hayat *et al.* (2016) who reported that female secondary school teachers possessed superior emotional intelligent and engagement in continuing professional development programs than the male teachers. Similarly, the study of Gulla and Masrur (2019) revealed that there were variations based on gender regarding personal job fit and emotional intelligence of teachers, and that male teachers were better attached to job and possessed high emotional intelligence than female teachers. Nonetheless, gender disparity was not noticeable as far as job performance was concerned.

With regard to administrative effectiveness, Omoike and Idogho (2011) found that administrative dexterity of HODs in Nigeria universities was high, since no significant difference existed in the aspect of sex. Mether *et al.* (2015) also found that no significant relationship existed between school administrators' gender and their effectiveness in human resource management, student affairs management and financial management.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of this study have shown that emotional intelligent is a strong determinant of administrative effectiveness of heads of academic departments in Polytechnics. Specifically, the study indicated that the indicators of emotional intelligence studied, namely; self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management jointly predicted administrative effectiveness. Relatively, self-awareness mostly predicted administrative effectiveness, while the least prediction of effectiveness was evident in self-management. The study further showed that gender had to place in determining the emotional intelligence capability and administrative effectiveness. It can therefore, be concluded that the more likely they are able to display emotional intelligence, the more effective they are likely to be in the day-to-day administration of their respective departments, all things being equal. In this case, the HODs who display a high level of emotional intelligence has the tendency of better positioning to cope with the dictates and intricacies of institutional administration in the contemporary societies. Being thoughtful of others will facilitate the capacity to inspire the staff members and provide appropriate guidance for the enhancement of organizational cohesion. Emotional intelligence is thus, an indispensable factor towards effective institutional leadership.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions made from the study, the following recommendations are advanced:

There is the need to place much attention to emotional intelligence in the appointment of Heads of Department. In doing this, the selection process of HODs based on seniority has to be looked into. Democratization of the appointment is hereby suggested. Through this, members of the department will have opportunity to assess the emotional intelligence level of the aspiring HOD. This is expected to enhance the election of individuals who will participate in efficient and effective administrative practices at the departmental level.

As a matter of policy, management of Polytechnics should put in place machineries to ensure that orientation/ induction programs are organized for the newly appointed/ elected HODs with training on the indices of emotional intelligence as a component. Serving HODs should also be provided with the opportunities for Mandatory Continuing Professional Education on the successful utilization of emotional intelligence in order to promote smooth operation of the departmental affairs.

Heads of Departments should constantly appraise their interpersonal relationship with departmental staff members to ascertain the extent of the realization of the anticipated results. Any observed display of low level of emotional intelligence by HOD should be referred to the institutional Guidance Counselors, hence, counseling units in all polytechnics should be strengthened.



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**Cross-Cultural Social Skills Instruction and Indirect Expressions:  
Psychoeducation in Japan's High-Context Culture**

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### Abstract

In recent years, the number of international students in Japan has been increasing. They suffer from understanding indirect expressions in communication with Japanese people. In this study, we implemented and assessed the impacts of a novel instructional program aimed at teaching social skills in a high-context culture characterized by the frequent use of indirect expressions. We conducted two experiments with students in Japan. Experiment 1 included semi-structured interviews with international students in Japan. Interview analysis revealed that it is difficult to learn to use and understand the intent behind indirect expressions without having first-hand experience communicating with Japanese people who use indirect language, particularly regarding “*sassuru*” – expressions that allow for multiple interpretations. Experiment 1 highlights the presence of problems that cannot be solved simply by learning Japanese and the challenges of adapting to communication styles characterized by the frequent use of indirect expressions in high-context cultures. Based on Experiment 1, we provided social skills instruction to an experimental group of international students as a teaching intervention. Next, participants in the experimental group and control group (who had not received the social skills instruction) completed questionnaires before and after the experiment. Data analysis verified that the intervention participants (1) developed more awareness of, and interest in, the Japanese culture; (2) became more confident in their interpretation of expressions with multiple meanings and of silence; and (3) became more accepting of ambiguous expressions because they had developed greater understanding. Conversely, the control group participants did not experience similar notable changes.

*Keywords:* cross-cultural comparison, indirect expressions, social skills, international students, Japan

Recent years have seen an increase in the number of international students, and this trend has attracted considerable attention. However, this upsurge makes it difficult for educators to address their problems individually; thus, a broader approach to international education is needed. Additionally, recent research has highlighted inadequacies in international education, and several studies have examined the problems encountered by students pursuing education in foreign countries (Tanaka, 2000). For example, international students living in Japan may have difficulty adapting to many cultural differences, especially regarding various aspects of communication, such as the use of “indirect expressions.” In Japanese culture, people commonly use – and prefer to use – indirect expressions in conversations to avoid conflict (Takeuchi, Imahori, & Matsumoto, 2001).

International students in Japan often find it difficult to understand these indirect expressions, and this situation can lead to additional misunderstandings and further hinder communication. In 1987, Moyer identified “ambiguity” related to some types of expressions as a factor that contributes to stress in the daily lives of many international students (Moyer, 1987). Tanaka and Fujihara (1992) also pointed to difficulty understanding the meaning of certain expressions as a source of confusion for international students in Japan. Hofstede (1996) identified the difference in “direct” and “indirect” communication between the cultures of the United States and Japan as a contributing factor to culture shock for those adapting to life. Takahashi (1991) also argued that one of the factors in cross-cultural maladjustment is the difference in communication style, namely, “indirect expressions.” Notably, for many sojourners, these differences in communication can be a greater source of difficulty than differences in values (Shimoda & Tanaka, 2005). For example, foreigners in Japan have reported that, in their communication with locals, even determining whether their responses mean “yes” or “no” is a major source of frustration (Nakano, Okunishi, & Tanaka, 2015). Researchers have actively accumulated knowledge about the experiences of international students in Japan since the number of international students there increased in the 1990s. According to the “Intercultural Education Scheme” (Shiratsuchi & Tanaka, 2016), the difficulties and dissatisfactions related to communication have not changed over the past 20 years. A relatively new study (Nakano, S., Tanaka, T., & Simic-Yamashita, M. (2017)) that examined intercultural difficulties among international students in Japan also noted difficulties in understanding indirect expressions.

Kleinberg and Hall (1979) classified culture into two parts: high-context and low-context, and there have been many related studies, such as those examining indirect expressions. “High-context culture” means people communicate based on inherent understanding. In contrast in “low context cultures,” communication is expected to be direct, precise, and explicit. According to Hall (1976) and Gudykunst and Ting-Toomy (1988), communication in the United States is primarily “low-context,” whereas communication in Asia, including China, Japan, and Korea, is primarily “high-context.” Relatedly, Hasegawa and Gudykunst (1998) compared silence in Japan and America and identified the differences between clear and tacit communications.

However, even among Asian countries, which are considered a high-context culture compared to America, Japanese culture is unique in its indirect expressions. For example, Ko, Chao, and Dong (2000) conducted a study contrasting verbal communication in Japan and China. They examined indirect expressions and the related strategy points used to avoid direct statements and questions in conversation, such as euphemisms, rhetorical questions, and omissions, used in conversation. Although the results showed that the two cultures share some common strategies and frequency of use of indirect expressions, especially in the context of requests, invitations, and rejection, Chinese involves lower-context communication than Japanese and

emphasizes the rightful persuasiveness of assertion. While Japanese speakers convey the surrounding information but not conclusions. In other words, in Japanese, speakers expect conversation partners to deduce the speaker's implied conclusions; thus, they do not have to state them overtly.

These differences in communication styles can hinder cross-cultural adaptation. In other words, learning processes, such as acquiring new skills and understanding cultural standards and proper behaviors, are essential for cross-cultural adaptation. Some methods have been developed to approach this topic from different points of view, including “cognition,” “emotion,” and “behavior.” For instance, some of these methods include (1) role-plays to improve students' awareness of their own and other cultures, (2) culture assimilators to help students understand the differences in causal attributions of various incidents, and (3) simulations to provide students with experiences of different-culture situations (Yaping, 2003).

If behavioral instruction using the role-plays is carried out after cognitive instruction, students can grasp the meaning or function of behavior and thus improve their cognitive understanding (Tanaka, 2000). Furnham (1983) and Furnham and Bochner (1982) mentioned that the difficulties foreigners experience are related to a lack of social skills, and the more they develop social skills in the host country, the less hardship they experience. Social skills education uses role-play to promote cultural understanding in terms of both knowledge and behavior; because psychological knowledge and skill are used, it is one of the methods used in psychoeducation. Teaching in Japanese education is mostly centered on knowledge. Therefore, receiving behavioral instruction after cognitive instruction might help students better understand Japanese expressions. Regarding psychoeducation, a cross-cultural psycho-educational program for international students in Japan was conducted with the goal of enhancing cross-cultural contact, which supports psychological, sociocultural, and cross-cultural adjustment for international students (Tanaka, 2012). The process by which behavioral instruction is carried out after cognitive instruction is an important educational feature.

International students who cannot understand indirect expressions must master the conventions related to the use of indirect expressions in conversations in Japanese. Regarding how skills are learned, there are many studies on role-play scenarios such as “asking directions,” “visiting a professor,” and so on (e.g., Tanaka & Nakashima, 2006), but indirect expressions are often treated as only one part of this instruction. In comparison, there is only limited research on Japanese indirect expressions that are not well understood by international students.

The available research on how skills are learned includes several different skill-learning scenarios. Although some literature addresses indirect expressions, skills-learning research focusing on indirect expression is limited. Neither skills instruction nor indirect expression has been studied adequately. Thus, the aim of this study was to create and assess a training program that can be further developed to improve cross-cultural adaptation among future international students in Japan. We expect that, after participating in the skills training developed in this study, students will demonstrate a greater understanding of Japanese culture and more confidence and motivation to interact with Japanese hosts after participating in the social skill training. Although this is a very small study, it is intended to provide content and suggestions, so the program can be further developed and evaluated for use on a bigger scale in a broader context.

## Methodology

Participants were collected using the snowball technique. They are international students at the same university. They were asked to participate in this study after being informed that they would be invited to attend a session to learn about communication specific to Japanese culture. They were also promised that the results of the experiment would not be used for any purpose other than the research and that anonymity and privacy would be ensured. After carefully explaining these points in writing and orally, I obtained written consent to cooperate in the research. This research plan was approved by the Ethics Committee of the second author's university. All collaborators cooperated with me until the end of the experiment. First, we conducted a group interview in a 60-minute session at the classroom on the university on campus in Japan to survey international students about problems encountered in communicating in a high-context culture. Social skills training is one aspect of psychoeducation that comprises psychological knowledge and technological skills (Takana, 2000). Interviews were recorded with a voice recorder, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using the KJ method-Type (Kawakita, 1996). The KJ method was invented by Jiro Kawakita, a cultural anthropologist, to summarize data, and KJ is named after the inventor's initials.

Based on the results of that survey, we tested a social skills training focused on behavioral culture-related instruction using an experimental group that received the training and a control group that did not (Experiment 2). Participants in Experiment 1 were asked to participate as an experimental group in Experiment 2. The training focused on indirect expression to help students studying in high-context cultures improve their understanding and use of the communication style therein. In high-context cultures, people use vague expressions from which some of the meaning can be inferred because it is not entirely expressed in words. Conversely, when a person wants to assert something in a conversation, they must do so without hurting or insulting others by avoiding words that may reflect a rude attitude. The educational method of this research will be the key to creating good relationships with people in both low-context and high-context cultures without misunderstandings.

In cross-cultural adaptation research, there is a hypothesis that increasing social skills promotes cross-cultural adaptation (Okunishi & Tanaka, 2011). According to this hypothesis, acquiring social skills achieve the formation of interpersonal relationships with host people and contributes to the promotion of cross-cultural adaptation. This study is based on this hypothesis. In other words, we conducted social skills training and examined its effects.

### Experiment 1 – Interview

#### Purpose

We conducted a survey via interviews with international students in Japan to examine expressions they found difficult to understand when communicating with people in Japanese.

#### Methodology

##### *Participants and Study Period*

Seven foreign students in Japan were recruited using the snowball technique. Data for this experiment were collected in January 2011 and January 2012. The entire study (including both

experiments) was supported by KAKENHI (Grant-in-Aid for Challenging Exploratory Research NO. 15H0345617, representative Tomoko TANAKA).

### ***Procedure***

We conducted a semi-structured interview using the following questions: (1) Have you experienced the use of indirect expressions in Japan? (2) Are there any unique expressions in your country? (3) Are there any Japanese expressions that you have questions about? (4) Are there any Japanese expressions that you want to learn? The interview was conducted in Japanese (although some English words were also used) because all participants speak and understand Japanese fluently.

### ***Analysis***

We analyzed informants' comments according to the KJ method (Kawakita, 1996). Their responses and comments were sorted by their units of meaning. First, we extracted segments of the transcribed narratives corresponding to points in the interviews. Then, all information was written on individual cards. The cards were carefully read. Cards containing similar content were grouped together. The contents are summarized in Table 1 for each question.

### **Results and Discussion**

Seven international students participated in this 60-minute session. The participants included two male and five female international students aged between 21 and 26 ( $M = 23.5$ ,  $SD = 2.2$ ). They were from East Asia, and their level of Japanese language was advanced.

The average time of their stay in Japan was 3.0 years ( $SD = 2.0$ ). The largest number is students from China, the second is Korean, and the third is Taiwanese (JASSO, 2018). International students from East Asia account for over 50% of the total. In this study, we decided to investigate East Asian students because of the largest number in Japan. However, because indirect representation is difficult, not only for students from East Asia but also for students from other countries, we believe the results of this research could also be utilized with students from other regions.

Table 1 shows the interview questions and responses (Table 1). All participants reported that they had experienced indirect expressions in Japan. As typical examples of indirect expressions, they identified “next time” [indirect refusal with vague promising about the next time], “indirect refusal,” and “ambiguous message.” In the list of questionable expressions, the participants included examples of indirect refusal and cases of receiving an apology from someone who had apparently done no harm.

Another example in the same category is difficulty in the interpretation of “*kekko-desu*.” The participants often did not know how they should interpret and respond to such ambiguous expressions.

In the list of Japanese expressions that they wanted to learn more about, the participants included some examples of indirect expressions and some examples of expressions allowing multiple interpretations, such as “*sumimasen*” and “*kekko-desu*” mentioned in Item (3). These responses from the participants indicate the presence of problems that cannot be solved simply by learning the Japanese language. Underlying these problems was difficulty with “*sassuru*,”



the meaning from the situational context. For example, Participant B remarked, “It is not difficult to learn the language, but it is to learn indirect expressions.” Similarly, Participant E remarked, “*Iidesu*” is an ambiguous expression because it can be interpreted either as yes or no.” These are typical characteristics of communication in a high-context culture. It seems that international students in Japan experience difficulties in adapting to communication styles typical of a high-context culture characterized by the frequent use of indirect expressions. The results of this study were used to identify essential skills, and this information was used to inform the skills instruction presented in Experiment 2.

**Table 1**

*Answers Given in the Interview Survey*

Q1 Did you experience the use of indirect expressions in Japan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I experienced “indirect refusal.” (A) (D) (E) (F)</li> <li>• Japanese used “<i>Tatema</i>.” (B)</li> <li>• “<i>Kangaesasetekudasai</i>.” (C)</li> <li>• Nothing. (G)</li> </ul>
Q2 Are there any unique expressions in your country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Japanese language is not very difficult (D)</li> <li>• Studying indirect expressions is difficult. (E)</li> </ul>
Q3 Do you have questions about any Japanese expressions?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Kekkoudesu</i>” ... is it “Yes” or “No”? (A)</li> <li>• “<i>Keigo</i>” (B)</li> <li>• “<i>Iidesu</i>” (E)</li> </ul>
Q4 Are there any Japanese expressions that you want to learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think “<i>Sumimasen</i>” is very useful. (B)</li> <li>• “<i>Gomennnasai</i>.” (C)</li> <li>• I want to use Japanese expressions properly. (F)</li> </ul>

*Note:* A–G means participants

## Experiment 2 – Social Skills Instruction

### Purpose

In this study, based on the results of Experiment 1, social skills instruction aimed at international students was carried out, with a focus on indirect expressions, and the effectiveness of this instruction was investigated. The control group was not given social skills instruction. Pre- and post-intervention ratings were obtained to assess change in cultural adjustment.

### Methodology

#### *Participants and Study Period*

The control group was given questionnaires assessing changes in their cultural adjustment experiences. One month after the first session, they completed the questionnaire again. Experimental group data were collected from November 2012 through January 2013; control group data were collected from November through December 2012.

## ***Procedures***

Each participant completed a 60 min session. Before the session, we described cultural assimilation and indirect expressions issues to the participants, provided explanations, and conducted a skills-learning session focused on indirect expressions following Tanaka and Nakashima's method (2006). There were three topics of skills instruction: “indirect refusal (Session 1),” “interpretation of an ambiguous word (Session 2),” and “silence (Session 3).” The sessions consisted of the following eight parts: (1) explanation of topics, (2) interpretation, (3) checking answers, (4) explanation of Japanese behavior, (5) model play by native Japanese people, (6) role-play, (7) feedback, and (8) summary. We used video cameras to record and give feedback. In each session, participants evaluated their own use of indirect expressions. All participants took part in and completed all eight sessions. In addition, the control group did not participate in any language sessions.

The content of the sessions consisted of (1) cultural assimilation, (2) pre-session ratings (5-point scale from 1 = *disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*), (3) skills training, and (4) post-session ratings (with the same 5-point scale). The data were collected after each session.

## ***Participant Characteristics***

We asked all the participants (in both groups) to provide information about their personal experiences. Specifically, they provided details about their age, home country, Japanese language level, years of stay in Japan, Japanese language use frequency, and interactions with Japanese people.

## ***Ratings of Learning in the Session***

After each skills-learning session, we asked participants to evaluate themselves on whether they could use the skills well in the session and to rate their awareness of indirect expressions, as well as other questions, using a 5-point scale (1 *disagree* =, 5 = *strongly agree*), based on the methods of Shimoda and Tanaka (2007). The skills-learning questionnaire was conducted in Japanese.

## ***Ratings of Attitudes Toward Japanese Culture***

Before and after each session, we asked participants to evaluate themselves on their awareness of Japanese culture and interaction with Japanese people with the scale of Nakashima and Tanaka (2008). Nine evaluation items were answered using a 5-point scale (1 = *disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). The questionnaire regarding attitudes toward Japanese culture was conducted in Japanese. Data were analyzed using *t*-tests.

## **Results**

In the experimental group, 8 participants included one male and seven female international students aged between mid-20 and over 30 ( $M = 23.5$ ;  $SD = 2.2$ ) (see Table 2). In the control group, 8 international students participated in this survey, aged between their early 20s to 30 or older ( $M = 24.3$ ;  $SD = 2.0$ ; Table 3). No confounding factors could interfere with the study results, as all participants (from both groups) were enrolled in the same Japanese language class, and none were participating in any club or organized activity that included Japanese people.

**Table 2**  
*Characteristics of Experimental Group Participants*

	<u>Groups A–D</u>			
	A	B	C	D
Age	Early 20s	Early 20s	Late 20s	Over 30
Home country	China	China	Taiwan	Taiwan
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female
Japanese level	Upper	Upper	Upper	Upper
Years of stay in Japan	2 months	2 months	32 months	8 months
Number of hours per day you converse in Japanese	2 hr	3–4 hr	1 hr	4 hr
Number of Japanese friends	7 friends	6 friends	10 friends	10 friends
	<u>Groups E–H</u>			
	E	F	G	H
Age	Early 20s	Early 20s	Late 20s	Mid 10s
Home country	Taiwan	China	China	Korea
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female
Japanese level	Upper Level	Upper Level	Upper Level	Upper Level
Years of stay in Japan	9 months	2 months	3 months	18 months
Hours per day you converse in Japanese	1 hr	4 hr	3 hr	All day
Number of Japanese friends	30 friends	2 friends	30 friends	> 10 friends

**Table 3**  
*Characteristics of Control Group Participants*

	<u>Groups A–D</u>			
	A	B	C	D
Age	Late 20s	Late 20s	Over 30	Late 20s
Home country	Korea	Taiwan	China	China
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Female
Japanese level	Beginner	Beginner	Beginner	Beginner
Stay length in Japan	1 month	25 months	24 months	1 month
Hours per day conversing in Japanese	0 hr	0.5 hr	≤ 3 hr	4 hr
Number of Japanese friends	5 friends	Many	Few	5 friends
	<u>Groups E–H</u>			
	E	F	G	H
Age	Late 20s	Early 20s	Late 20s	Mid-20s
Home country	Taiwan	China	China	Korea
Gender	Female	Female	Female	Female
Japanese level	Beginner	Upper Level	Upper Level	Upper Level
Stay length in Japan	2 months	2 months	3 months	18 months
Hours per day conversing in Japanese	1 hr	4 hr	3 hr	All day
Number of Japanese friends	5 friends	2 friends	30 friends	> 10 friends

### **Participants' Ratings of Learning in the Sessions**

After each skill-learning session, ratings were obtained on how well students thought they had mastered the skills covered in sessions 1 through 3 (“indirect refusal,” “interpretation of an ambiguous word,” and “silence”). We used ANOVA to test the ratings on skills-learning from Session 1 through Session 3 in the experimental group and examine the changes across the three sessions. However, no significant differences were found in any of the items;  $F(2, 21) = 3.47, p = .90 (p > 0.05)$ .

### **Attitudes Toward Japanese Culture**

In the experimental group, before and after the sessions, I asked the participants to evaluate themselves on their awareness of Japanese culture and their interaction with Japanese people

(Table 4). The result of the *t*-test indicated significant increases in the following five question items (significance set at  $p < .05$ ).

Q7 “I have enough self-confidence to communicate with Japanese people”:  $t(14) = 2.36, p = 0.03$ .

Q10 “When I communicate with other people, I talk ambiguously”:  $t(14) = 3.30, p = 0.01$ .

Q16 “I can understand what other people want to say, even if they don’t give a clear answer to me”:  $t(14) = 2.15, p = 0.04$ .

Q18 “I understand why silence is used in conversations”:  $t(14) = 3.13, p = 0.01$ .

Q11 It was a reverse item, “When I communicate with other people, I don’t like the silence,” and was significantly decreased:  $t(14) = 2.25, p = 0.04$ .

Because the sample for the *t*-test was small, Table 5 summarizes how ratings increased, decreased, or did not change by group (experimental and control) and among individual participants. Table 5 represents the number of informants. Items Q2, Q7, Q10, Q11, Q16, and Q18 received increased ratings from at least four out of eight participants. These items are confidence in communicating with Japanese people and understanding ambiguity/silence in high-context cultures.

While there was no clear perception of improvement in the acquisition of the skills themselves, the results indicate an increase in confidence in communicating with the Japanese and understanding the use of ambiguity and silence in high-context cultures. Although three items (Q11, Q17, and Q19) were given higher ratings by four of the eight participants, no items were rated more highly by five or more participants. Moreover, the *t*-test results did not reveal statistically significant pre-post differences for any items.

We also used *t*-tests to examine differences between the experimental and control groups before and after the session. The results showed that the control group scored the following five items significantly higher than the experimental group in the pre-session evaluation (significance set at  $p < .05$ ).

Q7 “I have enough self-confidence to communicate with Japanese people”:  $t(14) = 2.36, p = 0.03$

Q10 “When I communicate with other people, I talk ambiguously”:  $t(14) = 3.30, p = 0.01$

Q11 “When I communicate with other people, I don’t like the silence”:  $t(14) = 2.25, p = 0.04$

Q16 “I can understand what other people want to say, even if they don’t give a clear answer to me”:  $t(14) = 2.15, p = 0.04$

Q18 “I understand why silence is used in conversations”:  $t(14) = 3.13, p = 0.01$ .

However, post-session evaluations showed no significant differences between the experimental and control groups. This result may be due to the experimental group’s increased understanding

and confidence in Japanese cultural communication. It also reflects the fact that the control group's evaluations did not change.

**Table 4**

*Results of Pre-Post Ratings of Attitude Toward Japanese Culture (Experimental Group)*

Questions		Participants								M	SD
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		
(1) I understand realistic ways for one to cope with Japanese cultural features.	pre	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1.9	0.3
	post	2	3	3	4	2	4	2	2	2.8	0.8
(2) I understand the ways of the Japanese culture and can apply parts of it properly.	pre	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	1.9	0.6
	post	2	3	3	2	3	4	2	2	2.6	0.7
(3) I have mastered ways to cope with Japanese cultural features.	pre	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.0	0.0
	post	2	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	2.5	0.7
(4) I understand the Japanese cultural way of proper thinking and cope without confusion.	pre	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2.5	0.5
	post	2	3	3	4	2	4	3	2	2.9	0.8
(5) I would like to communicate with Japanese citizens on campus and locally.	pre	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1.3	0.4
	post	1	4	1	1	1	1	2	1	1.5	1.0
(6) I have friends who can communicate using the Japanese language.	pre	2	3	2	4	1	3	3	1	2.4	1.0
	post	3	4	2	2	2	3	4	1	2.6	1.0
(7) I have enough self-confidence to communicate with Japanese people.	pre	2	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	2.1	0.8
	post	3	3	3	3	1	3	3	2	2.6	0.7
(8) Communication with Japanese people is difficult for me*.	pre	3	4	3	2	2	4	3	3	3.0	0.7
	post	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	2.4	0.5
(9) I would like to share a close relationship with Japanese persons.	pre	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	1.4	0.7
	post	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1.5	0.5
(10) When I communicate with other people, I talk ambiguously.	pre	2	2	3	4	2	3	4	1	2.6	1.0
	post	4	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	3.9	0.6
(11) When I communicate with other people, I don't like silence*.	pre	2	5	3	1	2	2	2	3	2.5	1.1
	post	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1.6	0.5
(12) When I communicate with other people, I am modest.	pre	3	4	2	3	2	3	2	3	2.8	0.7
	post	3	3	2	5	2	4	1	3	2.9	1.2
(13) I'm good at expressing my thoughts using non-verbal expressions.	pre	1	2	4	2	1	1	2	1	1.8	1.0
	post	1	2	3	4	1	5	2	2	2.9	1.4
(14) I say directly "I can't agree with you" if I cannot agree*.	pre	4	4	2	4	2	5	2	4	3.4	1.1
	post	4	4	3	4	2	4	2	3	3.3	0.9
(15) I can understand what other people want to say even if they use indirect expression.	pre	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2.0	0.5
	post	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2.1	0.3
(16) I can understand what other people want to say, even if they don't say it clearly.	pre	1	2	2	2	3	1	1	2	1.8	0.7
	post	1	2	3	4	3	2	2	2	2.6	0.7
(17) I can understand ambiguous or indirect expressions.	pre	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	2.0	0.5
	post	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2.4	0.5
(18) I understand why silence is used in conversations.	pre	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1.5	0.5
	post	1	2	4	2	3	2	3	3	2.7	0.7
(19) I know that there are many means of expression around the world.	pre	1	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	1.6	0.7
	post	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1.3	0.5
(20) I change how I express things based on the culture to which the other person belongs.	pre	1	2	2	4	2	2	3	2	2.3	0.8
	post	1	2	2	2	2	3	4	2	2.4	0.7
M	pre	1.9	2.5	2.2	2.3	1.9	2.1	2.2	2.0		
	post	2.2	2.9	2.5	2.8	2.0	3.0	2.5	2.0		
SD	pre	0.8	1.0	0.7	1.1	0.6	1.1	0.7	0.8		
	post	0.9	0.6	0.9	1.2	0.6	1.2	1.0	0.8		

\*Reverse items

**Table 5**  
*Increased, Decreased, and Unchanged Ratings*

Questionnaire items	Experimental group (n = 8)			Control group (n = 8)		
	↑	→	↓	↑	→	↓
(1)	3	5	0	0	5	3
(2)	5	2	1	1	3	4
(3)	3	5	0	2	3	3
(4)	4	3	1	2	2	4
(5)	1	7	0	2	3	3
(6)	4	3	1	2	5	1
(7)	4	4	0	3	1	4
(8)	1	2	5	1	6	1
(9)	2	4	1	2	4	2
(10)	7	1	0	3	4	1
(11)*	0	3	5	4	2	2
(12)	3	3	2	2	4	2
(13)	3	4	0	2	3	3
(14)	1	5	2	1	4	3
(15)	2	5	1	1	5	2
(16)	4	4	0	3	4	3
(17)	3	5	0	4	0	3
(18)	6	2	0	0	1	6
(19)	0	6	2	4	3	1
(20)	2	5	1	2	5	1

*Note:* Questionnaire items are identical to those in Table 4.

↑: increased; →: unchanged; ↓: decreased;

\*reversed items

## Discussion

The results show that those who participated in the social skills instruction developed more interest in Japanese culture, and their confidence in interpreting ambiguous words or silence increased. As a result, they displayed a positive attitude toward ambiguous expressions, which may reflect an increase in their awareness of the cultural differences resulting from participating in the session. They were able to address their questions about indirect expressions, which led to higher confidence in communication in a high-context culture. Through cognitive instruction, they were able to identify what they did not understand, and with behavioral instruction, they could then apply that learning. Thus, they developed greater understanding of, and satisfaction with, high-context expressions. Charles (2006) explained that there are five meanings of silence: (a) truthfulness, (b) social discretion, (c) embarrassment, (d) defiance, and (e) anger, and these include (a) positive and (b) negative

meanings. However, there are various meanings at the communication level (this research focused on “adjustment”), as Bruneau (1973) pointed out. Cross-cultural research must not only recognize silence but also investigate how to interpret silence in the context of communication.

As for the control group, those who did not participate in the social skills instruction did not develop a greater interest in Japanese culture, and their understanding of ambiguous expressions did not deepen. They tended to use some skills without showing a clear understanding. These results could be because they had not had the same opportunity to notice the differences in culture. Furnham et al., 1986 suggested that it is difficult to solve problems in communication without an opportunity to experience behavioral instruction, which suggests that opportunities that help learners notice cultural differences relate to cross-cultural adaptation. Tanaka (2012) pointed out that cultural instruction at the behavioral level, which supports smooth relationships with people in the host country, is useful for solving problems. Several cross-cultural psychology studies have pointed out differences between cultures (e.g., Matsumoto & Juang, 2004). However, regarding cross-cultural adaptation, given the necessity of examining behavior with an eye toward coping, one can argue that it is important to provide cross-cultural education that includes cultural instruction.

### General Discussion

This study involved the implementation of an instructional program aimed at teaching social skills in a high-context culture characterized by the frequent use of indirect expressions. These characteristics were investigated from the viewpoint of cross-cultural adaptation.

The interviews performed in Experiment 1 showed that international students in Japan experience the need to use indirect expressions as well as situations where Japanese people use indirect expressions. The students indicated that they experience difficulties with “*sassuru*”—the meaning of an expression that allows multiple interpretations—or with understanding the true intent of the speaker. The interviews suggested the presence of problems that cannot be solved simply by learning the Japanese language and revealed the difficulty of adapting to communication styles typical of a high-context culture characterized by the frequent use of indirect expressions.

Experiment 2 verified that the participants had developed more awareness of, and interest in, the Japanese culture, had become more confident in the interpretation of expressions with multiple meanings and of silence and had become readier to accept ambiguous expressions because of having developed understanding. However, the members of the control group showed little change in their awareness of and interest in the Japanese culture, and they demonstrated hardly any deepening of understanding of ambiguous expressions. Even though they also used certain social skills, they often did so without a clear understanding of the threads.

Amir (1969), Kleinborg and Hull (1979), and Selltz and Cook (1962) pointed out the effectiveness of having many social interactions in the host country or contact with the host language. Learning the language alone cannot prepare one for smooth communications based on a real understanding of the culture and the history behind various behaviors. Cross-cultural adaptation requires a specific understanding of the host culture (Searle & Ward, 1990). Thus, a two-step cultural instruction program that incorporates elements of psychoeducation and arouses more interest, such as by addressing specific cases and demonstrating practical



solutions in the process of behavioral instruction, may contribute effectively to resolving this problem.

### **Limitations and Implications for Further Research**

The current research addressed issues that were unresolved in earlier research: the assessment of others of the effectiveness of the skills instructions and a comparison with a control group to provide greater objectivity. Nevertheless, future research with larger participant samples is needed to validate our results. Additionally, in a larger study, participants can be further divided into groups according to their level of fluency in Japanese to allow for comparisons of the program's effectiveness between groups. Research including more scenarios and discussing them from the viewpoint of cultural distance would also be valuable. The inclusion of sessions conducted with international students before they arrive in Japan would also benefit further investigations of the effectiveness and implications of the instructional program. Finally, a limitation of this study may have been that number of friends per participant might influence their skills-learning and attitude toward Japanese culture. For example, participant F, who had only two Japanese friends, reported having a lower level of motivation for learning to use social skills (e.g., “my interest in indirect expressions increased” and “I want to know other expressions peculiar to Japan”) than participants E and G, whom each had more than 30 Japanese friends (Table 6).

Although participants who have more friends may be more highly motivated to use the skills they have learned, we were unable to verify a correlation between the number of friends and the differences in scores in this study. Further research is needed to investigate that relationship in detail.

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## **Happiness Impacting Psychological Well-Being of Government and Private School Teachers with Self-Esteem as a Moderator**

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### **Abstract**

The present study was conducted upon 170 government and private school teachers of Punjab, India. The purpose was to study the differences in the happiness level of the teachers of two sectors and its impact upon the psychological well-being of teachers moderated by self-esteem. Instruments used were Oxford Happiness Questionnaire by Argyle and Hills, Rosenberg's self-esteem Questionnaire, and Psychological Well-Being Scale by Bhogle and Prakash. The data analysis was done using Jamovi software to get S.D and t values. The results showed no difference in the happiness level of the teachers of the government and private schools, and happiness significantly impacts the psychological well-being of teachers moderated by self-esteem. The study further mentions the limitations and future recommendations.

*Keywords:* government and private school teachers, happiness, psychological well-being, self-esteem

Teaching is an essential service to humanity. It builds the society and the nation and is sometimes called the “Mother of all Professions” (Nenty et al., 2015). It is considered the most trusted profession as it builds trust and integrity. It not only allows teachers to evaluate their work but also judge the work of other staff. (Hargreaves et al., 2006, as cited in Nenty et al., 2015). According to Boroko (2004), the development of teachers as professionals is necessary to facilitate classroom learning, improving schools’ results and pupils’ learning outcomes (Postholm, 2018). Besides interacting with students, teachers also learn by interacting with their colleagues, coordinating with them, and mentoring each other.

There is a difference between teachers’ knowledge and their teaching methods across the globe and in one nation. There have been various developments in different sectors, and Educational Sector is no exception. India has shown great interest and commitment towards increasing the literacy level for the past few years. Its education’s contribution to GDP has risen from 0.67% in 1951 to 3.54% in 2004 (Tilak, 2004). Along with the structure of education, its quality has also undergone many changes as many professional courses like I.T. and engineering have expanded, giving people various career options (Gouda et al., 2013).

However, the differences between government and private schools in India regarding resources available to teachers and students cannot be ignored. It has been found that even after years of schooling, government school children do not acquire basic skills in literacy and numerals (Pandey et al., 2008 ASER 2005, 2006, 2007 and PROBE 1999, as cited in Goyal and Pandey, 2012). Factors like lack of resources, poor quality of education, poverty, and illiteracy of their parents were the prime reasons. However, it is identified that teachers’ inactivity and absence are the root cause of the same (Goyal and Pandey, 2012).

In their findings, Gouda et al., (2013) suggest that the standard of the infrastructure of schools depends upon their ownership- private or government. It was also found that government primary school costs are less than private primary schools in India. Private schools generate high revenue for administrative or management expenses and teachers’ salaries, which are not much concern for government agencies. It is also found that the performance of private school children is better than government school children in reading, writing, and mathematics. The same is that the teachers in private schools are accountable to the managers hiring or firing them and the parents. This is not the case with government school teachers as they are more concerned about salaries and promotions than performance. The results also indicated that a school’s infrastructure affects a teacher’s motivation and attitude towards the job. They are more likely to show a positive attitude when provided with adequate facilities and infrastructure.

Previous research has studied the impact of various factors like stress, well-being, happiness, spirituality, social support, work environment, etc., to understand their cause and effect on the teachers’ performance. However, the present study tends to examine if there is a difference in the happiness level and if it significantly predicts the psychological well-being of India’s government and private school teachers, with self-esteem as a moderator.

Happiness can be related to how one appreciates his own life. Studies have also proved that happy individuals live to lead a healthy life and have a more effect on one’s life than non-smoking (Veenhoven, 2008, as cited in Benevene et al., 2018). According to Sigmund Freud (1930), people strive for happiness and to remain happy. There are two sides to this. One is that they want to be free of any pain and experience a significant amount of pleasure (Craig, 2020). However, some research suggests that happiness results from some brain activities in “hedonic

systems.” It can be said that parts that generate happiness have a widespread network (Kringelbach and Berridge, 2010).

Psychological well-being has a lot of importance than just impacting the physical health of an individual. It is also more than just the absence of psychological distress like depression or anxiety (Fitzgerald et al., 2019). It is often understood in combination with happiness or other positive emotions and optimal and effective functioning of one’s life (Deci & Ryan, 2008 as cited in R. Winefield et al., 2012). According to Huppert, 2009, people with high psychological well-being are happy, reliable, supportive, and satisfied with their lives (R. Winefield et al., 2012). Self-esteem can be defined as how one thinks and feel about himself (Rosenberg, 1965, as cited in Borji et al., 2019). According to Coopersmith, 1967, self-esteem is an evaluative process in which an individual becomes aware of his capacity, worth, and success (Borji et al., 2019). Self-esteem has been a significant concern for various psychologists. Abraham Maslow gave a theory of “Hierarchy of Needs” where he emphasized self-esteem as a considerable drive of an individual, which he fulfils to move to self-actualization.

### **Literature Review**

Pan and Zhou (2012) conducted a study on 994 part-time MBA students from different organizations across China. The study aimed to study the relationship between Career Success and Happiness using moderators like Career Success Value (Internal satisfaction) and Career Commitment. While testing the effect of objective and subjective Career Success (Salary and managerial level) on happiness, it was found through regression analysis that salary had a significant impact upon the middle-income employees’ happiness but had no impact upon employees with low or high salaries. However, impact of the managerial level on happiness was not that significant. Career Success Value was also found to moderately impact the effect of salary on happiness. While evaluating the impact of Career Commitment, it was found that the graph was steeper for employees with high commitment than with low commitment, indicating that it has a moderate effect on the relationship studied.

A study was conducted by Wong, Gong, and H. Fung (2019) to determine the differences in the effects of Valuing Happiness on Subjective Well-Being between 117 young and 131 old adults of China. The role of interdependence and independence within the groups were also assessed for their mediating role. Participants completed their self-report measures in the laboratory that measured the value of happiness, interdependence, independence, and subjective well-being. The findings showed a positive relation between valuing happiness, interdependence, and independence in older adults. But their subjective well-being was positively associated only with interdependence. On the contrary, a positive association was found among young adults between valuing happiness and independence, which was not insignificant to well-being. Thus, we can conclude that young adults benefit from valuing happiness when they are not dependent upon others but seek happiness in a socially disengaged way. But older adults may seek emotional support for the same.

Abbas Abdollahi et al., (2018) investigated a relationship between two types of perfectionism (Personal Standard Perfectionism and Evaluative Concerns Perfectionism), Emotional intelligence and happiness. It also aimed to study if emotional intelligence moderately affects the relationship between perfectionism and happiness. Participants of the study were 412 Malaysian high-school children who were asked to complete self-report questionnaires. The structural model showed that students with higher emotional intelligence and P.S. perfectionism experience more happiness, and E.C. perfectionism was negatively related to



happiness. Multigroup analysis was used to determine if E.I. mediates between perfectionism and happiness, and it was found that it significantly does.

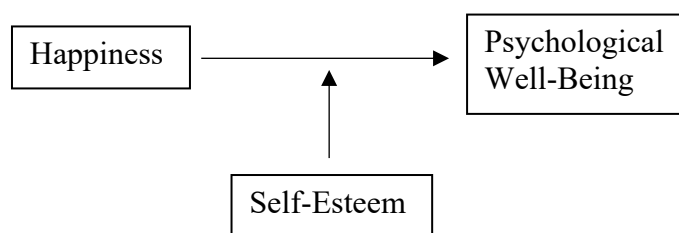
Halil Eksi et al.,2020, conducted a study on 378 teachers in Turkey to study the relationship between stress, spirituality along its three dimensions (anomie, transcendence, and harmony), and well-being. The researchers used the correlational research design to study the variables. While using Cronbach Alpha and Confirmatory Factor Analysis, a significant relationship was found among all the variables. It was found through a path model that stress positively contributes to anomie, which further predicts transcendence, harmony, and happiness. It was also found that anomie is negatively related to happiness, while transcendence is positively related.

You li and Ren-Chang Zhang (2019) surveyed 615 kindergarten teachers to evaluate their work stress, social support, psychological capital, and well-being. They used Teacher Stress Inventory, Psychological Capital Scale, Work-Related Well-Being Questionnaire, and Social Support Questionnaire. Descriptive statistics showed that work stress was negatively related to other variables, whereas social support, psychological capital, and well-being were positively correlated with each other. The mediating effect of psychological capital between occupational stress and well-being and social support between psychological capital and work-related well-being was found. This study was helpful for teachers in China. It helped them understand and avoid stressful environments, practice physical and mental well-being, and maintain their psychological capital.

Job Satisfaction is often understood as one's judgment about his job (Spector, 1997; Manuti and Palma, 2007, as cited in Benevene et al., 2018), and job satisfaction with self-esteem impact a person's happiness (Bowling et al., 2010, as cited in Benevene et al., 2018). Benevene et al., conducted a study to examine how job satisfaction and self-esteem mediate between happiness and health of school teachers. The study was conducted on 300 teachers of the State of Kerala in India. Findings showed that job satisfaction directly impacts happiness, health, and self-esteem of the teachers. Thus, this study stresses promoting employees' job satisfaction to improve their health and increase their happiness.

Often a positive relation is found between self-esteem and spirituality (Stern and Wright, 2018, as cited in Mitra Borji et al., 2019). Self-Esteem is also a considerate predictor of resilience (Mitra Borji et al., 2019). Therefore, a study was conducted by Mitra Borji et al., in 2019 to study if self-esteem mediates the relationship of resilience and spiritual health. The study was conducted upon 240 students of Iran University of Medical Sciences, and Spiritual Health Questionnaire, Coopersmith self-esteem Inventory, and Connor Davidson resilience scale were used. The findings suggested that self-esteem mediates the relation between resilience and spiritual health. Thus, we can conclude that people can develop a positive attitude towards their life by strengthening their self-esteem and enhancing resilience and spirituality.

### Theoretical Framework



## Hypothesis

1. There is a significant difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers.
2. Happiness will predict the psychological well-being of the government and private school teachers.
3. Self-Esteem moderately impacts the relationship between happiness and psychological well-being.

## Methods

The research is a quantitative study that aims to study the differences in the level of Happiness (Independent Variable) and its impact on the Psychological Well-Being (Dependent Variable) of Government and Private School Teachers with self-esteem as a moderator.

## Context and Participants

The study was conducted upon 170 government and private school teachers of Punjab, India. The data was collected through google forms for some, and the rest were collected through distributing the questionnaires to the participants. The researcher collected the data from both male and female teachers aged 30-40 years. Non-teaching staff was excluded. Prior instructions were given, and respondents were asked to respond accordingly.

## Research Instruments

*Oxford Happiness Questionnaire:* Michael Argyle and Peter Hills developed this questionnaire in 2001. It has been derived from Oxford Happiness Inventory. It includes 29 items to which the participant has to respond on a six-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. The scale has an internal reliability value of 0.91, test-retest reliability of .73 and the concurrent validity of .73 (Liaghatdar et al., 2008).

*Psychological Well-Being Scale:* This scale was developed by Sudha Bhogle and J Prakash in 1995. It is a 28-item scale where the participant has to respond either with the “yes” or “no” option. The scale has a test-retest reliability of 0.71. The scale has concurrent validity of 0.62 (after correlating it with the well-being scale developed by Nagpal and Sell) (Chandrashekara and Sampathkumar, 2017).

*Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale:* Morris Rosenberg developed this psychometric scale in 1965. It is a 10-item scale that measures one’s attitude towards himself. It is uni-dimensional, and the participant answers it on a four-point Likert scale. The scale is highly reliable as it has an internal consistency of 0.77. Test-retest reliability is 0.85 (two weeks period) and 0.63 (for 7-months intervals).

## Data Analysis

The results were analysed using jamovi software. First, a normality test was done to check if the data is normally distributed or not and whether to use parametric or non-parametric tests. Then Independent T-Test was done to check the differences in the mean of happiness levels of government and private school teachers. To check if happiness positively impacts psychological well-being, regression analysis was used. In the end, moderation regression was done to check if self-esteem moderates the relationship between happiness and well-being.

## Results

To check if the data were normally distributed or not, a normality test was done.

**Table 1**  
*Scores of Normality of the Data Collected*

Variable	Mean	Sk	Kurtosis	W	p
Happiness	4.49	- .350	-0.643	0.975	0.004*
Psy. Well-Being	27.8	- .0172	- 0.304	0.982	0.026**
Self Esteem	21.7	- 1.04	0.656	0.907	.001***

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .05$

The p-value for all the variables- happiness, self-esteem, and psychological well- being were less than .05; thus, the researcher used the non-parametric test as the data was not normally distributed.

To check if the researcher should accept or reject the study's first hypothesis (H1), which states that there is a significant difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers, the researcher used an independent T-test.

**Table 2**  
*Independent T-Test Scores of Happiness of Government and Private School Teachers*

Happiness Level	N	M	S.D	t	p
Private Sector	85	4.54	0.58		
Government Sector	85	4.43	0.581	1.21	0.228*

Note. \* $p > .05$

Since p is 0.228, which is more than .05, the difference between the happiness level of the government and the private sector is not significant. Thus, we reject the hypothesis (H1) that there is a considerable difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers.

The researcher also conducted a regression analysis to check H2, which states that happiness will predict the psychological well-being of the government and private school teachers.

**Table 3**  
*Regression Analysis Between Happiness and Psychological Well-Being Scores*

Predictor	$\beta$	t	p	r <sup>2</sup>	F	p
Happiness	0.630	10.50	.001	0.396	110	.001

Note. Happiness predicts psychological well-being ( $p < .01$ )

Regression Analysis indicated that happiness significantly impacts the teachers' psychological well-being ( $\beta = 0.630$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The coefficient of determination ( $r^2 = .40$ ) showed that happiness

could explain 40% of the variation in psychological well-being. The model is adequately fit ( $F=110, p<.01$ )

To analyse if self-esteem moderates the relationship between happiness and psychological well-being, the researcher used Moderation Regression. The intercept shows the psychological well-being's (DV) position in the absence of Self Esteem (independent variable).

**Table 4**  
*Moderation Estimates*

	Estimate	S.E	Z	p
Happiness	4.025	0.4897	8.22	.001
Self-Esteem	0.296	0.0703	4.21	.001
Happiness*Self Esteem	0.247	0.1268	- 1.95	0.05*

Note. \* $p=.05$

Moderation analysis showed that the effect of happiness and psychological well-being is contingent upon self-esteem ( $p=.05$ )

**Table 5**  
*The Effect of the Predictor (Happiness) on the Dependent Variable (Psychological Well-Being) at Different Levels of the Moderator (Self-Esteem)*

	Estimate	S.E	Z	P
Average	4.02	0.496	8.12	.001
low	3.04	0.655	7.65	.001
High	5.01	0.762	3.99	.001

Note.  $p<.05$

The results showed that at a low level of self-esteem, the impact of happiness on psychological well-being is 3.04, at an average level, it is 4.00, and at a high level, the effect is 5.00. The effect is most significant at the high level of self-esteem, followed by an average and low level. The p is .001 at all the levels, which is significant. We can say that the relation between happiness and psychological well-being is strongest when self-esteem is high.

## Discussion

The present research aimed to study the impact of happiness on the psychological well-being of government and private school teachers of Punjab, India, moderated by self-esteem. Teachers are a group of employees who are not adequately addressed in the literature concerning this context (Benevene et al., 2019). Thus, the study's objective was to study the differences in the happiness level of government and private school teachers, its impact upon their psychological well-being, and the moderating role of self-esteem. 170 teachers of 30-40 years of age participated in the study. The results were analysed using jamovi software. The researcher conducted a normality test to check if the data were normally distributed or not. Table 1 of the result showed that the p-value for all the variables that are happiness, self-esteem, and psychological well-being was less than .05, which means that the data was not normally distributed. The researcher, therefore, used the non-parametric test.

The first hypothesis stated that there is a significant difference in the happiness level of government and private school teachers. The researcher conducted an independent T-test and found that there is no significant difference between the happiness level of government and private school teachers  $p > .05$  (Table 3). It is generally assumed that government employees are more satisfied with their work thus are happier than private employees (Jyoti, 2017). But the results of this study presented a different picture. The results are quite encouraging for both sectors. It is seen that private schools are more equipped with the latest technologies like smart class boards, which help private school teachers to make the concepts easier for the students and lower their burden. Private schools also provide a better working environment and physical conditions, making their teachers happier and satisfied with their jobs. However, in contrast, the government sector offers lesser competition between the employees because they enjoy cordial relations with their colleagues. Government jobs are also considered to be more secure than private ones. There are also various resources like NGOs and other organizations through which government schools receive aid to improve the working environment and conditions for teachers and the students and equip themselves with essential infrastructure, which has helped lessen the gaps between the two sectors.

In their study, Kumara K and K.B (2019) found that teachers of government schools were 20.6% and 15.3% more comfortable than unaided and aided schools, respectively, as they enjoy more freedom. Arora and Srivastava (2019) studied the level of social, mental, and professional happiness of male and female teachers of self-financed and aided colleges. They found that teachers of aided colleges scored less on social and cognitive happiness due to an overload of work. Teachers of private institutions also tend to lose their mental, social, and professional happiness due to high competition among them.

The present study highlights certain benefits from which management of both sectors would benefit. The private sectors school could ensure that the teachers enjoy their work-life balance and are not overburdened with the work. Efforts can be made to increase the satisfaction and happiness of private teachers concerning pay and promotion. This study would also help the management to consider job security as an essential aspect of the happiness level of the teachers. On the other hand, workshops can be arranged to help teachers of government schools improve their teaching methods. A clean and hygienic working environment with adequate infrastructures like a blackboard, lab equipment, table, and chair for government school teachers would also help enhance their happiness levels.

The second hypothesis stated that happiness significantly impacts the teachers' psychological well-being. The regression analysis was conducted to study the same, and it was found that happiness significantly affects the teachers' psychological well-being ( $\beta = 0.630$ ,  $p < .01$ ). It means that the happier the teachers are, the more will be their psychological well-being. Happiness is experiencing joy for a brief or a long time. It is an emotion that enables individuals to be satisfied with their lives and experience their well-being. Psychological well-being is all about how well one's life is going on. However, one doesn't need to feel good all the time as being disappointed due to not getting the expected promotion or experiencing grief due to the loss of a loved one is a part of life. Still, one must manage these negative emotions as part of their long-term psychological well-being (Huppert, 2009). Thus, happiness and psychological well-being are mental states of experiencing positive emotions with physical, social, and psychological functioning (Sundriyal & Kumar, 2014).

Carrillo et al., 2019 conducted a study on nursing professionals to examine if different humor styles promote psychological well-being. The results suggested that adapted humor styles like

affiliative and self-enhancing promote well-being and aggressive humor indicates poor psychological well-being. At the same time, self-defeating humor was also found to boost the psychological well-being of nursing professionals. Previous studies also found that happiness and life satisfaction decrease the chances of psychopathological problems like depression or stress (Gilman et al., 2006, Proctor et al., 2010, as cited in Demirbatir, 2015). Demirbatir, 2015 in their studies, also found that students with a higher level of happiness scored low on depression, anxiety, and stress levels.

Our study shed light on the impact of happiness on teachers' well-being, significantly affecting their professional and personal lives. There can be various factors on which the teachers' happiness and well-being are dependent, for example, cooperation at the workplace, classroom climate, opportunities for their development, support in both professional and personal lives, etc. Reducing the level of burnout is also necessary to increase their efficiency in teaching. Fiorilli et al., (2019) found that high emotional competence can help in reducing the burnout levels of teachers and can also improve it through effective training and meditation programs. The study is beneficial to understand that teachers must be given various opportunities to train themselves well, making them satisfied with their work fostering their happiness and well-being.

The third hypothesis stated that self-esteem moderately impacts the relationship between happiness and well-being. Moderation analysis showed that the effect of happiness and psychological well-being is contingent upon self-esteem ( $p=.05$ ). It was found that the impact of happiness on psychological well-being was most significant at a high level of self-esteem. As self-esteem predicts both variables, we can say that their psychological well-being is better the happier the teachers are. According to Rosenberg, 1965, people with high self-esteem are more confident in their lives and have a more heightened sense of self-worth than people with low self-esteem (Yu et al., 2019). Therefore, teachers who scored high on self-esteem trust their abilities to be successful and thus need society to recognize and respect them. Higher self-esteem is very crucial for teachers as it is related to one's self-image. Lower self-esteem would distort their self-image, making them incapacitate in their career (Mbuva, 2016). Teachers who show high self-esteem in their daily teaching would also inculcate high self-esteem in their students. This means that the high self-esteem of teachers not only promotes their happiness level and psychological well-being and plays an integral role in the growth of their students.

Hill, 2015 found that self-esteem predicts life satisfaction and subjective well-being. In her study, it was also found that male participants scored high on self-esteem but low on satisfaction and subjective happiness than females who scored low on self-esteem but had higher levels of life satisfaction and subjective well-being. There was a stronger relationship between satisfaction and subjective happiness than self-esteem with both the variables. Self-esteem, however, is strongly correlated with both life satisfaction and subjective happiness.

The present results have powerful implications for the profession of teachers. As stated above, teachers with higher self-esteem have a high level of happiness and enhanced psychological well-being; some policies must be made to improve their self-esteem. To enhance teachers' self-esteem, the management of schools must provide effective feedback that would tell them how to improve their teaching styles or appreciate them whenever their class does well. There must be open communication between management and teachers, and management must take effective actions to resolve the issues faced by the teachers so that they feel necessary. There must be some activities planned in a month to enhance the self-esteem of the teachers, which would spread positivity among them and boost their teaching ability.

### **Limitations and Future Recommendations**

The study has some limitations regarding the first hypothesis that it does not significantly differentiate the private and government school teachers on the happiness level. It does not focus on the sub-components of happiness. The gender differences were also not considered. As there are very few researches that compare the government and private school teachers, future studies could find differences concerning other variables between teachers of both sectors. They could also use a qualitative/mixed-method approach to help get rich insights into the participants' experiences. It also doesn't study the differences in the psychological well-being of government and private sector teachers or consider the sub-components of psychological well-being. Thus, future researchers could consider these limitations and conduct their research respectively. The study's limitations concerning the third hypothesis are that our findings cannot be generalized as they are limited to the Punjab state of India. Future studies could conduct a cross-cultural study across the different locations of India. It would also be interesting to study the role of job satisfaction as a mediator.

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**A Study on Compassionate and Self-Image Goals in relation to Academic Resilience among Undergraduate Students**

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### **Abstract**

The present study was conducted to determine the relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience among undergraduate students. For this study, Compassionate and Self-Image Goals Scale developed by Crocker and Canevello (2008) and Academic Resilience Scale developed by Cassidy (2016) were used. The study was conducted with 140 undergraduate students at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India. Participants were selected through a simple random sampling method. The correlation technique was used to analyze the data. The results revealed that more females had compassionate goals in comparison to males. The findings also revealed that students having compassionate goals were highly academically resilient. The result also highlighted that students belonging to science faculty having compassionate goals were highly academically resilient in comparison to students belonging to non-science faculty. It further revealed that students having self-image goals belonging to science and non-science faculties were not highly academically resilient.

*Keywords:* academic resilience, compassionate goals, self-image goals

A goal is said to be a vision of the future that people plan and commit to accomplish. It is the decision and commitment that a person makes to achieve a specific target by breaking bad habits, forming new ones, and achieving more in various aspects of life that are all options. Over time, goals can influence how people interact and act (Crocker & Canevello, 2008).

Compassionate and self-image goals are two different sorts of goals that reflect ecosystem and egosystem viewpoints on the self-other relationship, respectively (Crocker et al., 2009). Because they care about the well-being of others as much as themselves, people with compassionate aims desire to be a supporting and positive force in relationships. Regardless of group designations, communities, or generations, they tend to perceive everyone as interconnected (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). People who have high compassion objectives tend to see their connections with others as non-zero-sum, or that one's achievement does not detract from the success of others (Crocker & Canevello, 2008). People with high self-image aspirations strive to create, preserve, and defend positive views of themselves so that they can project desirable social attributes and be viewed as having desirable qualities by others (Crocker & Canevello, 2008).

### **Compassionate Goals**

Compassionate goals are concerned with helping others, not with obtaining anything for oneself, but with promoting others' well-being or preventing harm to others. These make it a point to help people. They are linked to feelings of cooperation, great attentiveness to others, and high relationship quality (Crocker & Canevello, 2012). Caring is implicit or explicit in compassionate goals. When people have compassionate goals, they are more likely to work together with others and see desired outcomes (win-win situations). That is, they believe that one person's achievement does not have to be at the expense of others. They have a sense of obligation to others and see themselves as a beginning point or source of happiness for others. People with compassionate goals are more willing to help others. As a result, others feel backed and want to return the favour, not out of commitment, but out of compassion. Compassionate goals are linked to a wide variety of enhanced good and decreased negative outcomes over time. Compassionate goals are motivated by a desire to help others, not to get something for oneself, but out of concern for others' well-being. Although people vary in how frequently they have compassionate goals in their connections with others on average, it is believed that people's compassionate goals range from a week to week, day to day, and potentially even moment to moment. Individuals with compassionate aims, regardless of ethnicity or group membership, are said to perceive people as associated and to feel care and concern for the prosperity of others. The components of compassionate goals are:

- a. Universality- It is a kind of feeling that whole life is interconnected, as well as a sense of shared responsibility among creatures.
- b. Connectedness- It is a kind of insight of personal obligation to others that extends across the generations and throughout the community. (Piedmont, 1999)

### **Self-Image Goals**

Self-image goals attempt to cultivate and maintain a favorable perception of one in relation to others. They are linked to sentiments of competition, a lack of receptivity to others, and poor relationship quality (Crocker & Canevello, 2012).

Self-presentation and impersonation management are usually done not intentionally delude others, but to depict an accurate, but idealised or glorified, image of oneself that the actor really thinks to be true (Baumeister, 1982; Greenwald & Breckler, 1985; Leary, 1995; Schlenker, 1980). People want to be seen as desirable by others, and they want to be seen as desirable by themselves (Dunning et al., 2005; Leary & Baumeister, 2000; Pyszczynski et al., 2004).

People with self-image goals are self-conscious and socially apprehensive because they are concerned about what others think of them. They are intent on displaying their desirable attributes, verifying their worth and demonstrating that they are deserving. People prioritise their perceived needs over the needs of others under this worldview. Constructing, defending, inflating and sustaining preferred self-images becomes a way to meet their wants by persuading others of their worth and value. People frequently conflate the self with the picture of oneself; people comprehend and react to challenges to their ideal images as if their survival or well-being were at risk. Individual variations, including a chronic tendency to view things via an egosystem lens, should be connected to, rejection sensitivity, social anxiety, interpersonal mistrust, insecure attachment patterns and narcissism. It sometimes appears to obstruct the formation of mutually supportive relationships, so undermining a sense of belonging. Frequent comparisons are involved with others, either implicitly or openly (Gibson & Poposki, 2010). Such goals can be advantageous in certain situations, such as short-term, one-time interactions with strangers (Cassidy, 2016). On the other hand, appear to be likely to lead to lower response to strangers as well as intimates and to develop competitive orientations that lead to emotional perplexity regardless of context.

### **Academic Resilience**

The term “resilience” refers to the ability to continue to grow and learn despite difficult or threatening circumstances (Howard & Johnson, 2000). Individuals are inherently motivated to satisfy their human needs for affection, love, belongingness, honor, existence, power, ability, challenge, and significance by an inborn developmental knowledge. It is characterised as a student’s capability to deal well with academic setbacks, burden, and study pressure in the academic situation (Catterall, 1998; Finn & Rock, 1997; Gonzalez & Padilla, 1997; Overstreet & Braun, 1999).

Academic resilience refers to the increased possibility of academic and other life accomplishments in the face of environmental adversity caused by qualities, conditions, and experiences (Wang et al., 1994). Academic resilience handles high levels of accomplishment, motivation and performance regardless of the stressful circumstances that put students at risk of failing grades and withdrawal (Alva, 1991). It is also defined as a student’s capability to deal successfully with obstacles, pressure, and challenges in the classroom (Cassidy, 2015). The increased likelihood of succeeding in many life endeavours despite the presence of poor circumstances brought on by early characteristics, experiences and environments. Academic resilience may also be described as pupils’ ability to perform satisfactorily even in the face of difficulties that prevent a vast percentage of others in similar situations from succeeding.

Students who are resilient are positive, have the ability to prepare for challenges, solve obstacles logically, and develop creative problem-solving methods. These pupils have a high sense of self-worth and are willing to learn from their experiences. They are long-lasting, adaptable, and self-sufficient. Academic resilience is a changing developmental process that involves protective factors that contribute to efficient adjustment, academic capacity, and academic accomplishment for students (Luthar et al., 2000). Individual traits such as skills,

attitudes, doctrine and values are the focus of internal protective factors. Cooperation and communication, empathy, good problem-solving abilities, goals, and self-efficacy are some of the internal protective characteristics (Constantine et al., 2003).

### **Purpose of the Study**

Previous research studies on compassionate goals have taken into account the linked feeling of cooperation and high relationship quality (Crocker & Canevello, 2012), emotional connection and affinity (Brown & Brown, 2006), and responsive and supportive nature (LeMay, Clark & Feeney, 2007).

It was also found that several research studies on self-image goals have taken into account the linked sentiments of competition and poor relationship quality (Crocker & Canevello, 2012), attributed to be noticed by others (Schlenker, 2003), lower regard, less stable relationships (Canevello & Crocker, 2008), involvement in comparison with others (Gibson & Poposki, 2010) and gives importance to “fitting in” to social surrounding (Markus & Kityama, 2010).

Different researches on academic resilience have been conducted to demonstrate how to define academic resilience, determinants of academic resilience, and strategies for increasing resilience among students at various levels (Southwick et al., 2014), as well as various factors contributing to academic success (Sinay & Erhan, 2018). There were studies which attempted to demonstrate the relationship between academic resilience and various variables such as academic stress (Wilks & Spivey, 2010) and self-efficacy (Simon, 2015).

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between compassionate and self-image goals and academic resilience. Every individual has a certain set of goals. Students tend to possess certain qualities which are inclined either towards compassionate goals or towards self-image goals, or both. Some people do things to improve other people’s respect for them, and others do things because they care about them. Also, there are some students who are prepared to triumph over any adversity in their academic lives, called as academic resilience, which depends upon certain factors.

Thus, it is significant to find out what relation compassionate and self-image goals have with academic resilience, which goal dominates amongst undergraduate students. How academically resilient are students with compassionate goals, and how academically resilient are students with self-image goals in the total sample and on the basis of gender and stream? Also, is there any correlation between compassionate and self-image goals and academically resilient behaviour of students? At this level, students are filled with different attitudes, attributes and behaviour. Therefore, a need was felt by investigators to study the relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience among undergraduate students.

### **Research Questions**

The following are the research questions which gave direction to this study.

1. How to identify undergraduate students on the basis of compassionate goals or self-image goals?
2. What kind of goals do students of different gender have?
3. What kind of goals do students of different streams have?

4. Which goal dominates in the high academic resilient students?
5. Is there any relationship between compassionate and self-image goals and academic resilience in the total sample?

### **Objectives of the Study**

To study the relationship between compassionate and self-image goals in relation to academic resilience among undergraduate students.

### **Methodology**

#### **Sample**

The sample consists of 140 undergraduate students. The sample was taken using random sampling techniques giving due representation to sub-samples (i.e. gender and stream).

#### **Instruments**

##### ***Academic Resilience Scale***

The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) was constructed by Cassidy (2016). It consists of 30 items under three factors. Item number 1,2,3,4,5,8,9,10,11,13,15,16,17,30 are covered under Factor 1 (Perseverance). Item numbers 18,20,21,22,24,25,26,27,29 come under Factor 2 (Reflecting and adaptive help-seeking). Item numbers 6,7,12,14,19,23,28 come under Factor 3 (Negative affect and emotional response). The scale's internal consistency and reliability with reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.90 which is higher than what is typically deemed acceptable. Scale items were chosen to reflect commonly accepted definitions, theoretical understandings and factors, constructs and attributes commonly associated with resilience are presented as proof of the scale's content validity.

##### ***Compassionate and Self-Image Goals Scale***

This scale was developed by Crocker and Canevello (2008). This scale consists of 13 items which are covered under two dimensions compassionate goals and self-image goals. The compassionate and self-image goals scale consists of 13 items covered under two dimensions. Compassionate goal covers item numbers 1,4,5,8,10,11,12 while self-image goal covers item numbers 2,3,6,7,9,13. The measure of support received, and the measure of support provided demonstrated strong internal reliability as  $\alpha=0.94$ . There is strong evidence for the scale's validity because average self-image goals predicted conflict, loneliness, and feelings of fear and confusion; compassionate goals attenuated these effects, and changes in weekly goals predicted changes in goal setting.

#### **Data Analysis**

The sample was taken using random sampling techniques giving due representation to sub-samples, that is, gender and stream. SPSS version 20 was used to analyse the data using the Pearson.



## Results

Objective 1: To identify the compassionate goals and self-image goals in the total sample and sub-sample based on gender and stream.

**Table 1**

*Percentage Analysis of Compassionate and Self-Image Goals in the Total Sample*

Sample	Goals Identified			
	CG (N)	CG (%)	SI (N)	SI (%)
Total	127	90.7%	13	9.2%
Male	59	84.2%	11	15.7%
Female	68	97.1%	2	2.8%
Science	66	95.6%	3	4.3%
Non-Science	60	85.9%	10	14%

Table 1 displays the percentage analysis of compassionate and self-image goals in the total sample and sub-samples of undergraduate students. The result shows that in the total sample of undergraduate students, 90.7% of students had compassionate goals, and 9.2% of students had self-image goals. In the gender sub-sample, 84.2% of the males had compassionate goals, and 15.7% of males had self-image goals. Whereas 97.1% of females had compassionate goals and 2.8% of females in the total sample had self-image goals. Thus, it can be said that female undergraduates had more compassionate goals than male undergraduates.

In students belonging to the science stream, 95.6% had compassionate goals, and 4.3% had self-image goals. Whereas, in students belonging to the non-science group, 85.9% had compassionate goals, and 14% of students had self-image goals. Hence, it can be concluded that science group students had more compassionate goals than non-science group.

Objective 2: To identify the goal in the highly academically resilient student of the total sample

**Table 2**

*Percentage Analysis of Highly Academically Resilient Students in the Total Sample*

Total AR	High AR	Male	Female	CG	SIG	Goal
	N	N	N	N	N	Identified
M=112.6	67	36	31	67	0	100% CG
		53.7%	46.2%	100%	0	

Table 2 displays the percentage analysis of high academic resilience in the total sample. It shows that (N = 67) students came out to be highly academically resilient, out of which 53.7% students were male and 46.2% students were female. And both males and females had compassionate goals.

Results showed that compassionate goals were identified in the highly academically resilient students, and students with self-image goals were not found to be highly academically resilient.

Hypothesis (H<sub>01</sub>): There is no significant relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience in the total sample of undergraduate students.

**Table 3**  
*Pearson Correlation between CSG and AR in the Total Sample*

Dimension		ARD 1	ARD 2	ARD3	Total AR	SI	CG
ARD1	Pearson	1	.629*	.511**	.868**	.053	.312**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.538	.000
	N	140	140	140	140	140	140
ARD2	Pearson		1	.551**	.834**	.060	.297**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.481	.000
	N		140	140	140	140	140
ARD3	Pearson			1	.820**	.251**	.138
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.003	.103
	N			140	140	140	140
Total AR	Pearson				1	.059	.295**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.486	.000
	N				140	140	140

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

\*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 displays the result of the Pearson Correlation calculated between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience along with their respective dimensions in the total sample. The result revealed that there is a significant positive relationship (at 0.01 level) between compassionate goals and total academic resilience in the total sample of undergraduate students,  $r(138)=0.295$ ,  $p=0.000$ . It means that students who have compassionate goals are highly academically resilient.

On exploring the relationship of compassionate goals with the dimensions of academic resilience, the above table shows that compassionate goals have a significant positive relationship (at 0.01 level) with dimension 1 *perseverance* and dimension 2 *reflecting and adaptive help-seeking*,  $r(138)=0.312$ ,  $p=0.000$  and  $r(138)=0.297$ ,  $p=0.000$  respectively. This result highlighted that students with compassionate goals have high perseverance, reflective thinking and adaptive help-seeking behavior. At the same time, compassionate goals did not have a significant relationship with dimension three *negative affect and emotional response* of academic resilience. This shows that students with compassionate goals do not have a negative effect and low emotional response.

Further, the results showed that students with self-image goals did not have a significant relationship with total academic resilience in the total sample of undergraduate students, and its two dimensions, i.e., dimension 1 *perseverance* and dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking*. Interestingly, students with self-image goals had a significant positive relationship (at 0.01 level) with dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response*,  $r(138)=0.251$ ,  $p=0.003$ . This clearly shows that students having self-image goals have low perseverance, unreflective thinking, help-avoidance behavior, negative affect and low emotional response.

Hypothesis (H<sub>02</sub>): There is no significant relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience in the male sub-sample of undergraduate students.

**Table 4**

*Pearson Correlation between CSG and AR in the Male Sub-Sample*

Dimension		ARD 1	ARD2	ARD3	Total AR	SI	CG
ARD1	Pearson	1	.529**	.528**	.858**	.003	.345**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.979	.003
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70
ARD2	Pearson		1	.547**	.793**	.043	.247*
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.723	.039
	N		70	70	70	70	70
ARD3	Pearson			1	.833*	.292*	.203
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.014	.092
	N			70	70	70	70
Total AR	Pearson				1	.107	.325**
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.379	.006
	N				70	70	70

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

\*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 displays the result of the Pearson Correlation calculated between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience along with their respective dimensions in the male sub-sample. The result revealed that there is a significant positive relationship (at 0.01 level) between compassionate and self-image goals and total academic resilience in the male sub-sample of undergraduate students,  $r(68)=0.325$ ,  $p=0.006$ . It means that males who have compassionate goals are highly academically resilient.

On exploring the relationship of males having compassionate goals with dimensions of academic resilience, the above table shows that compassionate goals have a significant positive relationship (at 0.01 level) with dimension 1 (perseverance),  $r(68)=0.354$ ,  $p=0.003$ , significant positive relationship (at 0.05 level) with dimension 2 (reflecting and adaptive help-seeking),  $r(68)=0.247$ ,  $p=0.039$ . The result highlights that males with compassionate goals have high perseverance, reflective thinking and adaptive help-seeking behavior. At the same time, compassionate goals did not have a significant relationship with dimension 3 (negative affect and emotional response) of academic resilience. This shows that males who have compassionate goals do not have a negative effect and low emotional response.

Further, the result showed that males who have self-image goals did not have a significant relationship with total academic resilience and its two dimensions, dimension 1 *perseverance* and dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking*. But males having self-image goals surprisingly had a significant positive relationship (at 0.05 level) with dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response*,  $r(68)=0.292$ ,  $p=0.014$ . This reveals that males who have self-

image goals have low perseverance, unreflective thinking, help-avoidance behavior, negative effect and low emotional response.

Hypothesis (H<sub>03</sub>): There is no significant relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience in the female sub-sample of undergraduate students.

**Table 5**

*Pearson Correlation between CSG and AR in the Female Sub-Sample*

Dimension		ARD1	ARD2	ARD3	Total AR	SI	CG
ARD1	Pearson Correlation	1	.718**	.513**	.880**	.120	.272*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.322	.023
	N	70	70	70	70	70	70
ARD2	Pearson Correlation		1	.573**	.872**	.087	.346**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.473	.003
	N		70	70	70	70	70
ARD3	Pearson Correlation			1	.816**	.238*	.096
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.048	.429
	N			70	70	70	70
Total AR	Pearson Correlation				1	.015	.271*
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.902	.023
	N				70	70	70

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

\*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 5 displays the result of the Pearson Correlation calculated between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience along with their respective dimensions in the female sub-sample of undergraduate students. The result revealed that there is a significant positive relation (at 0.05 level) between compassionate goals and total academic resilience in the female sub-sample of undergraduate students,  $r(68)=0.271$ ,  $p=0.023$ . This means that females who have compassionate goals are highly academically resilient.

On exploring the relationship of females having compassionate goals with dimensions of academic resilience, it was seen that compassionate goals have significant positive relationship (at 0.05 level) with dimension 1 *perseverance*,  $r(68)=0.272$ ,  $p=0.023$  and at (0.01 level) with dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking*,  $r(68)=0.346$ ,  $p=0.003$ . This shows that females with compassionate goals have high perseverance, reflective thinking and adaptive help-seeking behavior. At the same time, compassionate goals did not have a significant relationship with dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response* of academic resilience. This means that females with compassionate goals do not have a negative affect or low emotional response.

Further, the results showed that females having self-image goals did not have a significant relationship with total academic resilience and its two dimensions, i.e., dimension 1 *perseverance* and dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking*. Interestingly, females

having self-image goals had a significant positive relationship (at 0.05 level) with dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response*,  $r(68)=0.238$ ,  $p=0.048$ . This reveals that females who have self-image goals have low perseverance, unreflective thinking, help-avoidance behavior, negative affect and low emotional response.

Hypothesis (H<sub>04</sub>.) There is no significant relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience in the science sub-sample of undergraduate students.

**Table 6**

*Pearson Correlation between CSG and AR in the Science Sub-Sample*

Dimension		ARD1	ARD2	ARD3	Total AR	SI	CG
ARD1	Pearson Correlation	1	.468**	.334**	.802**	.219	.388**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.005	.000	.070	.001
	N	69	69	69	69	69	69
ARD2	Pearson Correlation		1	.433**	.765**	.017	.446**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.891	.000
	N		69	69	69	69	69
ARD3	Pearson Correlation			1	.764**	.128	.123
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.295	.312
	N			69	69	69	69
Total AR	Pearson Correlation				1	.056	.398**
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.649	.001
	N				69	69	69

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

\*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 6 displays the result of the Pearson Correlation calculated between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience along with their respective dimensions in the Science sub-sample of undergraduate students. The result revealed that there is a significant positive relation (at 0.01 level) between compassionate goals and total academic resilience in the Science sub-sample of undergraduate students,  $r(67)=0.398$ ,  $p=0.001$ . This means that students from the Science stream who have compassionate goals are highly academically resilient.

On exploring the relationship of science stream students having compassionate goals with dimensions of academic resilience, it was seen that compassionate goals have significant positive relationship (at 0.01 level) with dimension 1 *perseverance* and at with dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking*,  $r(67)=0.388$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $r(67)=0.446$ ,  $p=0.000$  respectively. This shows that students from the science stream having compassionate goals have high perseverance, reflective thinking and adaptive help-seeking behavior. At the same time, students having compassionate goals did not have a significant relationship with dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response* of academic resilience. This means that students from the science stream having compassionate goals do not have a negative effect and low emotional response.

Further, the study of the table revealed that students from the science stream having self-image goals did not have a significant relationship with total academic resilience and all of its three dimensions, i.e., dimension 1 *perseverance*, dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking* and dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response*. This reveals that students from the science stream having self-image goals have low perseverance, unreflective thinking, help-avoidance behavior and do not have a negative effect and low emotional response.

Hypothesis (H<sub>05</sub>): There is no significant relationship between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience in the non-science (arts, commerce, social-science) sub-sample of undergraduate students.

**Table 7**

*Pearson Correlation between CSG and AR in the Non-Science sub-sample*

Dimension		ARD1	ARD2	ARD3	Total AR	SI	CG
ARD1	Pearson Correlation	1	.731**	.625**	.909**	.058	.264*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.634	.026
	N	71	71	71	71	71	71
ARD2	Pearson Correlation		1	.641**	.870**	.094	.208
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.000	.000	.435	.082
	N		71	71	71	71	71
ARD3	Pearson Correlation			1	.852**	.335**	.147
	Sig. (2-tailed)				.000	.004	.220
	N			71	71	71	71
Total AR	Pearson Correlation				1	.126	.238*
	Sig. (2-tailed)					.297	.046
	N				71	71	71

\*\*Significant at 0.01 level

\*Significant at 0.05 level

Table 7 displays the result of the Pearson Correlation calculated between compassionate and self-image goals with academic resilience along with their respective dimensions in the non-science sub-sample of undergraduate students. The result revealed that there is a significant positive relation (at 0.05 level) between compassionate goals and total academic resilience in the non-science sub-sample of undergraduate students,  $r(69)=0.238$ ,  $p=0.046$ . This means that students from a non-science stream who have compassionate goals are highly academically resilient.

On exploring the relationship of non-science stream students having compassionate goals with dimensions of academic resilience, it was seen that compassionate goals have a significant positive relationship (at 0.05 level) with dimension 1 *perseverance*,  $r(69)=0.264$ ,  $p=0.026$ . This shows that students who are from non-science backgrounds having compassionate goals have high perseverance. At the same time, students having compassionate goals did not have a significant relationship with dimension 2 *reflecting and adaptive help-seeking* and dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response* of academic resilience. This means that students from

non-science backgrounds having compassionate goals have unreflective thinking, help-avoidance behavior and do not have a negative affect and low emotional response.

Further, the study of the table revealed that students from non-science backgrounds having self-image goals did not have a significant relationship with total academic resilience and its two dimensions, i.e., dimension 1 *perseverance*, dimension 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking*. This reveals that students from non-science backgrounds having self-image goals have low perseverance, unreflective thinking and help avoidance behavior. Interestingly, students of non-science background having self-image goals had a significant relationship (at 0.01 level) with dimension 3 *negative affect and emotional response*  $r(69)=0.335$ ,  $p=0.004$ . This shows that students coming from non-science backgrounds having self-image goals have a negative affect and low emotional response.

### Discussion

The findings revealed that out of the total sample of undergraduate student's majority of the students had compassionate goals, and few had self-image goals.

It was found that a large number of females had compassionate goals in comparison to males. The results also revealed that a large number of students belonging to the science group had compassionate goals, whereas students belonging to the non-science group were less in number. This showed that students from science backgrounds had more compassionate goals than those from a non-science backgrounds.

Interestingly, the results also revealed that all the highly academically resilient students had compassionate goals. It was also found from the results that males were more academically resilient than females. But collectively, academically resilient males and females both had compassionate goals. None of the highly academically resilient males and females had self-image goals.

The findings revealed that compassionate goals and total academic resilience were positively correlated, which indicated that students who had compassionate goals were academically resilient. The result is consistent with past research, which showed that self-compassion would motivate to grow, learn new stuff and prevent poor academic achievement (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejitterat, 2005).

The result also showed that compassionate goals were positively correlated with the two dimensions of academic resilience (*perseverance*), (*reflective and adaptive help-seeking*) and not with the third dimension (*negative affect and emotional response*). This means that students who have compassionate goals have high perseverance, stick to the plan, are hardworking and seek help, support & encouragement. And do not show symptoms of anxiety and hopelessness. This is supported by a study conducted by Leary et al., 2007, which states that individuals who have high self-compassion exhibit less extreme reactions, lack of negative emotions, and others.

The study further revealed that students with self-image goals were not likely to be highly academically resilient. Students having self-image goals had a positive correlation with dimension 3 (*negative affect and emotional response*) of academic resilience and not with the other two dimensions, dimension 1 (*perseverance*) and dimension 2 (*reflective and adaptive help-seeking*). This indicates that students who had self-image goals have low perseverance,

unreflective thinking hardly sticks to the plan, help avoidance behaviour, negative response and low emotional response.

The findings depicted that males who had compassionate goals in the total sample had a higher positive correlation with total academic resilience as compared to females having compassionate goals. This is consistent with past research that males were more academically resilient than females (Kaur & Mallick, 2016).

The result also showed that females with compassionate goals were more positively correlated with dimensions 1 *perseverance* & dimensions 2 *reflective and adaptive help-seeking* in comparison to males. This means that females had high perseverance, stick to the plan, had reflective thinking and help-seeking behaviour and are hardworking more than males. This is consistent with the study that females scored better in empathy and thankfulness than males but refuted that males reported higher levels of resilience than females, according to the findings (Agnieszka et al. 2002). Females may have evolved adaptations to be sensitive to nonverbal expressions as primary caregivers of young infants, and such sensitivities have increased infant survival (Babchuk et al., 1985; Hampson et al., 2006). Males do not face the same selective pressure as females, which could explain gender differences in emotion recognition, empathy and compassion, according to the Primary Caretaker Hypothesis (2007). The study further revealed that males and females who had self-image goals do not have a correlation with total academic resilience. This means that males and females who had self-image goals were not highly academically resilient. The results also indicated that males and females having self-image goals had a positive relationship with dimension 3 (negative affect and emotional response) but not with dimensions 1&2 (perseverance and reflective and adaptive help-seeking). This means that males and females who had self-image goals had low perseverance, unreflective thinking, hardly sticks to the plan, help-avoidance behaviour, anxiety, negative affect and low emotional response.

According to the present study, the students of science faculty having compassionate goals had a higher positive correlation with total academic resilience in comparison to students of non-science faculty. This means that students of science faculty who had compassionate goals were highly academically resilient in comparison to students of non-science faculty. This is consistent with research that academic resilience reveals that students in the science stream were more academically resilient than their peers (Pinki & Duhan, 2020).

The results also revealed that students having compassionate goals belonging to science faculty were more positively correlated with dimensions 1 and 2 of academic resilience than students having compassionate goals belonging to non-science faculty. It indicates that students from the science faculty had more perseverance, stick to the plan, had reflective thinking, sought help and were hardworking more than the students belonging to the non-science faculty.

The study further revealed that students belonging to science and non-science faculties do not have a significant correlation with total academic resilience. It means that students who had self-image goals were not highly academically resilient. The result also indicates that students from science and non-science faculties had low perseverance, unreflective thinking, help-avoidance behaviour, anxiety, and others.

The result also showed that students having self-image goals from non-science faculty have a positive correlation with dimension 3 (negative affect and emotional response) whereas students from science faculty do have a significant correlation with dimension 3 of academic



resilience. This indicates that students having self-image goals from non-science faculty show symptoms of negative affect, anxiety, and low emotional response, whereas students of science faculty do not manifest these symptoms.

### **Educational Implications**

The following is a summary of the educational implications of the current study for various stakeholders:

*Implication for policymakers:* Moral sciences should be made a compulsory subject to instil moral principles in students. Individual counselling sessions should be arranged to help students deal with narcissistic behaviour. Along with individual counselling group, counselling sessions should be done to help students understand and practice compassion in their lives and should also teach students the techniques on how to be academically resilient and what factors affect academic resilience and how to overcome them. Provision of co-curricular activities like group or project work, role-playing, visits & excursions, and others, should be given importance in the curriculum to promote healthy and social values among students. Teachers should be appointed who practice compassion, who reflects compassionate and resilient behaviour in order to be a good role model for the students.

*Implications for teachers:* The term “compassion” is often misunderstood and confused with other phrases, teachers must help students grasp what it means with the help of discussions, journaling, drawing, and others. Attention and awareness activities should be incorporated into the classroom by teachers in a variety of ways. Students should be assisted in identifying the compassion within them and acquiring skills and resources in the classroom to cultivate components of compassion (cognitive, emotional, purposeful, and motivating). Students should be assigned project work by the teachers to foster compassion, social ideals, and healthy competition among them. A teacher should be a powerful role model of compassion and should be aware of the importance of academic resilience and work to build it in the students.

*Implications for parents:* Parents should be a powerful role models of compassion in front of their children. They should create an environment at home where he or she can learn compassion and resilience from their elders in the natural setting. Good parenting should instil compassion in children from an early age so that they do not become prone to narcissistic behaviour later in life. Providing certain opportunities for their children so that they can practice caring and gratitude must be mandatory for the parents.

*Implications for students:* Playing cooperative and team-building games. Having daily interaction with peers in a fun, team-building capacity promotes prosocial abilities. Reading/writing stories about helpers. Stories of important historical figures and their compassionate lives are powerful ways to inspire compassion in students. Hearing stories of leaders that make a compassionate impact on the world show children what is possible with pure intentions. Also, students playing role play or pretend play in scenarios in light of focussing compassion lay pathways to compassion in later life.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The limitations of the study are: Due to paucity of time and difficulty in the online collection of data, the sample taken in the study is only 140, while a large sample may be taken. The sample is extracted from Science, Arts, Commerce, and Social Science faculty, while it may

be taken from engineering, law, management, and medicine faculties as well. The total sample includes sub-samples like gender and stream, whereas the sub-sample of the locality may also be taken into consideration. Present study delimits to undergraduate students, while students from lower and higher levels of formal study may also be taken. The sample is confined to Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, only, while a comparative study may be conducted with other universities as well.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

On the basis of the current study, the following recommendations for further research may be given:

The current study focuses on Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India, undergraduate students; however, the research might also be undertaken on school and postgraduate levels, as well as students from other universities and other countries. Future research could also investigate the differences in compassionate and self-image goals between men and women in urban and rural areas, or between various faculties. Comparative study on academic resilience and socio-economic status of students and teachers may also be considered.

### **Conclusion**

The present study was conducted to determine the relationship between compassionate and self-image goals and academic resilience among undergraduate students. The results revealed that students with compassionate goals were highly academically resilient. It was also highlighted in the study that different dimensions of academic resilience like perseverance, reflective and adaptive help-seeking were correlated with compassionate goals more while the dimensions of negative affect and emotional response were correlated with self-image goals more based on total sample and sub-samples. There are also implications for policymakers, instructors, and parents in terms of promoting acceptable compassion and strengthening resilience among undergraduate students.

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## **A Leadership Intervention Targeting Job Satisfaction Among ABA Practitioners**

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Erratum: This paper was re-uploaded on March 21, 2023 after the order of the authors was changed. Mitze Burnett was moved from the second to the first author, and Stephanie M. Morgan was moved from the first to the third author.

### **Abstract**

Organizational culture shapes workplace dynamics and employee relations. Leaders contribute to this by setting the parameters for behavioral expectations and modeling them. In this pilot study, it was hypothesized that a motivational email would increase job satisfaction and increase completion rates of clinical notes. Pretest posttest T-tests were performed to determine significant differences between scores in the experimental and control group. The results indicated a significant difference in job satisfaction when receiving a positive motivational email. The completion of clinical notes increased and there was a significant difference in completing clinical notes when receiving a positive motivational email. The findings of this study aligned with the current literature available on the topic of employee job satisfaction. Using these findings to make shifts in the way an organization operates and provides a positive work environment for their employees will yield happier employees who have a higher level of performance.

*Keywords:* applied behavioral analysis, leadership in psychology, job satisfaction, organizational culture

Organizational culture shapes and molds workplace dynamics. Individuals in leadership set parameters for the type of behavior that is expected within the office setting and how it should be carried out. Organizational culture can impact job satisfaction, performance and company outcomes, staff morale, retention, and progress toward target goals (Longman, et al. 2018; Warrick, 2017). Warrick (2017) suggested that many corporations do not realize the implications of these actions and their ramifications until it is too late and valuable workers have been lost to rival companies. They stressed the need for leaders to build and maintain a stable and flexible organizational culture. Doing so can lead to positive responses from and between workers and an overall welcoming atmosphere (Warrick, 2017).

Individuals' feelings about their performance can also impact their perception of satisfaction. Providing a means to share knowledge and to feel like a part of a larger unit and team can increase workplace satisfaction (Froman 2010; Papachristopoulos & Xanthopoulou, 2019). Venkataramani et al. (2013) defined workplace satisfaction through favorable ties with colleagues and with upper management and whether team members feel they are supported and can approach others for advice. If the culture encourages aspirations to expand and build on professional development, then many employees can and will. However, in the absence of such support, staff personnel feel a lack of incentive to continue their pursuits and focus instead on moving their careers to different venues which do support such goals. Therefore, the need for management to create a career path for those seeking such movement is key in developing productive workplace culture and career success across the board (Alas & Mousa, 2016; Wang, et al. 2019; Yalabik, et al. 2017). While research on workplace satisfaction is expansive (Dhamija, et al. 2019; Epton, et al. 2017), little is known about the underpinnings of occupational behavior and satisfaction in the field of applied behavior analysis (ABA), and organizations are not applying behavioral analysis interventions to motivate their staff (Ludwig, 2015, p. 606).

This pilot study measured job satisfaction among thirty-one individuals working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program. The aim of this study was to analyze the impact of a tool intending to increase job satisfaction and the completion of job duties. This was a motivational email containing both positive reinforcement statements and information from Scientific Journals. The following research questions were answered:

1. Does a positive motivational email sent to practitioners working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program (Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, Behavior Interventionists) increase job satisfaction?
2. Does a positive motivational email sent to practitioners working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program (Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, Behavior Interventionists) increase their completion of clinical notes?
3. Do practitioners working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program (Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, Behavior Interventionists) who receive positive motivation emails have a higher rate of completed clinical notes than those who do not receive positive motivational emails?

## Literature Review

An effective company can build on its employees' capabilities and promote accordingly, allow team members to interact and share knowledge, and serve as a repository and overseer for these personnel members (Caruso, 2017, Hoever, et al., 2018; Lacerenza, et al., 2018). Employees often do not volunteer knowledge or experience unless directly asked; without managerial encouragement, they may not perform at their highest possible potential, which can create a losing situation for companies (who do not benefit from this knowledge) and employees, who could feel more secure in their positions by way of demonstrating their skillsets (Caruso, 2017). In Caruso's view, then, organizational culture must foster an environment which is largely built upon the acquisition and sharing of knowledge at all levels, including those gained through training seminars, life experiences, and interchanges with others (Caruso 2017).

Likewise, having a relationship with teammates at all levels, including supervisors, is integral for company success. Webb Day et al. (2014) note the need for effective communication between supervisors and subordinates in this context including the recognition of high performing individuals and accompanying compensation. While discussions concerning salary and compensation are certainly essential, it is equally important (if not more so) for supervisors to acknowledge and draw attention to exemplary productivity; positive feedback can enhance employee self-esteem, lead to rewards (both tangible and intangible) and even lead to merit increases. Hence, placing an emphasis on common ground is helpful to open-up such dialogs. Tools such as motivational emails with positive reinforcement statements and information from scientific journals that will help staff in their job, in which all parties are permitted to give voice to questions, comments, and concerns, can also be of merit in this undertaking and can create an atmosphere of trust in corporate leadership too, which adds a further layer of loyalty and satisfaction since they would feel more secure in their positions and less likely to be blindsided by unexpected layoffs or company closures (Webb Day et al, 2014).

Some attention has been placed upon the relevance and correlation of workplace interactivity, productivity, culture, tangible reward systems, and how these elements conjoin to form the basis for employee happiness overall (Froman, 2010; Salah, 2016). These constructs are critical to business success as they aid in retention, thereby reducing business costs in recruiting and training new hires; moreover, it also underscores the notion that the company is a desirable setting based upon the experiences of those involved (Froman, 2010). Feedback to and from upper management combined with the judicious usage of positive psychology can support how a business formulates its unique branding. Organizational culture can also encourage unity among teammates and can glean a greater sense of accomplishment within their tasks (Froman, 2010; Salah, 2016). By providing a motivational email to ABA program practitioners, it is hypothesized that they could feel a greater sense job satisfaction.

## Materials and Methods

This pilot study is a quantitative experimental research design. Experimental research is a scientific approach to research, where one or more independent variables are manipulated and applied to one or more dependent variables to measure their effect on the latter (Bryman, 2012). Scientific studies also allow for either a controlled experiment and or the use of surveys that are customary and isolate the cause-and-effect relationships, while at the same time, scheming unrelated variables (Tsang, 2014). Administering an experimental research



design helps to implement a scientific approach to answering the research questions and testing the hypothesis while providing insight into the phenomenon in a cost-effective and time-efficient manner (Bryman, 2012). Due to the dearth of research in this area, a pilot study was conducted to determine if this is a viable line of inquiry, warranting a full-scale experiment.

## Participants

The participants for this study (N=31) were comprised of a convenience sample of adults who self-reported as male, female, or non-binary, who provide Applied Behavior Analysis services to children with Autism, Intellectual Disability, ADHD, and other behavioral health needs. For this study, the participants must be in the United States and be social media users. No other restrictions apply.

The participants for this study were invited to participate in the survey via an advertising post on [www.Linkedin.com](http://www.Linkedin.com), a professional networking platform and sent to individuals who post on social media that they are employed in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. The general population throughout this study was sampled, with no restrictions, based on sex, race, ethnicity, or other factors. The location of the participants was online and voluntary. To secure confidentiality, the online survey did not ask for any identifying information such as their name. The data was entered and secured in a google sheet that is password protected with a Business Associate Agreement to prevent anyone other than the researcher accessing the information. Data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years, at which time it will be destroyed based on the National Institute of Standards and Technology Guidance on best practices for clearing, purging, and destroying research data.

Once a participant granted consent, they were sent the direct survey link to take a pre-test that scored overall job satisfaction and any areas where they felt that they may be challenged or struggling. Participants were then contacted via an email including a review of the details of the study. Once those items had been verified and confirmed, the organized participants' contact information was organized into an excel spreadsheet. Since participants did not share their personal information and only responded with an email address, identifying information was not used on the confidential research material. Candidates subsequently were referenced using their email addresses rather than names or other details to prevent any accidental disclosures of their identities. That added step allowed participants to feel secure that their replies were truly confidential and would be held as such.

Participants' responses to the background and demographic questions were collected. Most participants (68%) were male, with 26% of participants female, 3% (N=1) reported as non-binary. The respondents identified as white or Caucasian (84%), 3 % (N=1) identified as Native American, and 10 % (N=3) of participants were of the Black/African American ethnicity.

Participants were also asked for highest level of education completed. Forty nine percent reported they had a bachelor's degree, while 16.1% had some college credit with no degree, and 16.1% reported they have an Associate degree as their highest education. A small number of participants (N=1) reported they have some high school with no diploma or a high school diploma (N=1). Finally, 12.8% (N=4) reported to have completed a graduate program and have a master's degree.

## **Instruments**

After providing demographic information, the participants completed a pretest and survey. The pretest utilized was the Abridged Job Descriptive Index, which is a valid and reliable measure (Guidroz, et al. 2010; Inoyatova, 2021) published by Bowling Green State University (2009). Additionally, a survey questionnaire was administered containing several measurement scales. The selected scales are attached as Appendix A (A bridged Job Descriptive Index), and Appendix B (Research Interview Questions). The Abridged Job Descriptive Index may be downloaded and used without special permissions and is frequently used by academic and organizational researchers to measure employee attitudes such as job satisfaction. The first six questions relate to demographics including the participants identified gender, current age, occupation, job title, highest degree obtained, subject area of highest degree. The seventh question asks the participant to rank their preference of content in a motivational email. The eighth question asks if the practitioner would like to have weekly emails as part of their workplace culture. Each motivational email sent during the study had two parts. The first part included positive reinforcement statements (i.e., You're doing a great job providing ABA services to your client!) The second part of the email included information from a scientific journal on ABA best practices.

## **Procedure**

Participants were split in half and randomly assigned to two groups (N1=15, N2=16), the experimental (trial) group and the control group did not receive an intervention. The experimental group was sent a weekly motivational email for 6 weeks. Data was collected using pretest and posttests. Responses from the Abridged Job Descriptive Inventory and Research Interview Questions were collected from all participants and scored.

## **Analysis**

Statistical tests were performed to determine if there were significant differences between pretest and posttest scores in the experimental and control group. Descriptive analysis was performed, and data was then coded and entered on a spreadsheet. Once data was organized into a spreadsheet, it was then entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The independent observations were collected from two random samples, each sample was checked for normality and equal variance. With these conditions met, despite a small sample size in each group and overall, a t-test was performed to determine any pre-posttest differences in the groups as there is not a defined lower limit to sample sizes in t-tests (De Winter, 2013). Pretest posttest T-test was run using SPSS version 26. These statistical tests will be performed to determine significant differences between pretest and post test scores in the experimental and control group.

## **Results**

RQ1. Does a positive motivational email sent to practitioners working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program (Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, Behavior Interventionists) increase job satisfaction?

The Null Hypothesis (H1o) was rejected, as the findings supported the significance in difference in job satisfaction when receiving a positive motivational email. Job Satisfaction

was the tested variable among the experimental group for pre-test, post-test, paired t-test. Overall, the model explained a significance (2-tails) at .002 (Table 1).

RQ2. Does a positive motivational email sent to practitioners working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program (Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, Behavior Interventionists) increase their completion of clinical notes?

The Null Hypothesis (H2o) was rejected, as the findings supported the significance in difference in the completion of clinical notes when receiving a positive motivational email. The completion of clinical notes was the tested variable among the experimental group for pre-test, post-test, paired t-test. Overall, the model explained a significance (2-tails) at .009 (Table 2).

RQ3. Do practitioners working in an Applied Behavior Analysis program (Board Certified Behavior Analysts, Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts, Registered Behavior Technicians, Behavior Interventionists) who receive positive motivation emails have a higher rate of completed clinical notes than those who do not receive positive motivational emails?

The Null Hypothesis (H3o) was rejected, as the findings supported the significance in difference in the completion of clinical notes when receiving a positive motivational email. The completion of clinical notes was the tested variable among the experimental group versus the control group for post-test, paired t-test. Overall, the model explained a significance (2-tails) at .005 (Table 3).

**Table 1**

*Job Satisfaction Experimental Pre-Test Versus Job Satisfaction Experimental Post-Test*

		Paired Samples Test				
		Paired Differences 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	T	df	Significance	
					Upper	One-Sided p
Pair 1	Job Satisfaction Experimental Pre – Job Satisfaction Experimental Post	-8.84158	-3.649	18	<.001	.002

**Table 2**

*Notes Completion Experimental Pre-Test Versus Notes Completion Experimental Post-Test*

Paired Samples Test				
		Paired Differences		Significance
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	T	Two-Sided p
		Upper		
Pair 1	Notes Control Post – Notes Experimental Post	-6.77680	-3.447	.005

**Table 3**

*Notes Completion Control Group Post-test versus Notes Completion Experimental Post-test*

Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences		t	df	Significance	
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	Upper			One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Pair 1	Notes Experimental Pre – Notes Experimental Post	-6.35521	-2.935	18	.004	.009	

**Discussion**

The findings were such that when a positive motivation email was sent to practitioners in an ABA program, their job satisfaction increased from pretest to posttest with a significance of

.002. Additionally, these same practitioners that received a positive motivational email increased their completion of clinical notes from pretest to posttest with a significance of .009. When comparing the completion of clinical notes as the tested variable among the experimental group who received a positive motivational email versus the control group who did not receive a positive motivational email, the results explained a significance at .005.

When participants were asked if they would like to have weekly emails as part of their workplace culture, the results varied between the control and experimental groups. The control group responded with 50% of them desiring to have a weekly email, whereas the experimental group responded with 84% of them desiring to have a weekly email. Overall, 71% of participants reported a desire to have weekly emails as part of their workplace culture. Participants were asked if they prefer to receive a motivational email with a positive reinforcement statement (i.e., You're doing a great job with your client!) or a motivational email with information from a scientific journal. A total of 44% of participants stated they would prefer an email with a positive reinforcement statement, whereas 55% of participants stated they would prefer a scientific journal in their motivational email.

Research has touched upon the positive and negative aspects of occupational functioning and the overreaching impact on employees' lives, including favorable results from managerial praise and peer recognition, the drop in morale when supervisors do not acknowledge contributions, and the need for incorporating tools into the business which expand upon talents, abilities, and morale (Froman, 2010; Hoever, et al. 2018; Mashhadi, et al. 2016; Papachristopoulos & Xanthopoulou, 2019; Salah, 2016). This study aimed to build upon the literature available and found that indeed incorporating tools as simple as a positive motivational email can increase job satisfaction as well as the completion of job duties. Capitalizing on these areas can serve the corporation's best interests in conjunction with lifting team spirit; these perks can serve as their rewards. Different forms that feedback delivery can take and how each of those forms can alter an employee's performance adversely or favorably, as well as changing or influencing how the employees view the company, their peers, and their supervisor. A virtuous organization is one that considers and cultivates individual experience, knowledge base, emotional adaptability, and unique capabilities and differences. This approach demands powerful company leadership which models the behavior that they desire, but which also adheres to a strict moral code in tandem with a clear ethical background (Froman 2010). Upper-level leadership can spearhead the type of performances and behaviors which they would like to see from their personnel and can be instrumental in creating the kind of workspace that they would like to see enacted.

This study can be used to generate meaningful change in organizational and workplace culture, especially in Applied Behavior Analysis organizations. Higher levels of job satisfaction, can translate to higher levels of productivity. This is also of utmost importance with the increasing need for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services and the availability, or lack thereof to assist all those in need of services.

Considering the intensive and one-to-one nature of ABA-based services, (Behavior Analyst Certification Board, 2014) as well as the latest reported prevalence rates of ASD, which estimate 1 in 59 children in the USA received the diagnosis (Baio, et al. 2018), there is an increasing need for ABA providers. Turnover rates for community-based direct-care staff working with individuals with developmental disabilities have long been problematic and reported as high as 70.7% to 77% per year (Kazemi, et al. 2015; Wine, et al. 2020). In line with the health care industry, there is a loss of productivity and costs of hiring and training

new staff which places a financial burden on providers (Novak & Dixon, 2019). High turnover also negatively impacts the current employees' morale and workload as experienced staff are replaced by untrained staff (Sulek et al. 2017). Finally, frequent turnover may disrupt the continuity of services, which may potentially hurt patients' progress in treatment and the organization's reputation in the community. This study should provide a basis for further research on how to cultivate job satisfaction among ABA practitioners to lower turnover and understaffing rates in the field. Stakeholders can benefit from the results of this study by way of companies saving money (therefore increasing payouts for shareholders), more productive workers, and a community that favorably views the company.

A major limitation of this pilot study is the small sample size and potential for confounding variables such as inner motivation or personal stressors which can also impact motivation. Additionally, many of the participants identified as white and male. In so much, the findings from this study are not generalizable to broader populations. Future research efforts should focus on recruiting a more diverse and representative sample. As this quantitative study focused on the measurement of job satisfaction, a more robust description of the participants' experiences and evaluative processes was not captured, and future studies could utilize a tool less dichotomous in nature. Future research could isolate and standardize a motivational email as a tool. Finally, a qualitative design could offer insight to better conceptualize variables that impact job satisfaction.

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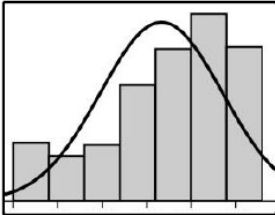
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## Appendix A

### Abridged Job Descriptive Index

<p><b>People on Your Present Job</b></p> <p>Think of the majority of people with whom you work or meet in connection with your work. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe these people? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write</p> <p><u>Y</u> for "Yes" if it describes the people with whom you work  <u>N</u> for "No" if it does not describe them  <u>?</u> for "?" if you cannot decide</p> <p>.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Boring  <input type="checkbox"/> Slow  <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible  <input type="checkbox"/> Smart  <input type="checkbox"/> Lazy  <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrating</p>	<p><b>Job in General</b></p> <p>Think of your job in general. All in all, what is it like most of the time? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write</p> <p><u>Y</u> for "Yes" if it describes your job  <u>N</u> for "No" if it does not describe it  <u>?</u> for "?" if you cannot decide</p> <p>.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Good  <input type="checkbox"/> Undesirable  <input type="checkbox"/> Better than most  <input type="checkbox"/> Disagreeable  <input type="checkbox"/> Makes me content  <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent  <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyable  <input type="checkbox"/> Poor</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">ABRIDGED JOB DESCRIPTIVE INDEX</h1>  <p>2009 Revision</p> <p>including</p> <h2 style="margin: 0;">Abridged Job in General Scale</h2> <div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">BGSU<sup>®</sup></div> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">Bowling Green State University</p>
<p>The Job Descriptive Index                  © Bowling Green State University                  1975-2009</p>	<p>The Job In General Scale                  © Bowling Green State University                  1982-2009</p>	

<p><b>Work on Present Job</b></p> <p>Think of the work you do at present. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe your work? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write</p> <p><u>Y</u> for "Yes" if it describes your work  <u>N</u> for "No" if it does not describe it  <u>?</u> for "?" if you cannot decide</p> <p>.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Fascinating  <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfying  <input type="checkbox"/> Good  <input type="checkbox"/> Exciting  <input type="checkbox"/> Rewarding  <input type="checkbox"/> Uninteresting</p>	<p><b>Pay</b></p> <p>Think of the pay you get now. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe your present pay? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write</p> <p><u>Y</u> for "Yes" if it describes your pay  <u>N</u> for "No" if it does not describe it  <u>?</u> for "?" if you cannot decide</p> <p>.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Barely live on income  <input type="checkbox"/> Bad  <input type="checkbox"/> Well paid  <input type="checkbox"/> Underpaid  <input type="checkbox"/> Comfortable  <input type="checkbox"/> Enough to live on</p>	<p><b>Opportunities for Promotion</b></p> <p>Think of the opportunities for promotion that you have now. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe these? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write</p> <p><u>Y</u> for "Yes" if it describes your opportunities for promotion  <u>N</u> for "No" if it does not describe them  <u>?</u> for "?" if you cannot decide</p> <p>.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Good opportunities for promotion  <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunities somewhat limited  <input type="checkbox"/> Dead-end job  <input type="checkbox"/> Good chance for promotion  <input type="checkbox"/> Fairly good chance for promotion  <input type="checkbox"/> Regular promotions</p>	<p><b>Supervision</b></p> <p>Think of the kind of supervision that you get on your job. How well does each of the following words or phrases describe this? In the blank beside each word or phrase below, write</p> <p><u>Y</u> for "Yes" if it describes the supervision you get on the job  <u>N</u> for "No" if it does not describe it  <u>?</u> for "?" if you cannot decide</p> <p>.....</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Praises good work  <input type="checkbox"/> Tactful  <input type="checkbox"/> Influential  <input type="checkbox"/> Up to date  <input type="checkbox"/> Annoying  <input type="checkbox"/> Knows job well</p>
<p>(Go on to next page)</p>		<p>(Go on to back page)</p>	

### Research Interview Questions

#### Demographics:

- 1) What is your identified gender?
- 2) What is your current age?
- 3) What is your occupation
- 4) What is your job title?
- 5) What is the highest degree that you have obtained (High school diploma, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctorate)
- 6) What is the subject of your highest degree (eg Psychology, Applied Behavior Analysis)

#### Motivational Email Preference:

- 7) Rank the following items in the order that you would prefer to receive in a motivational email (1=preferred the most; 2=preferred the least)
  - \_\_\_ Positive reinforcement statement (i.e. You're doing a great job with your client!)
  - \_\_\_ Information from a scientific journal
- 8) Would you like to have weekly emails as part of your workplace culture?





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