

Role of Lecturer Emotional Management in Driving Student Satisfaction in Sri Lankan Private Higher Education: Insights from ABC Institute

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Abstract - Emotional intelligence encompasses the capacity to comprehend, regulate, and articulate emotions proficiently, along with the ability to connect empathetically with others. Research on the specific emotional intelligence traits of academics that affect student satisfaction in Sri Lanka's private tertiary education sector remains scarce, despite its significance. This study examines the influence of academics' emotional intelligence (EI) characteristics on the satisfaction levels of undergraduate students in Sri Lankan private tertiary education institutions, specifically focusing on ABC Institute. As emotional intelligence becomes increasingly recognized as a crucial factor in effective teaching and student engagement, this study analyses how various EI dimensions such as self-awareness, empathy, concern for well-being, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills affect overall student satisfaction. Utilizing a multi method approach in the first phase of the study, authors interviewed 21 students and did a systematic journal review to identify underpinning emotional intelligence themes affecting student satisfaction and in the second stage data was gathered through a structured questionnaire from 278 students with representation from different study streams. The results of both phases indicated that there is a significant relationship exist between elevated levels of academic emotional intelligence and enhanced student satisfaction, particularly in aspects like student-teacher academic relationship, student engagement, teacher self-efficacy and lecturer's enthusiasm on student well-being. The study underscores the importance of incorporating emotional intelligence training into the professional development of academic staff to improve educational quality and student experiences. It also offers recommendations for policy and practice aimed at fostering sustainable advancements in Sri Lanka's higher education sector.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Higher Education, Student Satisfaction

I. INTRODUCTION

Student satisfaction is a vital measure of efficacy for Sri Lanka's private tertiary institutions, profoundly impacting retention rates, institutional reputation, and academic performance. While organizational focus often centers on curriculum and infrastructure enhancements, the role of faculty Emotional Intelligence (EI) the capacity to comprehend, regulate, and articulate emotions proficiently remains an essential yet insufficiently examined aspect influencing the quality of student experience.

Educators possessing high emotional intelligence are better equipped to cultivate nurturing learning atmospheres, address student emotional and academic requirements, and foster strong lecturer-student relationships. Consequently, EI can significantly enhance overall student satisfaction. Despite this potential, research specifically addressing the correlation between academic EI traits and student satisfaction in the context of the Sri Lankan private higher education sector is remarkably limited. This lack of insight suggests that current initiatives for improving student outcomes may overlook critical interpersonal and emotional dynamics. This study seeks to address this knowledge

gap by examining the connection between faculty Emotional Intelligence—specifically focusing on dimensions such as Improved Student-Teacher Relationships, Enhanced Student Engagement, Belief in Teacher Self-Efficacy, and Concerns for Student Well-being and undergraduate student satisfaction at the ABC Institute. The findings aim to enrich academic literature and provide practical, evidence-based recommendations for promoting emotionally intelligent teaching methods across the private higher education sector in Sri Lanka.

A. Significance of the Research

The subject of emotional intelligence holds significant importance in understanding the human dynamics that influence educational experiences and satisfaction of students. According to Landry (2019), Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to an individual's capacity to identify, comprehend, and regulate emotions, both personally and in others. For educators, possessing a high level of EI is crucial for promoting effective communication, empathy, and adaptability in seeing through the varied emotional and academic requirements of students.

In the competitive landscape of private tertiary education in Sri Lanka, student satisfaction emerges as a crucial factor influencing both institutional reputation and success. The significance of teachers possessing emotional intelligence is crucial in this context. When students are satisfied, they tend to remain engaged, achieve higher academic performance, and enhance the institution's overall image. This research underscores the influence of educators' emotional intelligence on students' perceptions of their learning environment, their interactions with faculty, and their comprehensive educational experience. Further, this study emphasizes the Sri Lankan context, offering significant insights into the cultural and institutional elements that affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and student satisfaction. The results of the study can guide the institutions to design of specialized training and development initiatives for faculty, enabling them to acquire the necessary emotional skills to foster more effective relationships with students. In conclusion, can implied that this research plays a crucial role in improving educational quality and student retention within the expanding private tertiary education sector.

B. Rationale of the study

Understanding the emotional dynamics that shape educational experiences is critical in today's rapidly evolving academic environment. Emotional Intelligence (EI), as defined by Landry (2019), encompasses an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions, as well as those of others. In the context of education, particularly within the role of the educator, EI becomes a vital competency. Teachers with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to communicate effectively, demonstrate empathy, manage classroom challenges, and respond to the diverse emotional and academic needs of students. These skills not only enhance the learning experience but also contribute to the overall well-being and satisfaction of students.

In Sri Lanka's highly competitive private tertiary education sector, student satisfaction has become a key measurement of institutional success and sustainable competitive advantage. It influences student retention, academic performance, and institutional reputation. Within this framework, the emotional intelligence of lecturers holds particular significance. Studies in higher education, especially concerning factors like emotional intelligence (a component of emotional management) and student outcomes, often highlight the influence of institutional and cultural factors (Gunasekara

et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2024). Further, studies in Sri Lankan state universities (Hewage & Fonseka, 2015) and global meta-analyses (Näring et al., 2011) confirm that emotional labor significantly impacts academic emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction emphasising on importance of same type of studies to be carried out for private sector institutions as well. When students feel understood, supported, and positively engaged by their teachers, they are more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction. As such, exploring the link between educator EI and student satisfaction is essential for identifying the human factors that drive positive academic outcomes. In that sense, this study is especially relevant in the Sri Lankan context, where cultural values, student expectations, and institutional practices may shape the way emotional intelligence is perceived and applied in the classroom. By examining this relationship within a localised setting, the research provides contextually rich knowledge that can guide policy and practice in Sri Lankan private higher education institutions. The findings have the potential to guide the development of targeted training programs aimed at enhancing the emotional competencies of academic staff, thus fostering stronger student-teacher relationships and more engaging educational environments. It is imperative that this study contributes to the broader goal of improving educational quality and student satisfaction in the private tertiary education sector. Insights derived from the study supports the strategic objectives of institutions seeking to enhance student experiences, promote academic excellence, and maintain sustained competitive advantage in an expanding and dynamic educational landscape. By stressing the value of emotional intelligence in teaching, the study lays a foundation for sustainable, student-centered educational practices in Sri Lanka.

C. Aims and Main Objective

The main aim and the objective of the study is to investigate relationship between the emotional intelligence attributes of academics that leads to student satisfaction in Sri Lankan private sector tertiary education institutes.

D. Specific Objectives

- To investigate the impact of emotional intelligence of academics in student-teacher relationship leading to student satisfaction.
- To investigate the impact of emotional intelligence of academics in student engagement leading to student satisfaction
- To investigate the impact of emotional intelligence of academics in teacher self-efficacy leading to student satisfaction
- To investigate the impact of emotional intelligence of academics in student well-being leading to student satisfaction

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher education institutions are increasingly focused on student satisfaction to gain a competitive advantage. This is particularly true for private institutions, where student satisfaction is a key metric for success and a primary factor in attracting and retaining students. A significant aspect of this focus is the role of academics, particularly their emotional intelligence (EI) and its impact on the student experience. Research highlights that a teacher's EI is a crucial personal resource that influences their performance, creates a positive learning environment, and ultimately contributes to student satisfaction and loyalty.

A. Student-Teacher Relationships

The quality of student-teacher relationships is paramount to student satisfaction. A positive relationship fosters a supportive atmosphere and enhances a student's sense of belonging and well-being (Saleh & Hibatullah, 2023). Adding to that Wang (2023) emphasised that a teacher's emotional intelligence is a key factor in building and maintaining these relationships, as it allows them to identify and regulate emotions in both them and their students. According to Aldrup et al. (2022), this emotional proficiency promotes empathy, understanding, and effective communication, all of which are essential for a constructive dynamic. Teachers with higher levels of empathy are more likely to participate in emotionally supportive actions, such as acknowledging students' emotional states and responding appropriately. This empathetic approach helps reduce student anxiety and can lead to improved academic performance. Wan et al. (2023) reiterated that the relationship between teachers and students serves as a key environmental factor that can enhance the development of students' intrinsic capacities for empathy and openness.

Effective communication from teachers significantly influences student satisfaction and academic emotions (Jia et al., 2021). This includes providing constructive feedback, showing empathy, and fostering open dialogue. Positive interpersonal communication behaviors, such as immediacy and clarity, create a supportive educational atmosphere that boosts student motivation and achievement (Derakhshan, 2021). According to Singh (2023), effective communication is vital for improving students' learning experiences and academic results. Effective communication could also lead to a positive classroom environment which greatly improves the quality of relationships between students and teachers. Li et al., (2022) cited when students perceive their teachers as compassionate and supportive, they are more inclined to actively participate in their education. Furthermore, Yu & Singh (2023) stated that a comprehensive strategy that includes effective classroom management and attention to the well-being of teachers can significantly enhance student engagement and academic achievement.

Students who feel recognized and acknowledged by their teachers are more likely to participate actively in the learning process and demonstrate increased motivation (Bunting & Jota, 2021). Shin & Johnson (2021) highlighted that acknowledgment from teachers to students is crucial for fostering students' self-determination and motivation. This recognition validates students' efforts and contributions, which strengthens the student-teacher relationship.

B. Student Engagement

Teacher emotional intelligence and passion for their profession are instrumental in fostering student engagement (Sun et al., 2024). Academics with high EI can better comprehend student needs, manage the classroom environment, and inspire learning. Su et al. (2022) agreed stating that this enhanced engagement leads to greater student satisfaction, as students feel more connected to their studies and are more motivated to persevere.

Inspirational teaching stimulates curiosity and nurtures a passion for learning, encouraging students to actively engage in their academic pursuits (Mempin, 2024). Teachers who use inspirational methods can have a lasting, significant, and beneficial impact on students' thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. Providing constructive and supportive feedback is essential for enhancing student engagement (Zhang & Hyland, 2022). When feedback is delivered positively, it acts as a catalyst for motivating students

and encouraging their participation (Câmpean et al., 2024). Teachers generally agree that this kind of feedback is an effective way to boost student engagement.

According to Australian Education Research Organisation (2023), fair and consistent interactions from teachers enable students to understand expectations and foster a sense of security, which is crucial for effective classroom management and engagement. Consistency allows students to understand what is expected of them, creating clarity and a sense of safety as cited by Norfolk County Council (2025).

Further it has been found by Wei (2023), when students feel respected, they are more likely to engage in classroom activities, exhibit a stronger dedication to their academic pursuits, and experience enhanced psychological well-being. An environment characterized by respect promotes positive interactions and creates an inclusive educational setting that supports academic achievement.

C. Teacher Self-Efficacy

Mempin (2024) cited that Teacher self-efficacy a belief in one's ability to succeed in teaching is a crucial attribute that positively influences student outcomes. This finding has been agreed upon by Wu et al. (2019) who have earlier stated that academics with high self-efficacy are more proficient at managing and inspiring student learning, leading to a positive experience for both teachers and students (Wu et al., 2019). This self-efficacy is a key factor in improving student engagement and creating a positive classroom environment (Deepa, 2024). The expectations that teachers hold have a significant impact on student performance, as these beliefs can create self-fulfilling prophecies (Davies & Hattie, 2025). Educators' beliefs can influence the impact of their expectations, with biases and stereotypes potentially leading to diminished expectations for certain groups of students and negatively affecting their performance. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more open to innovative teaching methods, demonstrate enhanced planning skills, and show increased persistence when facing challenges (Lazarides & Warner, 2019). According to Savolainen et al. (2021), over the time, as teachers develop their careers, their self-efficacy tends to improve, allowing them to implement more attractive teaching strategies for students. Increased self-efficacy predicts enhanced resilience in teachers. This is particularly important for educators navigating the complexities of inclusive education. Teacher training programs that develop both self-efficacy and resilience are vital. It has been also stated that educators with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more successful in captivating their students and enhancing their instructional techniques (Johansson & Johansson, 2021). They also argued that in contrast, a low sense of self-efficacy can impede the educational experience due to diminished confidence in teaching skills.

D. Student Well-being

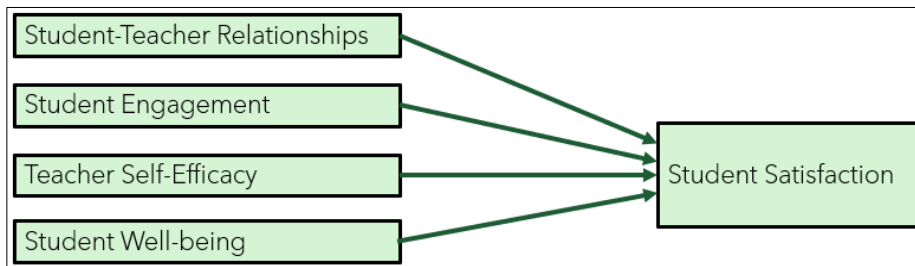
According to Wang, (2022). numerous authors have agreed that the teacher emotional intelligence and perceived emotional support are directly linked to student well-being and a reduction in school burnout. Academics with high EI are more adept at managing difficult classroom scenarios and can foster emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and problem-solving skills in students (Todmal et al., 2023). This creates a more positive and supportive learning environment. Teacher assistance is essential for helping students manage stress. Positive student-teacher relationships are linked to improved stress management and academic performance (Hoferichter & Raufelder, 2022). As argued by Ren (2024), educators play a critical role in recognizing and supporting students' mental health. The finding has been also agreed upon by Zheng, (2025) who has stated that

supportive and caring teacher behaviors are linked to improved student emotional health. According to UNICEF (2025), regularly engaging with students to understand their emotional status helps support their well-being. This support is a fundamental component of the overall educational experience.

III. METHODOLOGY

Based on the gaps in the literature reviewed, the conceptual framework is developed as below.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework



Source: Authors' compilation.

A. Development of Hypotheses

As such, the hypothesis for the research is developed to test each variable as below.

Hypothesis 1

H0: There is no relationship between student-teacher relationship and student satisfaction.

H1: There is a relationship between student-teacher relationship and student satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2

H0: There is no relationship between Student Engagement and Student Satisfaction

H2: There is a relationship between Student Engagement and Student Satisfaction

Hypothesis 3

H0: There is no relationship between Teacher Self-Efficacy and Student Satisfaction

H3: There is a relationship between Teacher Self-Efficacy and Student Satisfaction

Hypothesis 4

H0: There is no relationship between Student Well-being and Student Satisfaction

H4: There is a relationship between Student Well-being and Student Satisfaction

B. Research Design

This study adopts a pragmatism theoretical stance, using an abductive approach to develop and test hypotheses. The research employs a multi method strategy, relying on two data collection techniques to ensure validity and consistency. A case study was conducted at the ABC Institute to provide an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon. The primary data collection tools were in-depth interviews and a structured questionnaire, which align with the philosophical paradigm of pragmatism.

C. Research Methods

1) Sampling Rationale: The study utilized a judgmental sampling method to select participants with researcher's expert opinion being used to select a sample that they believe is representative of a specific population. In the initial stage authors interviewed 21 students and did a systematic journal review to identify underpinning themes of emotional intelligence affecting student satisfaction. In the second phase a sample consisted of 278 undergraduate students enrolled in the undergraduate program at ABC Institute, covering all four academic years were selected. This specific group was chosen because of its direct relevance to the research objectives. The research was conducted as a cross-sectional study, collecting data at a single point in time to fit within the project's time constraints. Data was collected through an online questionnaire distributed to the selected undergraduate students.

2) Questionnaire Design: The questionnaire was designed using a Likert scale with five options, from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree," allowing for the collection of quantitative data. The questions were developed based on the variables and indicators identified in the literature review, ensuring that the instrument was both unbiased and comprehensive. A structured questionnaire has been deemed as appropriate. It is deemed as ideal to use a structured questionnaire as the study involved a large-scale survey used pre-defined questions and response options, which simplified data compilation for statistical analysis, ensuring consistency across participants.

Before data collection, a pilot assessment was conducted with a small group of individuals from the target population. Feedback from this group helped identify and correct ambiguous or repetitive questions, enhancing the clarity and dependability of the final questionnaire. The research's theoretical framework is based on a focused literature review of studies published between 2014 and 2024. This ensures that the concepts and hypotheses are current and relevant to the modern context of private higher education. The questionnaire's questions were directly derived from these hypotheses, strengthening the internal consistency and validity of the research. The findings from this case study at ABC Institute can be generalized to the broader private higher education sector. This is because ABC Institute's operational model, strategy, and service delivery are representative of standard practices within the industry, ensuring the study's conclusions have wider applicability. The research adhered to strict ethical principles. All collected data was used exclusively for academic purposes and stored securely on a private drive to maintain confidentiality. The researcher ensured transparency and honesty, avoiding any data manipulation or misrepresentation. Participants' involvement was voluntary, and the study was designed to prevent any harm, discomfort, or disruption. Vulnerable groups were intentionally excluded to minimize ethical risks. Academic integrity was maintained throughout the process, with a strict policy against plagiarism and academic misconduct.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

A. Relationship between Student-Teacher Relationship and Student Satisfaction

Table 1. Summary of Key Findings – Model Summary

Model Summary ^b									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.423 ^a	.179	.167	.387	.179	15.175	4	278 ^a	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Student Well-being, Teacher Self-Efficacy, Student Engagement, Student-Teacher Relationship

b. Dependent Variable: Student Satisfaction

Source: Authors' compilation.

The model shows a moderate-to-weak positive correlation ($R = 0.423$) between the set of predictors and Student Satisfaction. The predictors collectively account for only 17.9% of the variance in Student Satisfaction. This is considered a weak to moderate effect size, meaning 82.1% of the variability in Student Satisfaction is due to other unmeasured factors. The average error when predicting Student Satisfaction using this model is 0.387. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.494 suggests a minor cautionary note regarding the assumption of independent errors. Overall, while the model is statistically validated using a sample size of 283, it indicates that many other variables play a more substantial role in determining Student Satisfaction.

Table 2. Summary of Key Findings – ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.094	4	2.274	15.175	.000 ^b
	Residual	41.651	278	.150		
	Total	50.745	282			

Source: Authors' compilation.

The ANOVA table confirms that the overall regression model is statistically highly significant. The four predictors (Student Well-being, Teacher Self-Efficacy, Student Engagement, and Student-Teacher Relationship), when considered together, successfully and significantly predict Student Satisfaction.

This result is consistent with the Sig. F Change and F Change values observed in the Model Summary table.

Table 3. Summary of Key Findings – Coefficients

Coefficients^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.485	.397		1.219	.224
Student-Teacher Relationship	.128	.080	.123	1.589	.113
1 Student Engagement	.222	.075	.222	2.968	.003
Teacher Self-Efficacy	.195	.122	.104	1.596	.112
Student Well-being	.072	.071	.069	1.014	.311

Source: Authors' compilation.

Table 4. Summary of Key Findings – Correlations

Coefficients^a					
Model	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1 (Constant)	-.298	1.267			
Student-Teacher Relationship	-.030	.286	.355	.095	.086
Student Engagement	.075	.369	.383	.175	.161
Teacher Self-Efficacy	-.045	.435	.292	.095	.087
Student Well-being	-.068	.213	.292	.061	.055

Source: Authors' compilation.

Table 5. Summary of Key Findings – Collinearity Statistics

Coefficients ^a		
	Model	Collinearity Statistics
		Tolerance VIF
1	(Constant)	
	Student-Teacher Relationship	.493 2.030
	Student Engagement	.527 1.899
	Teacher Self-Efficacy	.697 1.435
	Student Well-being	.643 1.556

Source: Authors' compilation.

Table 6. Summary of Key Findings – Coefficient Correlations

Coefficient Correlations ^a					
	Model		Student	Teacher	Student
			Well-being	Self-Efficacy	Engagement
1	Correlations	Student Well-being	1.000	-.245	-.202
		Teacher Self-Efficacy	-.245	1.000	-.122
		Student Engagement	-.202	-.122	1.000
		Student-Teacher Relationship	-.230	-.216	-.494
	Covariances	Student Well-being	.005	-.002	-.001
		Teacher Self-Efficacy	-.002	.015	-.001
		Student Engagement	-.001	-.001	.006
		Student-Teacher Relationship	-.001	-.002	-.003

Source: Authors' compilation.

Table 7. Summary of Key Findings – Coefficient Correlations

Coefficient Correlations^a		
Model		Student-Teacher Relationship
1	Correlations	Student Well-being
		Teacher Self-Efficacy
		Student Engagement
		Student-Teacher Relationship
	Covariances	Student Well-being
		Teacher Self-Efficacy
		Student Engagement
		Student-Teacher Relationship

Source: Authors' compilation.

This model reveals that when considering all factors simultaneously, only Student Engagement is a statistically significant unique predictor of Student Satisfaction ($p=0.003$). This variable also holds the strongest unique predictive power in the model, indicated by the highest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.222$). This means that, independent of the other variables, an increase in student engagement is directly associated with a significant increase in student satisfaction. Conversely, the unique contributions of the student-Teacher Relationship ($p=0.113$), Teacher Self-Efficacy ($p=0.112$), and Student Well-being ($p=0.311$) are not statistically significant in this multivariate model. This non-significance suggests that while these variables may be correlated with Student Satisfaction individually (as seen in the prior bivariate analysis), their influence is largely shared with, or explained by, Student Engagement and the other variables in the group.

The overall stability and reliability of the regression model are supported by the Collinearity Statistics. Checks for multicollinearity—a statistical issue where predictor variables are too strongly related to each other—show that the data is acceptable. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all predictors range from 1.435 to 2.030. Since these values are well below the conventional threshold of 5, we can conclude that the model's coefficients are not inflated or distorted by inter-correlations among the predictor variables. This confirms the reliability of the finding that Student Engagement is the only significant unique factor in the model.

The multiple regression model successfully and significantly predicts Student Satisfaction using the four selected factors. However, the model explains a relatively small portion of the total variance in Student Satisfaction (17.9%). Of the four factors, Student Engagement is the sole statistically significant and independent positive predictor of Student Satisfaction. The non-significance of Student-Teacher Relationship, Teacher Self-Efficacy, and Student Well-being suggests that, in the presence of the other

predictors, their direct unique impact on student satisfaction is minimal, or that their effects are largely accounted for by other variables in the model.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research significantly extends established psychological and service management frameworks by applying them to the specific, competitive environment of the Sri Lankan Private Higher Education (Pvt-HE) sector. Firstly, it expands Emotional Labor Theory by investigating the differential impact of Surface Acting versus Deep Acting strategies on both Student Satisfaction and lecturer Emotional Exhaustion, a crucial analysis that moves beyond typical studies focused solely on burnout in state institutions. Secondly, the study contributes to Emotional Intelligence (EI) Models by focusing specifically on the 'Managing Emotions' component as a determinant of student outcomes, thereby testing the cross-cultural validity of EI theory and exploring how localized emotional expressions (like deference) may moderate the link between a lecturer's emotional skills and student satisfaction. Finally, by integrating Service-Dominant Logic (S-D Logic), the research validates the idea that in a competitive, fee-paying environment, a lecturer's emotional management is a crucial, non-academic element of perceived service quality; it refines student satisfaction models by explicitly establishing lecturer emotional competency as a key predictor in the process of value co-creation.

It can be deduced that as per the study's findings, which shows a clear link between student satisfaction and academics' emotional intelligence, authors of this study can offer key recommendations for higher education institutions (HEIs) in Sri Lanka. Study found a significant positive correlation between student satisfaction and four core areas a.) student-teacher relationships, b.) student engagement, c.) teacher self-efficacy, and d.) student well-being. To improve student-teacher relationships, HEIs should devote time and financial resources in training for academics on emotional intelligence, effective communication, and empathy, fostering a safe, supportive classroom environment. To boost student engagement, the authors can suggest promoting motivational teaching, providing constructive feedback, and implementing practices like peer-to-peer learning and reflective exercises. Based on findings it is deemed that improving teacher self-efficacy is crucial, especially for new academics, and recommended to be achieved through mentorship programs and professional development focused on practical teaching skills and flexibility. It is recommended that to prioritize student well-being, institutions should take steps to support their own educators' mental and emotional health, providing them with training in emotional support and counselling to better address students' needs. By concentrating on these four areas, HEIs can create a more positive, supportive, and effective educational environment, leading to increased student satisfaction, better academic outcomes, and a sustainable competitive position.

VI. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE WORK

This research aimed to find the relationship between academics' emotional intelligence and student satisfaction. Although actionable insights have been derived it has several limitations. First it can be argued that the study's scope is limited to the perspectives of undergraduate students at a single institution, the ABC Institute, and does not include the views of academic staff. The study's cross-sectional design implies that data was collected at one point in time, failing to capture changes that might occur over an academic year. The total reliance on self-reported data from questionnaires could have introduced potential response bias, and further the study did not account for contextual factors such as students' own emotional intelligence or their year of study. Furthermore,

the absence of qualitative data from stakeholders other than students such as interviews could have prevented a deeper understanding of student satisfaction, and there was no direct assessment of the emotional intelligence of the academics; their emotional intelligence was only inferred from student perceptions. These limitations suggest areas for future research to explore.

This research intended to investigate the impact of academic emotional intelligence (EI) characteristics on the satisfaction levels of undergraduate students within Sri Lankan private tertiary education, with a special reference at ABC Institute.

Although the findings provide significant insights, the subject matter is complicated and subjective, with only a limited number of factors being analyzed. A notable limitation of the study was its exclusive dependence on student perceptions, where authors did not consider input or self-evaluations of academic personnel. Future investigations could address this by integrating the viewpoints of academics through direct EI evaluations, thereby facilitating a more holistic and thorough understanding of the underlying dynamics.

Furthermore, while this study concentrated on four primary attributes of emotional intelligence and student satisfaction, other pertinent elements such as teaching experience, academic workload, or institutional support might also play a pivotal role in shaping student satisfaction. Following research could broaden these aspects to yield more thoughtful insights.

The study employed a predominantly quantitative, cross-sectional research design. To deepen understanding, future inquiries might consider a more qualitative strategies, including more interviews and focus groups, to examine the manifestation of emotional intelligence in actual academic interactions with a longitudinal research design. A longitudinal approach be beneficial in monitoring shifts in student satisfaction over time. Finally, since the research was confined only to a single institution, extending the study to include various types of private and public institutions can enhance generalizability and offer sector-wide perspectives on the influence of academic emotional intelligence on student satisfaction.

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