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PERCEPTIONS OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to analyse the relationship between intrapersonal competencies and the management of teaching tension, as a function of personal and work satisfaction, in higher education teachers. The Emotional Competencies Inventory (ECI) was administered to a sample of 974 teachers from public and private universities in Chile August to October 2023. This quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional approach was selected to address the research question in a rigorous and systematic manner. A variety of dimensions were addressed, including intrapersonal and interpersonal competence, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. The statistical analysis encompassed a range of methods, including descriptive measures, Pearson correlations, linear regression models, and interaction analysis. The internal consistency of the instrument was substantiated by a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.95, indicating the reliability of the data. The results indicate a high prevalence of intrapersonal competencies in the sample (M = 107.8), with interpersonal skills and adaptability following closely behind. However, the dimension of stress management exhibited the lowest mean value (M = 46.0), thereby underscoring the necessity to fortify this area in teacher training and well-being programs. A notable distinction emerged based on gender and years of experience: male educators exhibited an escalating trend in their emotional competencies as their teaching tenure extended, while in female educators, this relationship was inverse, marked by a substantial decline in the CEG score among those with over a decade of experience. The study's findings indicate that socio-emotional skills are a critical element for teacher well-being, particularly in highly demanding contexts. It is recommended that training strategies be implemented with an emphasis on developing skills for stress management, considering differences by gender, institution type, and years of professional practice. This work offers pertinent empirical evidence for the development of educational policies that are intended to promote comprehensive emotional development among university teachers.

KEYWORDS: Socio-Emotional Skills, Stress Management, Intrapersonal Competence, Higher Education, Gender, Teaching Experience.

1. INTRODUCTION

The importance of socio-emotional skills in higher education teachers is twofold. Firstly, the promotion of a positive learning environment is contingent upon the presence of such skills. Secondly, the establishment of a favourable relationship between the teacher and students is predicated on the possession of these skills. Finally, the enhancement of students' integral development is contingent upon the presence of such skills (Barkhuizen, 2017; Brackett et al., 2019).

Emotional self-regulation is defined as a person's ability to effectively recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions (Brown, J. et al., 2017; Mavroveli, S. et al., 2019). In the context of education, the ability to regulate one's emotions is crucial for the well-being and job satisfaction of teachers, both in their personal lives and in their professional careers (Hargreaves, A., & Boye, A., 2016; Wubbels, T., et al., 2015).

Teachers who can self-regulate their emotions are better equipped to deal with the challenges and demands inherent in their work. Chu and Chow (2019) This ability to cope with stress, frustration, and pressure more effectively is a key component of the professional competencies of the individuals. Furthermore, emotional self-regulation has been demonstrated to influence the quality of interactions with students (Hakanen, J.J., et al., 2017; Jennings, P.A., & Greenberg, M.T., 2016). Empirical evidence indicates that educators who demonstrate effective emotional regulation are more likely to respond with empathy and sympathy to their students' emotional needs (Farnia, F., & Jobbagy, A. 2019; Lomas, T., et al. 2017).

This contributes to a positive emotional climate in the classroom, where students feel safe and supported. This, in turn, can have a positive impact on academic performance and the teacher-student relationship (Ibarrola, B., 2014; Durlak, J. A., et al., 2011; Rusk, R.D., et al., 2018).

The emotional state exerts a regulatory influence on behaviour. This indicates that the manner in which one articulates themselves is contingent upon the underlying emotions experienced, such as anger, gratitude, fear, and forgiveness.

Emotions serve a regulatory function in interpersonal relationships, with emotional states prompting the establishment of competitive, cooperative, and future-oriented human groups. Human beings are in constant motion, transitioning between diverse emotional states. These fluctuations in emotional state influence their interpersonal relationships. According to Quintana and Cisternas, a regulator has been developed for this purpose, which they have designated the Quintana sense. J, & Cisterna, A. 2013)

The integration of individuals into their respective societies is contingent upon their emotional competencies, which facilitate a sense of empathy and responsiveness to social needs. Its approach has been demonstrated to facilitate more efficacious navigation of life circumstances in comparison to that of individuals who do not employ this approach. It is evident that there exist certain recurrent or overwhelming emotions that have the capacity to impede an individual's capacity for making pivotal life decisions. However, the ability to discern these emotions enables the development of effective management strategies. It is important to note that this does not guarantee the prevention of adverse outcomes or the absence of exposure to "negative" emotions. While these emotions are indeed necessary, the ability to respond effectively and maintain emotional well-being is enhanced by this approach. According to the works of Bisquerra, Pérez-González, and García Navarro (2015) and Casassus (2009).

The ability to manage emotions appropriately is defined as emotional management. **In order to achieve this development, it is necessary to**

1. Become aware of the relationship between emotion, cognition and behaviour: recognize that there is a direct relationship between the emergence of one or more emotions and that these develop in a cognitive process that in turn is expressed in our physical and verbal behaviour. Ruvalcaba, R, N.A., Gallegos, J., & Fuerte, M. 2017.
2. Express emotion appropriately: To properly express an emotion is to do so in a way that is honest, authentic, and respectful. It's important to be able to recognize and understand our emotions and then find ways to express them in a way that's appropriate for the situation and the person we're interacting with. The ability to understand the internal emotional state does not necessarily correspond to the external expression of the emotion, even more so when it is recognized that it impacts others. Keltner, D., & Haidt, J. 2017; Tracy, J. L., & Randles, D. 2011; Barrett, L. F. 2017; Gross, J. 2015; Levenson, R. W., & Ruef, A. M. 2017.
3. Generate appropriate coping strategies, as pointed out in the previous paragraph, internal emotion can be far from its expression, for this tool can be used that collaborate in a healthy

and positive coexistence environment for the other or others.

In order to become aware of the need to regulate emotionally, it is necessary to recognize in contexts and environments that the emotions that are expressed will depend on the type of relationship we have with the other, the degree of immediacy or expressive sincerity of the emotion. Grandey, A. A., Fisk, G. M., & Steiner, D. D. 2017; Gendron, M., Roberson, D., van der Vyver, J. M., & Barrett, L. F. 2014; Heerdink, M. W., van Kleef, G. A., Homan, A. C., & Fischer, A. H. 2017.

2. METHOD

2.1. Analysis Methodology

A descriptive analysis is conducted for the final score and each component and associated subcomponent. For numerical indicators, measures of central tendency, dispersion, and position are evaluated. For the qualitative indicators of gender, years of teaching, and type of institution, proportions are estimated. In order to evaluate the quality of the components and the final CEG score, Pearson correlations are estimated with a hypothesis test to evaluate the statistical significance of these associations.

For the CEG indicator, Cronbach's Alpha is presented as a measure of reliability for the scale. Subsequently, graphs depicting the association and distribution of the indicators are presented. To elucidate the potential impact of qualitative indicators on the final score of interest in CEG, as well as in the CIA and CME components, linear regression models via ordinary least squares are presented. Finally, there are interactions between the qualitative variables of interest. All analyses were conducted in R version 4.3.2. Subsequently, the descriptive, association, and statistical modeling analyses are presented.

The present research work employs a non-experimental design, which implies that no manipulation of the variables occurred. Consequently, the data were collected in a specific period (August to October 2023), resulting in a cross-sectional study design.

The present study constitutes a quantitative, exploratory-descriptive investigation, as the phenomenon under examination has received scant attention within the context in which it was initially developed. The objective of this study is to provide a systematic and objective description of the phenomenon.

The sample defined for this study was obtained from a universe made up of teachers from 20 public and 25 private universities who were working during the period from August to October 2023, with a sample of 974 teachers.

In order to respond to the research, a data collection instrument was utilized. The instrument in question was the Baron On Ice Questionnaire, which was elaborated, developed, and validated by BarOn & Parker in 2000.

2.2. Data Analysis

Table 1 delineates the components that comprise the total CEG score. The mean of the Intrapersonal component (CIA) was 107.8 points, the mean of the Interpersonal component (CIE) was 90.7 points, the mean of the Adaptability component (CAD) was 74.7 points, the mean of the Stress Management component (CME) was 46 points, and the mean of the General Mood component was 54.9 points.

The CEG indicator, which is composed of all the previous indicators, has a minimum score of 269 points and a maximum score of 498 points. The average score is 374.1 points, with a standard deviation of 48.4 and a median score of 376.5. These results offer insight into the observed data, highlighting a certain symmetry.

With respect to the composition of the sample, Table 1 indicates that 60.9% of the sample is male and 39.1% is female. In regard to the duration of teaching experience, 22.7% of respondents reported having between one and five years of experience, 24.2% indicated between five and ten years, 27.2% stated between ten and fifteen years, and 25.9% indicated having over fifteen years of experience. In regard to the institutional context of the teaching profession, it is noteworthy that 43% of educators are employed by public institutions, while the remaining 57% are engaged by private institutions.

A thorough examination of the correlation matrix of the CEG components, as depicted in Figure 1, reveals that all associations between components are positive and statistically significant at conventional confidence levels.

Furthermore, when considering the correlation between each component and CEG, these associations are also found to be positive and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

The distribution of the components indicates a tendency toward normality. Conversely, the observed Cronbach's alpha of 0.95 indicates a satisfactory outcome, thereby substantiating the reliability and consistency of the indicator in its internal structure.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics.

Variable	N	Media/Prop.	SD	Min	P25	P50	P75	Max
Emotional Understanding (SM)	974	24,6	4,2	16	22	25	28	33
Assertiveness (AS)	974	19,5	3,2	13	17	20	21	27
Self-concept (CA)	974	27,7	4,7	20	23	27	31	39
Self-realization (AR)	974	22,4	4,3	17	19	22	25	32
Independence (IN)	974	13,7	4,0	7	10	13	16	24
Intrapersonal (CIA)	974	107,8	16,4	76	94	107	119	147
Empathy (MS)	974	28,0	4,2	17	25	28	31	40
Interpersonal Relationship (IR)	974	34,8	5,0	24	31	35	39	47
Social Responsibility (SR)	974	27,9	4,7	19	24	27	31	39
Interpersonal (CIE)	974	90,7	11,5	64	83	90	100	118
Troubleshooting (SP)	974	27,2	3,8	20	24	27	30	34
Reality Test (PR)	974	24,3	5,2	12	20	24	28	38
Flexibility (FL)	974	23,2	4,0	14	20	23	26	33
Adaptability (CAD)	974	74,7	10,6	51	66	75,5	83	99
Stress tolerance (ET)	974	26,2	5,0	14	22	26,5	30	38
Impulse Control (IC)	974	19,8	4,6	12	17	19	22	37
Stress Management (CME)	974	46,0	8,6	32	38	46	52	72
Happiness (FAITH)	974	26,1	3,9	19	23	26	28	38
Optimism (OP)	974	28,8	4,4	20	24	29	32	38
General Mood (GAC)	974	54,9	7,3	39	48	56	60	71
CEG (Global)	**974**	**374,1**	**48,4**	**269**	**337**	**376,5**	**407**	**498**
Years of teaching								
Between 1 and 5 years	221	0,227						
Between 5 and 10 years old	236	0,242						
Between 10 and 15 years old	265	0,272						
Over 15 years old	252	0,259						
Gender								
Male	593	0,609						
Female	381	0,391						
Type of institution								
Public	419	0,43						
Private	555	0,57						

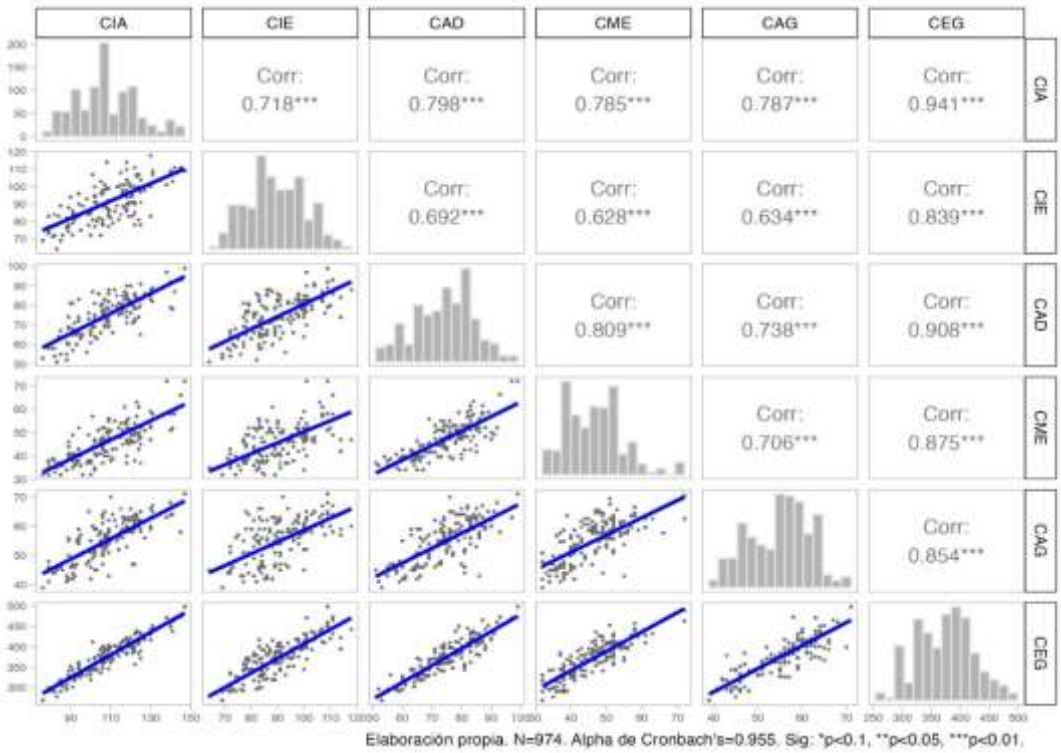

Figure 1: Matrix of Correlations of CEG Components.

2.3. Statistical Modeling

Table 2: Ordinary Least Squares Models for CEG.

	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**	**Model 5**
(Intercept)	376,290	371,360	367,466	364,399	356,867
	(-1.984)	(-2.361)	(-3.232)	(-4.397)	(-5.099)
Gender: Female	-5,689*			-2.720	14,572**
	(-3.172)			(-3.248)	(-6.402)
Institution: Private		4.746		6,622**	4.347
		(-3.128)		(-3.203)	(-3.225)
Teaching practice: Between 5 and 10 years			0.131	0.091	4.754
			(-4.498)	(-4.506)	(-6.155)
Teaching practice: Between 10 and 15 years			11,911	12,495	27,628
			(-4.377)	(-4.443)	(-5.892)
Teaching practice: Over 15 years old			12,855	13,662	25,277
			(-4.428)	(-4.560)	(-5.862)
Female x Between 5 and 10 years old					-6.877
					(-8.983)
Female x Between 10 and 15 years old					-35,382
					(-8.981)
Female x Over 15 years old					-27,771
					(-9.213)
R2	0.003	0.002	0.016	0.022	0.043
Adj. R2	0.002	0.001	0.013	0.017	0.035
Num. Obs.	974	974	974	974	974
Note: p < 0.01; **p < 0.05; *p < 0.1. Standard error in parentheses.					

Table 2 shows different models of ordinary least squares for CEG. Next, a descriptive reading of each component of the first four models will be made, and then model 5 will be described, in which an interaction between the most significant variables is made. A summary of the analysis will then be presented with the most relevant aspects.

Model 1 states that

$\hat{\beta}_1\ género$ = Women score on average 5.68 points lower in CEG than men, with 90% confidence being significant.

For Model 2, the type of institution is not observed to be significant for the CEG score.

Model 3 states that

$\widehat{\beta_2}\ ejercicio\ docente$ = People who have been teaching for between 10 and 15 years obtain an average of 11.9 points more CEG compared to those who have been teaching for between 1 and 5 years, controlling for the rest of the variables. This is significant at 99% confidence

$\widehat{\beta_3}\ ejercicio\ docente$ = People who have been teaching for more than 15 years have 12.8 points more CEG compared to those who have been teaching for 1 to 5 years, controlling for the rest of the variables. This is significant at 99% confidence.

Form 4 states the following

$\widehat{\beta_1}\ institución$ = People who belong to a private institution have an average of 6.62 points more CEG than those who work in public institutions, controlling for the rest of the variables. This is significant at 95% confidence.

$\widehat{\beta_2}\ ejercicio\ docente$ = People who have been teaching for between 10 and 15 years have an average of 12.49 points more CEG compared to those who have been teaching for between 1 and 5 years, controlling for the rest of the variables. This is significant at 99% confidence.

$\widehat{\beta_3}\ ejercicio\ docente$ = People who have been teaching for more than 15 years have an average of 13.66 points more CEG compared to those who have been teaching for between 1 and 5 years, controlling for the rest of the variables. This is significant at 99% confidence.

The aforementioned models allow for the visualization of the significance of the gender variable, which was previously found to be significant at 90% and 95%, and of the years of teaching practice, which was found to be significant at 99% in the previous models, in its incidence in the CEG score that can be obtained. For Model 5, interactions were generated between these variables, and significant interaction was obtained at all levels

of trust. This indicates that, as women have been teaching for more years, they have lower CEG scores compared to men.

Model 5 interactions

$\widehat{\beta_4}$ *Femenino X Ejercicio Docente* = The effect of being a woman and having 10 to 15 years of teaching practice decreases the CEG score by 20.8 points, compared to men with the same or less time of teaching practice. This is significant at 99% confidence.

$\widehat{\beta_5}$ *Femenino X Ejercicio Docente* = The effect of being a woman and having been teaching for more than 15 years decreases the CEG score by 13.19 points, compared to men with the same or less time of teaching practice. This is significant at 99% confidence.

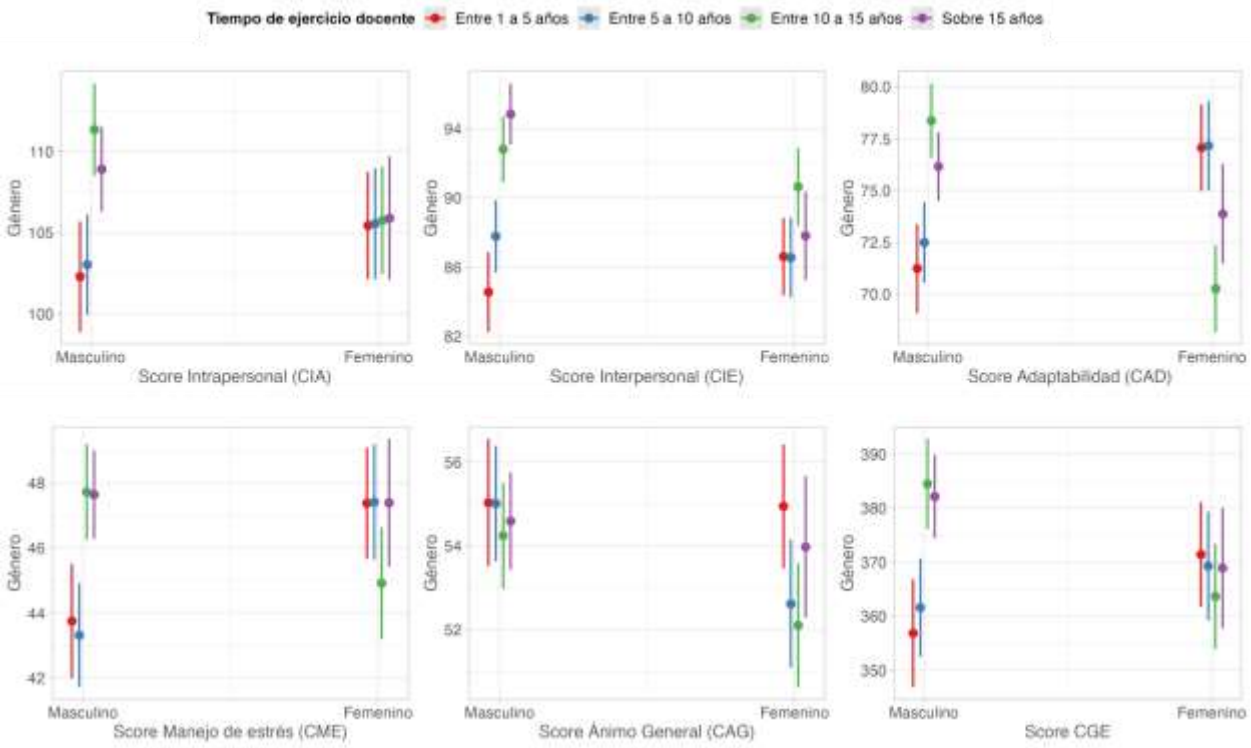

Figure 2: Analysis of Interactions for Gender and Years of Teaching on CEG Components.

Figure 2 illustrates the interactions for gender and year of teaching practice on the components of CEG. A cross-sectional analysis reveals a positive correlation between teaching experience and CEG component scores in male participants. In the case of women, it is noteworthy that the phenomenon does not occur in the same manner as it does in the case of men. This is due to the fact that women have accumulated more years of experience in the teaching profession. Consequently, their scores in each component remain constant or decrease over time. This results in the observation that as women have been teaching for more years, the lower the CEG score they have.

With respect to the intrapersonal components, it can be observed that, in the case of women, the change in score is marginal as the number of years of teaching practice increases. In contrast, for men, it is noteworthy that the greater the number of years of teaching practice, the higher their score in the intrapersonal component.

With respect to the stress management components, it has been observed that the female population generally exhibits higher stress management scores compared to males. However, there are no significant disparities in stress management scores based on the duration of teaching experience, with the exception of women who have been teaching for a period between 10 and 15 years. In this particular demographic, a notable decline in stress management scores is evident. In the case of male subjects, although their scores are lower than those of female subjects, as they accrue more experience in the teaching profession, there is a noticeable increase in stress management scores among those with 10 years or more of teaching experience.

3. DISCUSSION

The findings derived from the analysis of teachers' emotional competencies, as measured by the Emotional Competencies Inventory (ICE), provide a comprehensive perspective on the emotional

dynamics within the educational environment. The mean scores on the various components of the ICE demonstrate intriguing patterns that indicate areas of strength and potential intervention points.

Firstly, the strong presence of intrapersonal skills (IAP) in the sample is noteworthy, with an average of 107.8 points. This finding suggests that teachers possess a substantial degree of self-awareness, emotional self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation. Interpersonal competence (IC) remains a significant facet of academic success, underscoring the importance of social skills in the educational milieu.

However, the presence of a lower average in the Stress Management (CME) component raises questions about teachers' ability to effectively manage the stresses inherent in their work. These findings underscore the importance of designing professional development strategies that specifically address stress management in the educational context.

The presence of symmetry in the data, as evidenced by the consistency in the averages and distribution of the indicators, provides a solid basis for interpreting the relationships identified in the regression analysis. These relationships reveal significant associations between emotional competencies and key demographic variables, such as gender, years of teaching, and type of institution.

The finding that teachers from private institutions exhibit a higher average score in the intrapersonal component (CIA) compared to those from public institutions suggests the influence of the work environment on the development of emotional competencies. This underscores the necessity to address emotional demands in a manner that is tailored to the specific institutional context.

The positive influence of teaching experience on the intrapersonal component (ICD) is another salient finding. As teachers accrue years of experience, a marked increase in their scores is evident, underscoring the significance of ongoing practice and learning throughout their professional tenure.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers are subject to stressors with the potential to impact their mental well-being. The aforementioned factors may encompass the considerable demands associated with teaching, the pressure to achieve academic outcomes, contentious relationships with students or colleagues, and the nature of the work environment.

4. CONCLUSION

In summary, this study offers a comprehensive overview of teachers' emotional competencies and their relationships with demographic variables. The findings indicate the presence of notable strengths, while concurrently underscoring the necessity for targeted interventions, such as the cultivation of stress management skills.

The associations identified between emotional competencies and demographic variables offer valuable information for the formulation of training strategies and educational policies. Recognizing the diversity in teachers' emotional needs is imperative, with consideration given to factors such as gender, work experience, and the institution's type.

This study makes a significant contribution to the field of emotional competencies in education by providing a solid foundation for future research and the development of training programs. These programs are designed to promote an educational environment that is both emotionally healthy and enriching.

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