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MEDIATING ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE EFFECT OF SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE CENTRAL REGION OF GHANA: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING APPROACH

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Abstract:
The unending controversies regarding the nature of the effect that self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence have on teachers' job performance have become more profound among researchers and academics than ever before. As such, this study employed a positivist paradigm with a quantitative approach and casual-comparative research design to test the mediation role of emotional intelligence in the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance among Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana. Census sampling was used to select 342 Social Studies teachers, with the main instrument being a questionnaire. Bandura's (1976) Social Cognitive Theory constituted the theoretical framework. Multivariate structural equation modelling (SEM) through SPSS and AMOS was employed to analyze the data. The findings revealed that there was a positive and statistically significant total effect of self-efficacy beliefs on teacher job performance. Additionally, the findings disclosed that the direct effect of self-efficacy beliefs, after controlling for the presence of the mediator (emotional intelligence), on teacher job performance was positive and statistically significant. Furthermore, it was realized that the indirect effect of self-efficacy beliefs through the mediator (emotional intelligence) on teacher job performance was positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the study concluded that there was a partial and positive significant mediation in the role of teachers' emotional intelligence in the causal effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers. Finally, the study recommended that education practitioners and researchers should investigate other possible variables that could also mediate the causal link between self-efficacy beliefs and the job performance of teachers.

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Keywords: social studies teachers, self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence, job performance, senior high school

1. Introduction

There is no uncertainty that teachers are central to the realization of educational goals and objectives. Scholars contend that in the 21st century, teachers are continually challenged to be innovative in order to prepare and empower their students to be lifelong learners with the required competencies to compete favourably in the global arena, bridge the inequity gap, and foster attitudinal and technological transformation (Kilag *et al.,* 2024; Sasan & Baritua, 2022; Getachew & Tekle, 2020). Consequently, a country's educational system cannot be better than the quality of teachers who implement education agendas in that country, as such, variables that ensure teacher effectiveness have received growing prominence and attention among researchers and academicians. In this direction, teacher's self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence have gained traction among academics and researchers in recent times as critical in enhancing their job performance.

Teachers' self-efficacy beliefs relate to their confidence, competence and enthusiasm in selecting suitable instructional activities, organizing lessons as well as being able to handle challenging instructional situations in the classroom so as to trigger and foster students learning (Wray *et al.*, 2022; Hajovsky *et al.*, 2020; Perera & John, 2020). Pursuant to this view, Kara *et al.* (2022) contended that teachers are supposed to have a high sense of efficacy and capability in planning and implementing teaching and learning that fulfil the needs of immersing 21st-century learning skills through effective, interesting and interactive pedagogy practice. Hence, having high self-efficacy beliefs is a commanding motivational force which can overcome obstacles such as environmental and logistics constraints as teachers will feel self-motivated to achieve with their students. Empirical studies have documented that embedded in the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers is the issue of their emotional intelligence, which is critical to their effectiveness. Described as the teacher's ability to notice and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others (Sokmen & Sarikaya, 2022), teacher's emotional intelligence could be explained as a confluence of developed abilities to: know and value self; build and maintain a variety of strong, productive and healthy relationships; get along and work well with others in achieving positive results; and effectively deal with the pressures and demands of daily life and work (Valente *et al.*, 2022; Wu *et al.*, 2019). Hence, it is crucial for teachers to be emotionally intelligent so as to be effective in their instructional practices. Consequently, tacit teacher effectiveness constructs like the emotional intelligence of teachers have caught the attention of researchers and academicians in recent years.

To this end, it could be said that having apposite efficacy and being emotionally intelligent is crucial in realizing the 21st-century competencies and skills contained in the

Social Studies Curriculum of Ghana. Research on teacher efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence suggests that behaviours such as persistence on a task, risk-taking, and use of innovations are contingent and related to degrees of efficacy and emotional intelligence (Adarkwah *et al.*, 2022; Saddique *et al.*, 2020). In other reports, researchers recognized that efficacious and emotionally intelligent teachers put more effort into their work, persevere longer in their duties and recover faster when they fail to meet set targets (Goldag, 2020; Chapagain, 2020 & Al-Busaidi). Besides, teachers with high self-efficacy were found to be good at planning and organizing their work, more open to new ideas and innovation, and more persistent and resilient, which determine their levels of effectiveness, innovativeness (Alan-Cansever *et al.*, 2021; Damico, Geraci & Tarantino, 2020). It could be observed from the above report that effective implementation of the Social Studies curriculum is likely to repress if Social Studies teachers who are to actualize the dreams and hopes of the curriculum are themselves not emotionally intelligent and not highly efficacious.

It could be gleaned from the preceding arguments that there seems to be a causal link between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence and teachers' job performance. Accordingly, it could be deduced that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are a crucial determinant of teachers' emotional intelligence, which ultimately translates into improved teacher job performance. Nevertheless, there are debates and controversies relative to the nature of effects or relationships that self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence have on the job performance of teachers, and researchers and academics continue to debate the nature and complexity of the relationship among these variables (Sokmen & Karikaya, 2022). This debate is stimulated by conflicting findings relating to the direct and indirect effects and relationships between self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence and job performance among teachers. For instance, previous studies (Hassan & Ibourk, 2021; Waweru *et al.*, 2021; Tarajova & Metruk, 2020; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019) have revealed that self-efficacy beliefs have both direct and indirect effects on teacher job performance.

In finding the mediating variable, Sokmen and Karikaya (2022) discovered that teacher self-efficacy beliefs dwell on the emotional intelligence of the teacher, consequently, teachers' emotional intelligence mediates the effect of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs on their job performance. Indeed, literature is replete with evidence to the effect that self-efficacy requires an individual to be aware of his/her own feelings and how they affect others and that the emotions of teachers influence their motivation, competence, and goals (Hassan & Ibourk, 2021; Sokmen & Kilic, 2019; Hsieh *et al.*, 2017). The findings from these empirical studies suggest that the emotional intelligence of teachers mediates the effect of their self-efficacy beliefs on their job performance. Therefore, it is instructive that one of the ways to promote the self-efficacy beliefs and job performance of Social Studies teachers in Ghanaian schools is to enhance their emotional intelligence.

Additionally, the implication of these findings suggests that the effect and or relationship between self-efficacy beliefs are mediated by other extraneous variables which either bolster or throttle the effect of one variable on another. It could be construed from this finding that the emotional intelligence of teachers influences the effect of self-efficacy beliefs and job performance of teachers, yet the nature of the effect is uncertain, disputed, and requires further investigation. A synthesis and amalgamation of these research findings presents a complicated and intricate association among self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence and job performance of teachers. Hence, it necessitates analytical studies to map out these relationships in context-specific settings. The issue is to what extent do social studies teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence affect their job performance in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana?

Evidence from the literature review shows that teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence and job performance are crucial antecedents in the realisation of Goal 4 of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. A positive correlation has been observed in the literature between self-efficacy beliefs, job performance, and emotional intelligence and job performance. However, there are context (basic schools and not senior high schools), methodological and discipline (subjects) related gaps in the body of knowledge in the context of Ghana and more so among Social Studies teachers in Senior High in the Central Region of Ghana. As such, this study would enhance the body of knowledge by exploring these variables to fill the gaps in the context of Ghana, as well as the methodological and discipline (subjects) related gaps. On a general note, besides analyzing teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence and job performance, the study would also examine whether intervention programmes would be required, such as training on emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, and whether these effects are sustainable over time in improving teachers' job performance.

With context gaps, empirical studies on self-efficacy beliefs in Ghana have concentrated on only kindergarten and basic schools, pre-service teachers and not senior high schools (Nyantakyi *et al.*, 2020; Coffie & Doe, 2019; Boateng & Owusu-Sekyere, 2018; Abroampa *et al.*, 2017). Besides, only a few studies investigated self-efficacy beliefs in other subject areas, such as Ghanaian Language, Science and other subject disciplines and not Social Studies (Coffie & Doe, 2019; Ngman-Wara & Edem, 2016; Antwi *et al.*, 2016) with few studies on self-efficacy beliefs among teachers in senior high schools in Ghana were conducted in Kumasi (Sarfo *et al.*, 2015). Hence, this study hopes to fill the gap in the literature by providing evidence to the research world regarding the perspectives of Social Studies teachers in senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana. On emotional intelligence, evidence in literature from Ghana has focused on its relationship with other constructs such as job satisfaction, professional identity, and work engagement (Butakor *et al.*, 2020; Owusu-Fordjour & Azure, 2021; Gbemu *et al.*, 2020; Kuyini *et al.*, 2020) with the most recent study focusing on only headteachers (Dampson, 2021). On methodological gaps, these aforementioned studies looked at the study variables as distinctive variables. They were again conducted with different

philosophical considerations and approaches other than the positivist paradigm which this study utilized. Therefore, this study sought to fill these gaps in literature from the Ghanaian scene.

It could be envisaged that the outcome of the study would be beneficial and, therefore, help make valuable contributions to social studies teachers, academics, and researchers for improved policy and practice as well as teaching and learning within the context of social studies. Besides, the outcome of the study would also guide the Central Regional Directorate of Ghana Education Service to organize in-service training for teachers on self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence that are required for improved job performance of teachers. Besides, the findings of this research are intended to add to the existing literature on the influence of self-efficacy beliefs, emotional intelligence and job performance of senior high school Social Studies teachers. Finally, it is envisaged that the study would contribute information to curriculum developers to design course materials to suit and enhance the self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence of teachers to engender good job performance.

2. Theoretical Framework

Rooted in Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), this study adopted Bandura's (1976) widely acknowledged and accepted theoretical framework within which Social Studies teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence are commonly located and analysed. As the central construct of SCT, self-efficacy is defined by Bandura as the 'belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. In the context of Social Studies, Social Studies teachers' self-efficacy may be defined as their belief in their capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments in the areas of learning. Embedded within the theoretical lens of SCT, Social Studies teachers' actions are products of their inter- and intrapersonal influences, behaviours and the environmental forces affecting them, with the role of agency manifesting itself intentionally through forethought, self-reactiveness and self-reflectiveness (Bandura, 2018). This study opted for this SCT as the theoretical framework for the study because it comprehensively provides a conceptual understanding of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence, which has been applied in various fields of study; hence, it is accepted as an appropriate theory among existing models. Due to its dominance in the field of education, this model serves as a point of reference for several researchers in the domain of self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence, and it is touted as most efficacious in enhancing and understanding behaviour. Therefore, this study favoured SCT as the theory that is most probable to understand the mediating role of emotional intelligence in the effect of self-efficacy beliefs and job performance among Social Studies teachers within the Ghanaian senior high school context.

3. Methodology

This study was rooted in the positivist paradigm. This philosophical thought is based on quantitative data and observation with the goal of being independent of subjective opinions (Bell *et al.*, 2019). These authors further added that positivist philosophy is the natural science procedure for collecting data about an observable reality and searching for regularities and relationships to create generalizations. Therefore, it is said that positivist researchers adopt structured processes to arrive at knowledge that is acceptable. With the positivist tradition, this study relied on the causal-comparative research design. This non-experimental research design does not implement treatments or interventions as is the case in experimental designs and is applicable when researchers seek to establish cause-and-effect relationships but are unable to carry out experiments because it would be unethical and difficult to conduct experiments by manipulating independent variables in human beings (Patten & Newhart, 2018). All 380 Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana were selected to participate in the study through a census sampling technique. However, 342 out of the total 380 were actually involved in the study. This number translates to an 83% response rate, which is consistent with scholars such as Leedy and Ormrod (2021), who noted that a 30% to 40% response rate in questionnaire administration is satisfactory.

The main instrument for the study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was the adapted version of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2007) model on teachers' self-efficacy beliefs with three domains (students' engagement efficacy, instructional strategies, and classroom management) Bar-On (2007) mixed ability model of emotional intelligence, which consisted of five (5) composite scales: interpersonal scale (with sub-scales: emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence, self-regard and self-actualisation), intrapersonal scale (with sub-scales: empathy, social responsibility, and interpersonal relationship), adaptability scale (with sub-scales: problem-solving, reality testing, and flexibility), stress management scale (with sub-scales: stress tolerance and impulse control) and general mood (with sub-scales: happiness and optimism). Job performance was assessed based on the 2013 model on teacher job performance developed by the National Council of Educational Research and Training of New Delhi. This model discusses teachers' job performance in relation to six domains: designing learning experiences for students, knowledge and understanding of subject matter, strategies for facilitating learning, professional development, school development, and teacher attendance. They measured on a 5-point Likert scale such that 5 = Always to 1 = Never in the case of self-efficacy beliefs, 5 = Very often true of me to 1 = Not true of me for emotional intelligence and 5 = Strongly Agree to 1 = Strongly Disagree for job performance.

The questionnaire was pre-tested among 50 Social Studies teachers (25 each) in senior high schools in the Western and Bono Regions of Ghana so as to ensure its validity and reliability. This sample size (50) was deemed as appropriate sample for the pre-test

study based on expert endorsement of 5% to 10% of the total sample size being adequate in pre-testing an instrument (Harrison *et al*., 2021). The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were measured. Face validity was ensured by measuring the Cohen's Kappa Index (CKI), which is an inter-rater agreement that establishes the degree to which two or more raters or observers agree or disagree on the items that measure a construct (Denis, 2020). In establishing the CKI, two sets of questionnaires were given to two Social Studies teachers to rate by indicating *Suitable or Not Suitable,* where *Suitable* indicated agreement and *Not Suitable* indicated disagreement, respectively, to the items on the questionnaire. Afterwards, the researcher's leverage was guided by Landis and Koch's (1977) recommendation of a kappa coefficient of at least 0.60 being indicative of satisfactory face validity. Consequently, the kappa coefficient of 0.821, as in Table 1, established the face validity of the questionnaire.

Table 1: Cohen's Kappa Coefficient Results

			Rater2			The measure of Agreement Kappa	
			Not Suitable	**Suitable**	**Total**		
Rater1	Not	**Count**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**Value**	**0.821**
	Suitable	% within Rater1	68.5%	31.5%	100.0%	Asymp. Std. Error[a]	0.302
		% within Rater2	100.0%	1.7%	4.8%	Approx. T[b]	7.654
		% of Total	3.1%	1.6%	4.8%	Approx. Sig.	0.000
	Suitable	**Count**	**0**	**90**	**90**		
		% within Rater1	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%		
		% within Rater2	0.0%	98.5%	97.7%		
		% of Total	0.0%	97.7%	97.7%		
Total		**Count**	**2**	**88**	**90**		
		% within Rater1	3.1%	96.9%	100.0%		
		% within Rater2	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%		
		% of Total	3.1%	96.9%	100.0%		

The Content Validity Index (CVI) procedure was followed to establish the content validity of the questionnaire. In this study, CVI was approached in two ways, namely: Item Content Validity Index (I-CVI), and Scale Content Validity Index (S-CVI). This was done by giving the questionnaire to two experts in Social Studies to rate the items on the questionnaire on a 4-point rating scale. Afterwards, the experts' ratings were recoded and rated such that 1 and 2 were recoded as 0, while 3 and 4 were recoded as 1, with 0 indicating the item not being relevant and 2 meaning relevant. Impliedly, 0 meant the item not being relevant, and 1 indicated that the item was relevant. Later, the ratings of the two experts were used to complete the relevance rating and scoring form. Drawing on Nunkoo *et al*., (2021) recommendation of at least 0.80 is the acceptable range of content validity index, the I-CVI score of 0.83 and the S-CVI score of 0.86 indicated content validity of the questionnaire.

In checking for the construct validity of the questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used. In following the EFA procedure, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were deployed to ascertain data suitability for factor analysis. KMO score of 0.788 and Bartlett's test of

sphericity value of 4005, which indicated statistical significance ($p<0.05$), established that the data was adequate and suitable for EFA.

Table 2: Test of Suitability of Data for Factor Analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.788
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	15205.560
	Df	4005
	Sig.	0.000

Factor extraction through the Principal Components Analysis (PCA) method was used to extract the factors based on Kaiser's eigenvalue criteria. Kaiser's measure identifies the variance a factor contributes using an eigenvalue rule of 1 or greater (Harrison *et al.*, 2021; Pallant, 2020). As a result, as shown in Table 3, all factors with eigenvalues of 1 or greater were retained for rotation. The data in Table 3 show that the exploratory factor analysis for all 14 factors collectively contributed a total of 76.366 variance. This finding implied that all the items loaded well on their various components and, therefore, gave evidence that construct validation of the instrument was achieved in line with the criteria set out by scholars and, therefore, made the instrument valid.

Table 3: Exploratory Factor Analysis Results

s/n	**Factor Names**	**Factor Loadings**
1.	Student Engagement	0.644
2.		0.688
3.		0.674
4.		0.718
5.		0.641
6.		0.699
7.		0.751
8.		0.632
9.	Instructional Strategy	0.674
10.		0.674
11.		0.715
12.		0.647
13.		0.780
14.		0.754
15.		0.717
16.		0.716
17.	Classroom Management	0.695
18.		0.541
19.		0.783
20.		0.688
21.		0.679
22.		0.617
23.		0.651
24.		0.673
25.	Intrapersonal Relationship	0.638
26.		0.723
27.		0.748

28.		0.659
29.		0.713
30.		0.776
31.		0.676
32.		0.718
33.		0.723
34.		0.644
35.		0.596
36.		0.640
37.		0.719
38.		0.672
39.		0.672
40.	Interpersonal Relationship	0.714
41.		0.708
42.		0.685
43.		0.674
44.		0.677
45.		0.736
46.		0.712
47.		0.757
48.		0.710
49.	Stress Management	0.741
50.		0.716
51.		0.578
52.		0.644
53.		0.682
54.		0.756
55.	General Mood	0.624
56.		0.697
57.		0.747
58.		0.749
59.		0.683
60.		0.691
61.	Adaptability	0.724
62.		0.722
63.		0.702
64.		0.752
65.		0.610
66.		0.750
67.		0.652
68.		0.707
69.		0.702
70.	Designing Learning Experiences	0.671
71.		0.747
72.		0.703
73.		0.669
74.	Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter	0.700
75.		0.610
76.		0.665
77.		0.686
78.	Strategies for Facilitating Learning	0.650
79.		0.710
80.		0.740
81.		0.637
82.	Professional Development	0.550

83.		0.703
84.		0.686
85.		0.671
86.	School Development	0.703
87.		0.774
88.		0.728
89.	Teacher Attendance	0.674
90.		0.744
% of Variance		**2.987**
Cumulative %		**76.366**

The reliability of the instrument was approached through internal consistency. Scholars (Harrison *et al.*, 2021; Collier, 2020; Verma & Abdel-Salam, 2019) have espoused that coefficients of Cronbach alpha, otherwise branded as "coefficient alpha", range from 0 to 1, and coefficients of 0.70 or greater suggest the suitability or reliability of an instrument. Hence, the results in Table 4 indicate that the instrument was reliable.

Table 4: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Statistics

Constructs	**Sub-scales**	**Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted**
Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs	Students Engagement	0.85
	Instructional Strategy	0.85
	Classroom Management	0.85
Construct Cronbach Alpha	**Overall, Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs**	**0.85**
	Self-Regard	0.873
Intrapersonal Relationship	Emotional Awareness	0.872
	Self-actualisation	0.872
	Independence	0.870
	Assertiveness	0.872
	Empathy	0.869
Interpersonal Relationship	Social Responsibility	0.871
	Interpersonal Relationship	0.873
Stress Management	Stress Tolerance	0.869
	Impulse Control	0.872
General Mood	Optimism	0.872
Adaptability	Reality Testing	0.870
	Flexibility	0.872
	Problem-Solving	0.871
Construct Cronbach Alpha	**Overall Teacher Emotional Intelligence**	**0.874**
	Designing Learning Experiences	0.835
	Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter	0.841
Teacher Job Performance	Strategies for Facilitating Learning	0.840
	Professional Development	0.837
	School Development	0.845
	Teacher Attendance	0.843
Construct Cronbach Alpha	**Overall, Teacher Job Performance**	**0.846**

After checking for outliers through data exploration, the structural equation modelling (SEM) analytical technique through the maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) was used to examine the mediation role of EI in the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on job performance of Social Studies teachers in public Senior High Schools in the Central Region of Ghana. The covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) approach was favoured in analysing this mediation role. The SEM analysis was executed in two components. These included the measurement model, and the structural model. The measurement model delineates the nexus between the observed variables (indicators) and their respective latent (unobserved) variables, while the structural model specifies the relationship between two or more latent variables (Thakkar, 2020). Specifically, Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) analytical software was used to indicate the measurement model by connecting the items to their respective variable as well as the unobserved latent variables.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the psychometric properties of the measurement model in terms of composite reliability (CR), convergent validity (CV), and discriminant validity (DV). CR was estimated using values greater than 0.70 (Collier, 2020), while CV was assessed through the average variance extracted (AVE) greater than 0.50 (Hair *et al.*, 2021). DV was estimated using Fornell and Larcker's (1981) technique where the square root of the AVE of a construct is greater than the correlation coefficient between two constructs. The results of the general assessment of discriminant validity (DV), composite reliability (CR), convergent validity (CV) is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Results for Composite Reliability, Convergent Validity, and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	SCD	SE	IS	CM	SR	EA	SA	IND	ASS	EP	SOR	IPR	ST	IC	OPT	HPN	PRS	FLX	RT	DLE	KUSM	SFL	PD	TRA
SCD	0.863	0.799	**0.894**																							
SE	0.859	0.876	0.484	**0.936**																						
IS	0.752	0.848	0.517	0.921	**0.921**																					
CM	0.720	0.737	0.378	0.651	0.879	**0.858**																				
SR	0.910	0.868	0.152	0.210	0.285	0.454	**0.932**																			
EA	0.955	0.780	0.242	0.351	0.292	0.315	0.687	**0.883**																		
SA	0.847	0.812	0.192	0.522	0.543	0.503	0.722	0.754	**0.901**																	
IND	0.852	0.739	0.271	0.667	0.572	0.560	0.748	0.650	0.181	**0.860**																
ASS	0.863	0.707	0.125	0.421	0.558	0.478	0.472	0.513	0.669	0.851	**0.841**															
EP	0.772	0.817	0.323	0.664	0.663	0.671	0.417	0.611	0.853	0.823	0.828	**0.904**														
SOR	0.771	0.661	0.247	0.545	0.683	0.619	0.384	0.261	0.677	0.569	0.600	0.812	**0.813**													
IPR	0.979	0.844	0.205	0.516	0.552	0.535	0.421	0.263	0.457	0.470	0.577	0.635	0.804	**0.919**												
ST	0.793	0.667	0.446	0.482	0.568	0.590	0.436	0.458	0.513	0.766	0.725	0.650	0.480	0.659	**0.817**											
IC	0.717	0.839	0.274	0.364	0.503	0.596	0.440	0.378	0.479	0.544	0.320	0.678	0.577	0.487	0.619	**0.916**										
OPT	0.935	0.832	0.141	0.203	0.412	0.342	0.420	0.163	0.429	0.498	0.530	0.404	0.514	0.606	0.448	0.392	**0.912**									
HPN	0.712	0.735	0.267	0.154	0.002	-0.023	-0.097	0.057	-0.029	0.176	-0.256	0.047	-0.285	-0.162	0.081	-0.087	-0.220	**0.857**								
PRS	0.982	0.773	0.309	0.255	0.114	0.067	-0.088	0.005	0.073	0.338	-0.095	0.188	-0.059	-0.033	0.125	0.006	-0.014	0.048	**0.879**							
FLX	0.738	0.859	0.187	0.283	0.104	0.095	-0.029	-0.046	0.029	0.260	-0.006	0.187	0.013	0.018	0.198	0.053	-0.252	0.983	0.001	**0.927**						
RT	0.866	0.831	0.238	0.326	0.375	0.297	0.279	0.477	0.574	0.582	0.477	0.635	0.304	0.358	0.654	0.368	0.305	0.131	0.310	0.169	**0.912**					
DLE	0.715	0.857	0.469	0.513	0.851	0.704	0.332	0.320	0.489	0.452	0.417	0.495	0.574	0.427	0.483	0.571	0.292	-0.171	-0.130	-0.234	0.291	**0.926**				
KUSM	0.745	0.875	0.409	0.628	0.835	0.729	0.343	0.296	0.629	0.639	0.506	0.687	0.700	0.477	0.552	0.562	0.399	0.017	0.190	0.241	0.522	0.711	**0.935**			
SFL	0.856	0.750	0.367	0.448	0.613	0.657	0.401	0.288	0.519	0.434	0.519	0.614	0.610	0.544	0.571	0.501	0.289	-0.295	-0.057	-0.035	0.325	0.675	0.711	**0.866**		
PD	0.861	0.864	0.648	0.591	0.810	0.764	0.323	0.361	0.548	0.554	0.361	0.631	0.684	0.593	0.600	0.547	0.296	-0.018	0.134	0.062	0.545	0.826	0.896	0.670	**0.930**	
TRA	0.970	0.892	0.395	0.323	0.500	0.378	0.193	0.448	0.084	0.292	0.258	0.362	0.339	0.218	0.475	0.460	0.189	-0.015	-0.025	0.070	0.204	0.613	0.681	0.655	0.499	**0.944**

Note: SE: Student Engagement; IS: Instructional Strategy; CM: Classroom Management; SR: Self Regard; EA: Emotional Awareness; IND: Independence; ASS: Assertiveness; EP: Empathy; SOR: Social Responsibility; IPR: Interpersonal Relationship; ST: Stress Tolerance; IC: Impulse Control; OPT: Optimism; HPN: Happiness; PRS: Problem-Solving; FLX: Flexibility; RT: Reality Testing; DLE: Designing Learning Experiences; KUSM: Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter; SFL: Strategies for Facilitating Learning; PD: Professional Development; SCD: School Development; Teacher Attendance.

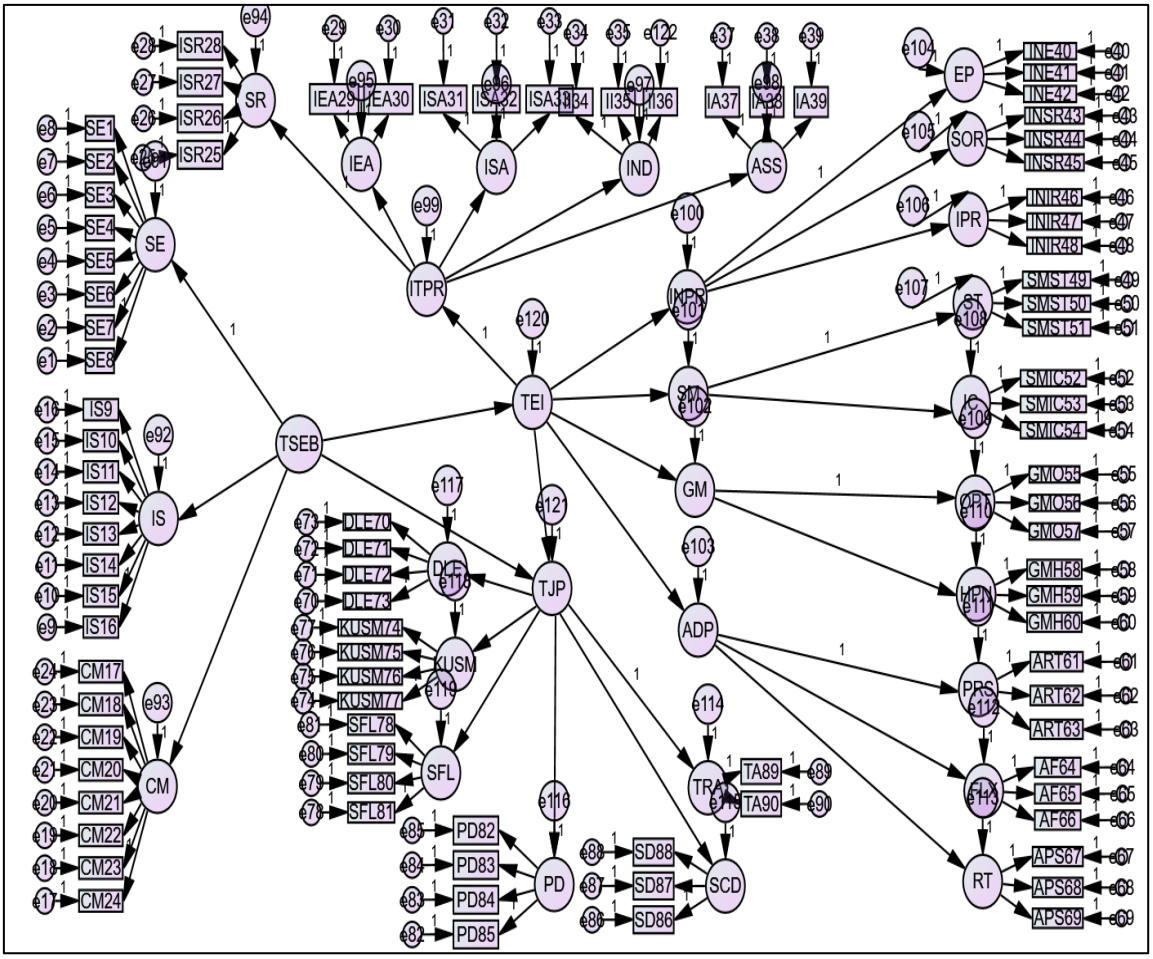
In comparing the results to the recommendations by scholars, as indicated earlier, it could be realised from the results in Table 3.5 that values for CR exceeded 0.70, indicating that the requirement for composite reliability was fulfilled. Similarly, the values for AVE were found to be greater than 0.50, as recommended, indicating that convergence validity was not violated. Finally, the square root of an AVE of each of the constructs was found to be greater than the coefficient of correlation between a pair of constructs, which suggested that discriminant validity was attained. Multivariate inferential statistics involving structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data, with the aid of IBM SPSS and AMOS version 28.0. Ethical issues such as access, informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, deception, and plagiarism were addressed.

4. Analysis of Data and Discussion of Findings

4.1 What is the mediation role of emotional intelligence in the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana?

This research question sought to examine the role as well as test the extent to which emotional intelligence mediates the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on job performance among Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana. In this research question, self-efficacy beliefs were the independent variable, emotional intelligence was conceived as the mediator variable and job performance was used as a dependent variable as indicated in the conceptual framework guiding the study. In answering this research question, mediation analysis in structural equation modelling was carried out with the aid of IBM SPSS and AMOS version 28.0, and the results are presented with the aid of the path diagram in figures as well as Table 4.17. Firstly, scholars such as Byrne (2016) have argued that mediation analysis begins with the development of a measurement model. Accordingly, a measurement model depicting the relationship among the variables is captured in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Measurement Model (Model before Modification)



Note: TSEB (Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs); TEI (Teacher Emotional Intelligence); TJP (Teacher Job Performance); SE (Student Engagement); IS (Instructional Strategy); CM (Classroom Management); INTRA (Intrapersonal Relationship); INTR (Interpersonal Relationship); SM (Stress Management); GM (General Mood); ADP (Adaptability); DLE (Designing Learning Experiences); KUSM (Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter); SFL (Strategies for Facilitating Learning); PD (Professional Development); SD (School Development; TA (Teacher Attendance).

The corresponding model fit indices of the measurement model prior to its modification are presented in Table 6. The assessment of goodness of model fit values was based on the suggestion by Bayram (2013) as indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Model Fit Indices for Both Measurement Model and Structural Model

Fit Indices	Cutoff Value	Measurement Model Value	Structural Model Values
Absolute Fit Indices			
χ^2 (Chi-square)		10586.908	7399.168
df (Degrees of Freedom)		3883	3876
χ^2/df	<2.0	2.726	2.726
GFI	>0.90	0.586	0.961
AGFI	>0.80	0.564	0.932
RMSEA	<0.08	0.071	0.069
Incremental/ Relative Fit Indices			
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	>0.80	0.371	0.910
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	>0.90	0.477	0.981
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	>0.90	0.482	0.920
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	>0.90	0.351	0.980
Parsimonious Fit Indices			
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)	>0.90	0.556	0.575
Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	>0.90	0.359	0.980

Note: GFI (Goodness of Fit Index); AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index); RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation); NFI (Normed Fit Index); CFI (Comparative Fit Index); IFI (Incremental Fit Index); RFI (Relative Fit Index).

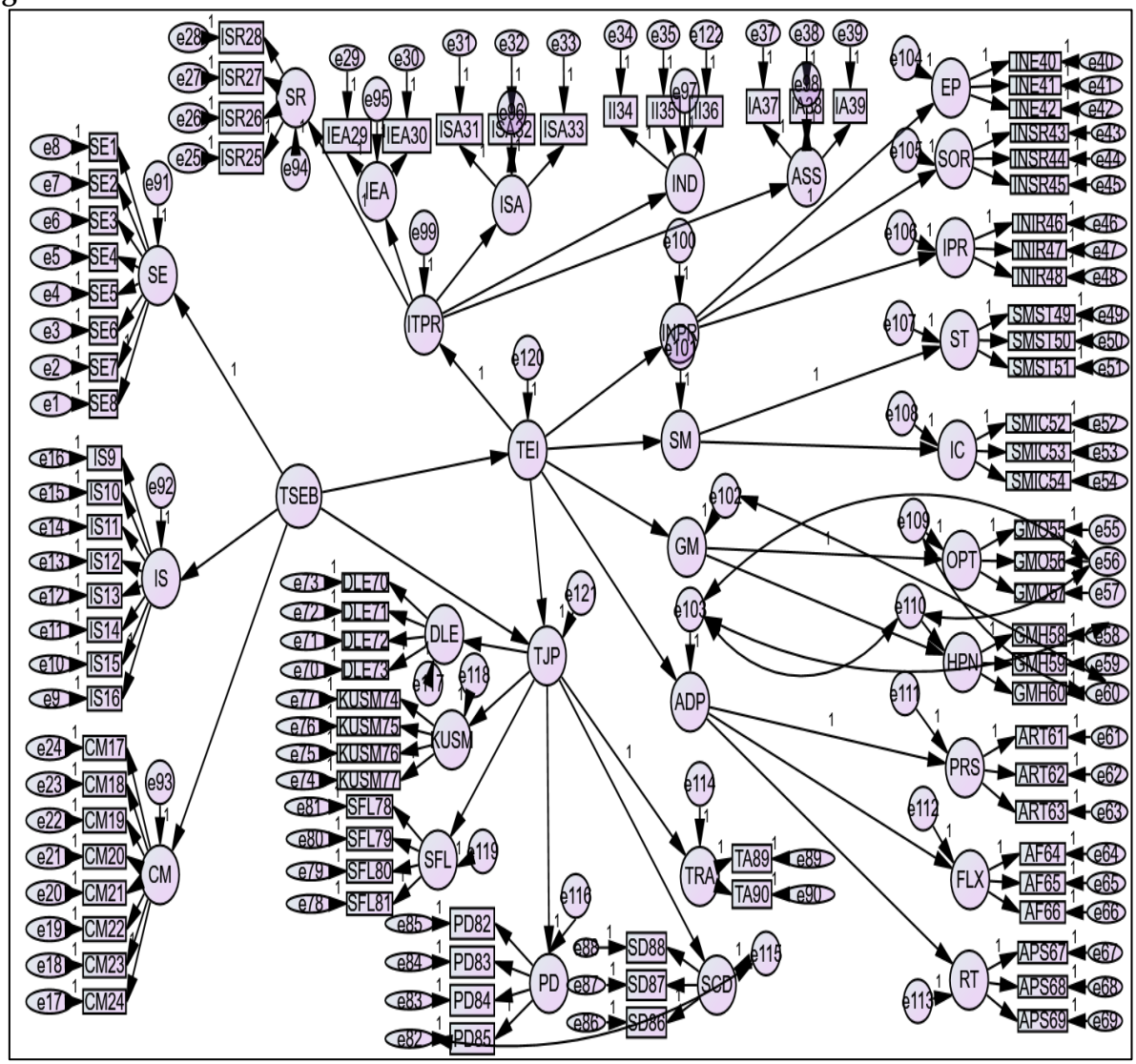
In a comparison of the model fit indices results in Table 1 to the criteria put out by Bayram (2013), as shown in the cutoff value column in Table 1, it could be realised that it was only χ^2/df and RMSEA that showed good fit. As recommended by Bayram (2013)**, the** assessment of model fit indices was based on Chi-square, relative/normed chi-square (χ^2/df), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) as the basis of checking for acceptable model fit indices in mediation analysis using structural equation modelling. As a result, modification was done to the model in line with the suggestion by McNeish An and Hancock (2018), who recommended either covarying or removal of indicators with high modification indices. The results presented in Table 7 show the modification indices and the actions taken.

Table 7: Modification Indices and Action Taken

			M.I.	Par Change	Action taken
e110	<-->	e103	123.957	1.258	Covaried
e56	<-->	e103	73.131	0.903	Covaried
e56	<-->	e110	70.346	1.054	Covaried
e58	<-->	e103	51.41	0.695	Covaried
e82	<-->	e115	43.172	0.209	Covaried
e60	<-->	e109	42.854	0.391	Covaried
e60	<-->	e102	42.74	0.395	Covaried

It could be observed that the paths with the high modification indices were errors associated with endogenous variables. Hence, they needed to be retained in the model. To mitigate the effects of these high modification indices in the model, these errors were covaried. A comparison of the model fit indices in the modified model with the corresponding cut-off values, as presented in Table 4.14, disclosed that the model was a good fit; hence, the study proceeded to carry out the mediation analysis. The modified or structural model is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Modified Model



Note: TSEB (Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs); TEI (Teacher Emotional Intelligence); TJP (Teacher Job Performance); SE (Student Engagement); IS (Instructional Strategy); CM (Classroom Management); INTRA (Intrapersonal Relationship); INTR (Interpersonal Relationship); SM(Stress Management); GM (General Mood); ADP (Adaptability); DLE (Designing Learning Experiences); KUSM (Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter); SFL (Strategies for Facilitating Learning); PD (Professional Development); SD (School Development; TA (Teacher Attendance)

In this study, self-efficacy was the causal variable, emotional intelligence was conceived as the mediator, while teacher job performance was conceptualised as the outcome or the dependent variable. The results of the mediation analysis are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Mediation Analysis Results of the Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Effect of Self-efficacy Beliefs and Job Performance

Path	Standardized estimates	P-value	Results
Total effect	0.967	0.008	Significant
Direct effect	0.539	0.012	Significant
Indirect effect	0.427	0.049	Significant

The findings of the mediation analysis in Table 3 show that there was a positive and statistically significant total effect of self-efficacy beliefs on teacher job performance (β=0.967, p=0.008). Additionally, the results from the mediation analysis further show that the direct effect of self-efficacy beliefs, after controlling for the presence of the mediator (emotional intelligence), on teacher job performance was positive and statistically significant (β=0.539, p=0.012). Furthermore, it was realized that the indirect effect of self-efficacy beliefs through the mediator (emotional intelligence) on teacher job performance was positive and statistically significant (β=0.427, p=0.049). In line with the foregoing findings, this study concludes that there was a partial and positive significant mediation in the role of teachers' emotional intelligence in the causal effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana.

5. Discussion of Results

This study sought to investigate the mediation role of emotional intelligence in the causal effect of self-efficacy beliefs on job performance among Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana. With the aid of SPSS AMOS, the mediation analytical technique was used, and the findings show that there was a positive and statistically significant total effect of self-efficacy beliefs on teacher job performance (β=0.967, p=0.008). Besides, the results from the mediation analysis further show that the direct effect of self-efficacy beliefs, after controlling for the presence of the mediator (emotional intelligence), on teacher job performance was positive and statistically significant (β=0.539, p=0.012). Moreover, it was also realized that the indirect effect of self-efficacy beliefs through the mediator (emotional intelligence) on teacher job performance was positive and statistically significant (β=0.427, p=0.049). There is enough evidence, therefore, to conclude that the teachers' emotional intelligence mediated the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana. The finding of this study concurs with the findings of Bing *et al.* (2022) in China, Sokmen and Sarikaya (2022) in Turkey, Saddique, *et al.*, (2020) in Pakistan, and Hameli and Ordun (2021) in Kosovo, where it was found

that emotional intelligence partially mediated the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of the teachers. This finding suggests that self-efficacy beliefs influence or affect job performance through the emotional intelligence of the teachers. The point is made that, in the discourse of cause-and-effect relationship involving factors that intervene in the causal link between self-efficacy beliefs and job performance of Social Studies in the public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana, the emotional intelligence of the teachers matters and is, therefore, crucial.

The findings of this research question have provided empirical evidence to validate Sarkhosh and Rezaee's (2014) postulation to the effect that emotional intelligence enhances the likelihood of accomplishment of teachers and teaching success, thereby contributing to the attainment of higher levels of self-efficacy beliefs. Additionally, the findings of this study have also demonstrated that teachers with higher emotional intelligence are better able to direct and inspire student learning, which leads to a positive teaching experience and increases self-efficacy. Moreover, the outcome of this research question corroborates the implications drawn by researchers like Ju *et al.* (2015) in China, who argued and called for the promotion of emotional intelligence due to its ability to improve teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and job performance. These scholars further averred that emotional intelligence must be fused into teacher preparation in teacher training programmes and institutions. This study considers these claims relevant because emotional intelligence is rarely fused and incorporated in teacher preparation and training institutions in Ghana.

The finding of the study suggests that the effect of emotional intelligence on the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana is supported and, therefore, sustained in this study. Therefore, the hypothesis that highly efficacious teachers' effectiveness is enhanced by the emotional intelligence of teachers to ultimately enhance job performance among Social Studies teachers is supported. This finding is not ambiguous and, therefore, not in doubt because the previous finding of this study revealed that the direct effect of teacher emotional intelligence was positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the mechanism through which self-efficacy beliefs affect the job performance of Social Studies teachers needs to include and consider teacher emotional intelligence in public senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana.

It could be observed that the finding of this study coheres with the contemporary trends in conceptualising the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on job performance of teachers. This trend shows that investigating the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on job performance of teachers has oscillated from examining direct effects to indirect effects (Bing *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the current wave of research in the field of analysing the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on outcome variables like teacher job performance is expected to include mediators in the conceptual relationship. It is pertinent to note that this new focus in research is substantiated in Ghana by my study and China and Turkey

through Bing *et al.* (2022) as well as Sokmen and Sarikaya's (2022) findings. However, the findings of numerous recent studies carried out in other countries like Pakistan, China, and Kosovo and cited in this study corroborate the contemporary trend put forward by (Bing *et al.*, 2022) by reporting a direct significant effect of self-efficacy beliefs on job performance of teachers.

5.1 Implications of the Findings for Teaching and Learning

The implications gleaned from the findings derived from the study is that it would be counterproductive if practitioners and researchers outrightly overlook the direct effects of self-efficacy beliefs on teacher job performance. This study's position on this controversy is that, investigating both the direct and indirect effects of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of teachers could be done concurrently to develop a comprehensive understanding of the causal link between self-efficacy beliefs, mediators and job performance among teachers. Also, the findings of the study imply that emotional intelligence is a good mediator in the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers. This suggests that in attempts to search for possible mediating variables in the link between self-efficacy beliefs and job performance, scholars and researchers should examine and consider emotional intelligence as one of the factors as well as others in the explanation needed in enhancing the job performance of teachers.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

Triggered by growing controversies among extant researchers and education practitioners on the nexus between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence on teacher job performance, this study has gathered ample evidence to validate the assertion that self-efficacy beliefs and emotional intelligence are crucial in enhancing job performance of teachers. The findings of the study further showed that the teachers' emotional intelligence mediated the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on the job performance of Social Studies teachers. Therefore, this study concluded that the mechanism through which practices outlined in the self-efficacy beliefs indicators affect the job performance of Social Studies teachers in terms of mediating effects involves the emotional intelligence of the Social Studies teachers as a mediator. Based on the finding that the emotional intelligence of the Social Studies teachers mediated the effect of self-efficacy beliefs on their job performance, this study recommends that education practitioners and researchers investigate other possible variables that could also mediate the causal link between self-efficacy beliefs and the job performance of teachers in senior high schools in the Central Region of Ghana and beyond. In line with the finding that the self-efficacy and emotional intelligence theories adopted in this were effective in promoting and enhancing the job performance of teachers, this study recommends that the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service should adopt and implement

and model these theories so as to enhance the job performance of teachers as well as school and educational goals.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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