# School Heads' Emotional Intelligence and Teachers' Job Satisfaction

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*Abstract* — This study determined the relationship between school heads' emotional intelligence (EI) and teachers' job satisfaction in the Palapag Districts, Schools Division of Northern Samar for the school year 2024–2025, with a focus on four key EI domains—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management—and their influence on dimensions of job satisfaction such as job security, work environment, job responsibilities, and community attachment. Employing a quantitative-correlational research design, the study utilized standardized survey instruments and statistical tools, including descriptive statistics and Pearson's r, to analyze data collected from both online and printed formats to accommodate the rural setting's logistical limitations. Results revealed that school heads' self-awareness and self-management were significantly associated with higher teacher satisfaction, especially regarding job security and working conditions, while social awareness and relationship management showed no significant correlation. Among demographic variables, only teaching load had a meaningful association with job satisfaction, underscoring the impact of workload on teacher morale. These findings emphasize the importance of intrapersonal EI competencies in educational leadership and inform the development of a Psychosocial Activity Plan tailored to enhancing school leaders' emotional capabilities and strengthening institutional support systems. This proposed intervention seeks to improve teacher well-being, reduce burnout, and foster a supportive school climate, offering actionable insights for leadership development and educational policy in geographically isolated and under-resourced schools.

***Keywords — Emotional Intelligence (EI), Job Satisfaction, School Administrators, Teacher Well-being, and Rural Education***

## I. Introduction

The Philippine education system continues to contend with deeply rooted issues concerning teacher quality, professional competence, and job satisfaction—factors that are strongly linked to the nation's persistent learning crisis. As reported by the World Bank (2022), an alarming 91% of 10-year-old Filipino children are unable to read and comprehend age-appropriate texts, a condition

termed “learning poverty.” This educational emergency has been attributed, in part, to the insufficient preparation and support of teachers. The Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), as cited in the Department of Education’s 2024 data, recorded an average passing rate of only 28% for elementary and 36% for secondary education in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) between 2017 and 2023. These statistics expose systemic flaws in pre-service education and reflect the broader need for targeted reforms in teacher training, evaluation, and school leadership. As the nation seeks to raise learning outcomes, improving teacher well-being and enhancing school leadership capacities have become urgent priorities (DepEd, 2024; UNESCO, 2024).

Amid these challenges, emotional intelligence (EI) has gained traction as a transformative construct for promoting teacher resilience, professional engagement, and instructional excellence. Goleman (2022) defines EI as the ability to recognize, understand, and regulate emotions in oneself and others—competencies that are crucial for effective leadership and teacher well-being. Emerging empirical evidence from the Philippines supports this view: emotionally intelligent teachers report greater job satisfaction and lower susceptibility to burnout (Navarro & Garcia, 2023; University of Batangas Research Center, 2022). Furthermore, EI enhances collaborative school cultures, which are particularly vital in environments characterized by limited resources and high stress (RSIS International, 2023). Regional studies have echoed these trends. Martinez (2023) found a significant positive relationship between EI and job satisfaction among teachers in CALABARZON, while Gumban et al. (2022) reported similar findings in Antique, noting that emotionally intelligent teachers contributed more meaningfully to school effectiveness and learner achievement. These findings underscore the potential of EI-focused leadership as a scalable, context-responsive intervention in Philippine schools (Consortia Academia, 2023; CPU Repository, 2022).

Despite this growing body of literature, rural districts such as those in Palapag, Northern Samar remain largely underexamined in terms of how school leaders' emotional intelligence influences teacher well-being. The region is marked by geographic isolation, infrastructure deficiencies, limited access to professional development, and high teacher workloads—all of which compound occupational stress and reduce morale (DepEd Northern Samar, 2023). Teachers in these settings often lack structured emotional support systems or exposure to emotionally competent leadership. Given these constraints, this study focuses on examining the relationship between the emotional intelligence of school administrators and teacher job satisfaction within the Palapag Districts for the academic year 2024–2025. Anchored on the need to advance inclusive, emotionally intelligent leadership in rural education, this research aims to inform evidence-based training programs for school heads and contribute to policy reforms that prioritize emotional intelligence as a key driver of teacher retention, school climate, and instructional quality. In doing so, it aligns with national education recovery goals and global benchmarks, such as Sustainable Development Goal 4, which calls for equitable and quality education for all (UNESCO, 2024).

## Literature Review

The increasing complexity of educational leadership has reinforced the value of emotional intelligence (EI) as a core leadership competency in contemporary school systems. Emotional intelligence—defined as the ability to perceive, regulate, and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 2022)—has been widely linked to school leadership effectiveness, particularly in fostering positive school climates, trust-based relationships, and teacher motivation (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2021; García-Sancho et al., 2023). Given that teacher job satisfaction is a key determinant of professional commitment, retention, and student achievement, scholarly attention has increasingly turned to understanding how school administrators' emotional competencies shape institutional culture and influence teacher well-being.

Extensive empirical research has established that emotionally intelligent leadership contributes positively to organizational health and teacher outcomes. For instance, Li et al. (2024) and Liu et al. (2024) identified EI as a significant predictor of teacher job satisfaction and organizational commitment, especially when paired with transformational leadership. Philippine-based studies, such as those by Manalo (2023) and Ochoa and Dela Cruz (2021), have demonstrated that emotionally intelligent leaders enhance communication, resolve conflict constructively, and strengthen team cohesion. Rural-focused research by Arceo and Villanueva (2024) echoed these findings, noting that emotionally intelligent school heads mitigate teacher burnout and build collaborative work environments. However, scholars such as Toprak and Savaş (2020) and Mustaquim (2021) have emphasized that contextual factors—like emotional labor and informal supervision—can moderate or amplify these effects, suggesting a complex interplay between individual emotional competencies and institutional dynamics.

This study is theoretically grounded in Salovey and Mayer's (1990) Emotional Intelligence Theory, supported by Wong and Law's (2002) EI model, which outlines four essential competencies: self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. These competencies are critical for school administrators tasked with leading emotionally intensive professional environments. To broaden the conceptual lens, the study integrates Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2023), which links job satisfaction to the fulfillment of autonomy, competence, and relatedness—psychological needs that emotionally intelligent leaders are well-positioned to support (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). Additionally, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), as updated by Sihombing et al. (2022), distinguishes between hygiene and motivator factors in job satisfaction, both of which may be shaped by the emotional climate fostered by school leadership. Together, these theories provide a robust framework for understanding how emotionally intelligent school administrators influence teacher satisfaction, particularly in resource-constrained, rural educational settings.

The conceptual framework of this study, depicted in Figure 1, illustrates the structural and analytical foundation guiding the investigation into the relationship between school heads'

emotional intelligence and teachers' job satisfaction. It is grounded in a systems-oriented approach, where the interaction among input, process, and output components enables a comprehensive understanding of the variables at play. The input domain consists of the demographic and professional profiles of both school administrators (including age, sex, designation, years of administrative experience, and number of relevant trainings attended) and teachers (including age, sex, teaching position, years of teaching experience, and daily teaching load in minutes). These variables provide contextual grounding for the subsequent analysis.

The process component involves a dual-layered assessment. First, school heads' emotional intelligence is evaluated across four core domains—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Second, teachers' job satisfaction is assessed in terms of key dimensions: job security, work environment, job responsibilities, and community attachment or linkages. The study systematically examines the correlations between school administrators' emotional intelligence and teachers' job satisfaction, alongside the relationships between their respective profile variables and the primary constructs under investigation. Through this analytical process, patterns and associations are identified to determine key leverage points for leadership and organizational improvement. The output of this framework is the formulation of a proposed psychosocial activity plan aimed at enhancing the emotional intelligence competencies of school administrators and improving the overall job satisfaction of teachers. By addressing identified gaps and fostering emotionally intelligent leadership, the plan aspires to promote a more responsive, supportive, and sustainable educational environment—particularly within the context of under-resourced school settings.

This study investigated the level of emotional intelligence among school heads and the degree of job satisfaction among public school teachers in the Palapag Districts, Department of Education Schools Division of Northern Samar for the School Year 2024–2025, with the ultimate goal of proposing a psychosocial activity plan to enhance school leadership and teacher well-being. Specifically, it examined the profile variables of both school administrators (age, sex, position/designation, years of administrative experience, and number of relevant trainings attended) and teachers (age, sex, teaching position, years of teaching experience, and daily teaching load in minutes). The study assessed the emotional intelligence of school heads across four domains: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management, and evaluated teacher job satisfaction in terms of security, work environment, job responsibilities, and community attachment. It further explored the significance of the relationships between school administrators' profiles and their emotional intelligence, teachers' profiles and their job satisfaction, and between the school heads' emotional intelligence and the job satisfaction levels of their teachers. To statistically validate these relationships, null hypotheses were formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance, particularly hypothesizing no significant associations between the profile of school heads and their emotional intelligence. The findings of the study informed the development of a proposed psychosocial activity plan aimed at cultivating

emotionally intelligent leadership and improving teacher satisfaction in geographically disadvantaged educational settings.

## II. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between the emotional intelligence (EI) of school administrators and the job satisfaction of teachers in the Palapag Districts under the Schools Division of Northern Samar for the academic year 2024–2025. This research design was selected due to its capacity to describe existing conditions and identify potential statistical relationships without manipulating variables, making it particularly appropriate for real-world educational settings (Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Pandey & Pandey, 2021). The descriptive component captured the levels of EI among school heads and the job satisfaction of teachers, while the correlational component allowed for the exploration of statistical associations among these constructs within the socio-cultural and operational context of a rural school district facing unique challenges, including resource limitations and geographical isolation (Galvez & Lugo, 2025; Sacramento, 2023).

The study was conducted in Palapag, a third-class municipality in Northern Samar, composed of three educational districts: Palapag I, Palapag II, and Palapag III. These districts, covering a mix of poblacion and far-flung barangays, were strategically chosen for their representative challenges related to rural education, such as limited accessibility, infrastructure deficits, and staffing constraints (DepEd Eastern Visayas, 2023; Northern Samar Development Report, 2023). The total study population consisted of 35 school heads and 496 teachers. All school administrators were included through total enumeration due to the manageable population size, a method suited for small groups where full inclusion enhances statistical power and data representativeness (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For the teacher group, stratified random sampling was employed, ensuring proportionate representation from each of the three districts. Using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error, a representative sample of 221 teachers was selected. Table 1 presents the breakdown, illustrating that this sampling strategy ensured district-level proportionality, minimized sampling bias, and enabled generalizability of results across the Palapag Districts (Etikan & Bala, 2017; Cohen et al., 2018).

To measure the constructs of interest, the study used structured instruments consisting of two main parts. Part I collected demographic information such as age, sex, years of experience, and position. Part II assessed emotional intelligence for school heads using items adapted from the Emotional Competence Inventory (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000), capturing self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management—key domains in educational leadership (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 2016). Teacher job satisfaction was measured using an adapted version of the Minnesota Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (Weiss, 2022), which captured intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction dimensions in alignment with modern organizational psychology frameworks (Riggle et al., 2009). To establish validity and reliability, the instruments

underwent expert review and statistical testing. Content validity was ensured through consultation with experts in educational leadership and measurement, while internal consistency was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, both of which yielded values above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011), confirming the tools' appropriateness for use in rural Philippine educational contexts.

## III. Results and Discussion

**Profile of the School Heads.** Table 1 presents a summarized profile of school heads in the Palapag Districts, detailing their age, sex, administrative position, years of experience, and relevant training. Most school heads fall within the 42–46 and 52–56 age brackets (each at 28.6%), indicating a seasoned yet diverse leadership group. This maturity suggests a reservoir of experience, while the presence of younger leaders may support innovation and mentorship opportunities (Ng & Feldman, 2019; North, 2019). Gender distribution shows near parity, with males slightly outnumbering females (54.3% vs. 45.7%), reflecting modest progress in gender equity in leadership roles, though systemic barriers to female advancement remain (UNESCO, 2021; Santamaría & Jean-Marie, 2014).

Professionally, 42.9% of school heads hold the Head Teacher I position, with fewer occupying higher-ranking posts such as Principal II or III. This suggests a mid-level administrative structure and possible stagnation in promotion pathways, echoing the call for clearer career advancement and leadership development programs (Bush, 2020). In terms of tenure, 40% have 2–8 years of administrative experience, indicating a relatively new leadership cohort. Only a small percentage have over 30 years of experience, pointing to the importance of succession planning and leadership continuity (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Regarding training, 40% of school heads have attended only 2–11 relevant professional development sessions, while very few have engaged in extensive training. This highlights uneven access to continuing professional development, a key component of effective leadership. Research underscores the need for sustained, needs-based, and context-specific professional learning to support school heads in fulfilling their roles effectively (Day & Sammons, 2016; OECD, 2020). Overall, the profile reveals a leadership group with solid experience but also critical gaps in advancement and development support.

**Profile of the Teachers.** Table 2 provides a concise overview of the demographic and professional profile of teachers in the Palapag Districts, highlighting age, sex, teaching position, years of experience, and daily teaching load. The data show a predominantly young to mid-career teaching force, with 46.2% aged 32–40 and only 11.3% aged 50 or older, suggesting a dynamic workforce with potential for innovation, but limited access to senior mentorship (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Ingersoll et al., 2018). The workforce is largely female (76.0%), mirroring

global trends in basic education and raising the importance of gender diversity in teaching roles (UNESCO, 2021; Cushman, 2012).

Professionally, the majority hold Teacher III positions (57.9%), while only a small percentage serve in Master Teacher roles (13.9%), reflecting a steep hierarchical structure and constrained advancement opportunities. Studies recommend enhancing merit-based promotion pathways to retain skilled educators and build instructional leadership (Kraft & Papay, 2014; OECD, 2020). Additionally, 44.8% of teachers have 2–10 years of experience and a significant number carry moderate to heavy daily teaching loads, with 40.3% teaching 315–374 minutes. This workload pattern, if unaddressed, may affect teacher well-being and classroom performance, as noted by Viac & Fraser (2020) and the World Bank (2019).

Overall, Table 2 portrays a vibrant, largely early-career teaching population with strong potential for growth. However, realizing this potential will require targeted interventions in workload management, career development, and mentorship to ensure sustained instructional quality and teacher retention in rural school settings.

**Level of Emotional Intelligence of School Heads**

Table 3 summarizes the emotional intelligence (EI) levels of the school administrator across four domains—self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management—with all mean scores ranging from 4.514 to 4.857, indicating Very High Emotional Intelligence (VHEI). The administrator exhibited strong self-awareness through confidence and resilience, aligning with Goleman's (1995) and Mayer et al.'s (2016) emphasis on reflective and ethical leadership. Very high social awareness was also evident, particularly in empathy and interpersonal sensitivity, reinforcing the role of EI in building trust and collaboration (Cherniss, 2010; Bass & Riggio, 2006).

In terms of self-management, the administrator effectively demonstrated emotional control and stress regulation, supported by culturally relevant practices such as prayer or meditation—consistent with Brackett et al. (2010) and Salazar-Clemeña (2014). Relationship management scored highest, highlighting the leader's strong interpersonal skills and ability to influence and connect with colleagues, reflecting the emotionally resonant leadership described by Fullan (2014) and Hatfield et al. (1994). Overall, the administrator's VHEI supports a positive, inclusive school culture and reinforces emotional intelligence as a cornerstone of effective educational leadership (OECD, 2020).

**Level of Job Satisfaction of Teachers**

Table 5 presents the level of job satisfaction among teachers across four dimensions: Job Security, Work Environment, Job Responsibilities, and Community Attachment/Linkages. Overall, results indicate that teachers in the Palapag Districts report high levels of satisfaction (HS), with mean scores generally exceeding 4.20. Teachers expressed the greatest satisfaction in

areas related to intrinsic motivation, such as taking pride in their work (M=4.326), exercising professional judgment, and engaging in meaningful community roles. However, certain items—particularly those concerning promotion opportunities, comparative compensation, and physical working conditions—received slightly lower ratings, falling under the satisfied (S) category. This suggests that while teachers are motivated and community-committed, they face limitations in career mobility and resource support.

Under Job Security, satisfaction was high in terms of personal accomplishment and perceived job stability, yet moderate for opportunities for promotion and fairness in pay. This reflects Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959), which differentiates between intrinsic motivators and extrinsic hygiene factors—suggesting that while lack of advancement does not diminish satisfaction completely, it remains a source of concern (Alrawashdeh et al., 2021; Iwu et al., 2022). Work Environment scores affirmed collegiality and supervisory support, but highlighted infrastructural inadequacies such as ventilation and lighting (M=3.710), aligning with research by OECD (2023) and Cucinotta & Cavicchiolo (2021) that links physical conditions to job satisfaction and teacher morale.

The Job Responsibilities domain yielded some of the highest ratings (e.g., M=4.443 for use of abilities), reflecting alignment with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) that underscores autonomy and competence as core drivers of job satisfaction. Similarly, teachers felt strongly about their Community Attachment, especially in terms of having a valued role and positive school-community relations (M=4.421, M=4.362). These responses reinforce the social significance of the teaching profession and the reciprocal relationship between school and community, as highlighted by Toropova et al. (2021). Overall, the data suggests a professionally fulfilled yet structurally constrained workforce, highlighting areas for policy intervention in teacher development, promotion systems, and school infrastructure.

**Test of Relationship Between the Profile of the School Heads and Their Level of Emotional Intelligence**

Table 6 presents the statistical relationships between school heads' profile variables and their levels of emotional intelligence (EI) across four domains: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management. Among the variables examined, only administrative position showed a statistically significant correlation with three EI domains—social awareness ($r = 0.410$, $p = 0.014$), self-management ($r = 0.392$, $p = 0.020$), and relationship management ($r = 0.446$, $p = 0.007$)—as well as overall EI ($r = 0.463$, $p = 0.005$). This finding suggests that those in higher leadership roles tend to demonstrate stronger emotional competencies, likely shaped by the relational and interpersonal demands of school administration (Miao et al., 2018; Boyatzis, 2018).

In contrast, age, sex, years of experience, and number of trainings attended did not yield significant relationships with any EI domain. These results imply that demographic attributes and

general professional experience alone are insufficient predictors of emotional intelligence. While age and experience have traditionally been linked to emotional maturity (Goleman, 1998), recent research underscores that EI must be cultivated intentionally through reflective practice and targeted learning (Zeidner et al., 2012; Brackett, 2019).

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of role-based learning in fostering EI among school leaders. Promotion to higher administrative positions may provide opportunities and context for developing emotional competencies. Thus, leadership development programs should integrate structured emotional intelligence training, mentorship, and reflective supervision to support school heads in navigating the relational complexities of educational leadership.

**Test of Relationship Between the Profile of the Teachers and Their Level of Job Satisfaction**

Table 7 presents the correlation analysis between teacher profile variables and their levels of job satisfaction across four dimensions. Among all variables examined—age, sex, position, years of teaching experience, and teaching load—only teaching load showed a statistically significant relationship with two domains: job responsibilities ($r = 0.174$, $p = 0.009$) and community attachment/linkages ($r = 0.133$, $p = 0.048$). This suggests that teachers with heavier workloads tend to feel more accountable in their roles and more connected to the school community, likely due to their active involvement in instructional planning and community engagement. This result supports the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 2020), which highlights that increased task significance and responsibility can enhance motivation and job satisfaction. However, scholars caution against excessive workloads, noting that without proper support, higher demands can lead to teacher stress and burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Meanwhile, the variables of age, sex, position, and years of teaching experience did not yield significant correlations with job satisfaction. These findings are consistent with studies showing that demographic factors have less influence on teacher satisfaction than work environment, leadership, and access to professional growth opportunities (Judge et al., 2020; Collie et al., 2012).

**Test of Relationship Between the Level of Emotional Intelligence of the School Administrators and the Level of Job Satisfaction of Teachers**

Table 8 presents the correlation analysis between school administrators' emotional intelligence (EI) and teachers' job satisfaction across five domains. Among the four EI dimensions, self-awareness showed the most consistent influence, with significant positive correlations to teachers' sense of job security, work environment, job responsibilities, and overall satisfaction. This suggests that when administrators demonstrate strong self-awareness—such as confidence, emotional reflection, and openness—teachers are more likely to feel secure, valued, and engaged in their roles. This finding reinforces the view that emotionally attuned leadership fosters a psychologically safe and supportive school culture (Goleman, 2021; Brackett et al., 2019).

In contrast, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management had limited or no significant associations with most job satisfaction domains. Only self-management and relationship management showed weak but significant correlations with work environment, suggesting that emotionally regulated and relationally competent leaders can modestly enhance workplace conditions. However, their minimal influence on other satisfaction indicators implies that these EI components may not translate as directly into perceived teacher well-being unless coupled with visible leadership behaviors and responsive practices (Collie et al., 2012; Leithwood, 2021).

Overall, the data highlight self-awareness as the most critical EI trait influencing teacher satisfaction, particularly in relation to job clarity, motivation, and environmental support. These findings suggest that leadership development programs should prioritize strengthening intrapersonal emotional skills to improve teacher morale and organizational climate. Additionally, since contextual factors may shape how EI is perceived and operationalized, future studies should explore the mediating role of school culture and communication in linking leadership traits to teacher outcomes.

## IV. Conclusion

1. The school heads in the Palapag Districts exhibit a predominantly mid-career to late-career leadership profile, with most aged between 42–56 and holding lower to mid-level designations. This points to a seasoned but structurally stagnant administrative workforce, indicating a need for clearer promotion pathways and leadership succession planning. Gender representation among school heads shows relative parity, with a modest male majority. This suggests gradual progress toward gender equity, although persistent systemic and cultural barriers still hinder broader female advancement into top leadership roles.

2. Teachers in the Palapag Districts are mostly young to mid-career and predominantly female, reflecting both global trends in the feminization of teaching and the untapped potential of a youthful workforce. However, the low proportion of Master Teachers indicates limited vertical mobility and mentorship capacity within schools.

3. The school administrator demonstrates a Very High Level of Emotional Intelligence (VHEI) across all domains, especially in relationship management and self-awareness. These competencies are critical in fostering trust, collaboration, and an emotionally supportive school culture, which are vital in rural educational settings.

4. Teachers report high levels of job satisfaction, especially in areas of intrinsic motivation and community engagement. However, satisfaction dips in extrinsic areas such as

promotion, compensation, and infrastructure, emphasizing the need for targeted policy interventions in resource support and career development.

5. Only the school heads' administrative position was significantly correlated with emotional intelligence levels, particularly in social awareness, self-management, and relationship management. This confirms that leadership roles inherently cultivate emotional competencies more than demographic factors like age, sex, or experience.

6. Among teacher profile variables, only teaching load was significantly correlated with job satisfaction, particularly in the areas of job responsibilities and community attachment. This suggests that greater workload, when perceived as meaningful and supported, can enhance engagement, though care must be taken to avoid burnout.

7. Self-awareness among school administrators emerged as the strongest emotional intelligence trait influencing teacher job satisfaction, significantly affecting teachers' perceptions of job security, work environment, and professional motivation. This highlights the transformative potential of emotionally attuned leadership in shaping a positive school climate.

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