



# Investigating the Effectiveness of Character Empowerment Training on Primary School Teachers' Teaching Emotions

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## Abstract

**Background:** Intervention programs focused on character empowerment provide teachers with the tools to achieve personal well-being and develop resilience in challenging situations.

**Objectives:** This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of character empowerment training on the emotional responses of primary school teachers in Yazd city during the 2021 - 2022 academic year.

**Methods:** The research employed a semi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest approach and a control group. The statistical population consisted of primary school teachers in Yazd, from which 30 individuals were selected using convenience sampling. These individuals were randomly assigned to either the experimental group (15 teachers) or the control group (15 teachers). Teachers were first paired based on their teaching experience, prior participation in similar courses, and educational level. One individual from each pair was then randomly allocated to the experimental group, and the other to the control group. The research instrument used was the Teachers' Emotions Questionnaire. The experimental group underwent character empowerment training over two months, comprising 12 sessions of 50 minutes each. Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 26, employing an ANCOVA model and MANCOVA test.

**Results:** The findings revealed a significant difference between the two groups in terms of the emotions of pride (32%), anxiety (18%), and anger (47%). Specifically, character empowerment training increased the emotion of pride ( $P < 0.01$ ) while reducing anger and anxiety ( $P < 0.05$ ). However, there was no significant difference between the experimental and control groups regarding the emotion of enjoyment ( $P < 0.01$ ).

**Conclusions:** Enhancing awareness of character empowerment and integrating it into daily practices can help teachers experience heightened pride, reduced anger, and lower anxiety levels, while also enabling them to recognize and appreciate their positive attributes.

**Keywords:** Character, Empowerment, Emotions, Primary Schools, Teaching, Teacher

## 1. Background

Character empowerment refers to the positive traits that form the foundation of our identity and behavior. These traits drive individuals to act in a humane manner, and recognizing and fostering these capabilities can have beneficial outcomes for oneself and others (1).

Peterson, a pioneer in positive psychology (2), emphasizes the effectiveness of character strengths interventions in educational settings, particularly schools, as a means to promote academic achievement

and moral development (3). Long-term programs centered on character empowerment provide adolescents with pathways to flourish and build resilience in the face of challenges (4). Character empowerment interventions in schools incorporate three essential learning components: First, acquiring theoretical knowledge about character strengths; second, identifying these strengths in oneself and others; and third, encouraging the application of these strengths in diverse life scenarios. Empowerment training fosters positive interactions, enhances achievement, accelerates the learning curve, and improves performance. This leads to increased

motivation, greater satisfaction, and a sense of mastery and competence (5).

The exploration of teachers' emotions began in the 1990s, gaining attention due to the link between positive emotions and education. Researchers increasingly focus on how teachers' emotional experiences influence their professional development and classroom dynamics (6, 7). Emotions related to progress not only highlight student learning but also enhance the overall classroom environment (8). Classroom dynamics play a significant role in shaping the emotions experienced by teachers and students during problem-solving and other activities (9, 10). Teachers' emotions are often described as the heartbeat of education (11) and are intrinsically woven into the teaching process (12). Emotions involve a complex interplay of psychological processes, including emotional, cognitive, motivational, and physiological responses (13). Primary emotions associated with the teaching profession include happiness, love, enjoyment, pride, honor, sadness, anger, and fear (14).

According to Chen (14), teacher happiness is associated with positive interactions with students, colleagues, and school administrators. It is further enhanced by support from peers, respect from school officials, and professional recognition. Love, as the second emotion, reflects the fulfillment teachers derive from their work, including receiving respect, fair compensation, and witnessing students' growth. Sadness, the third emotion, encompasses feelings of discouragement when efforts are overlooked, rewards are perceived as unfair, or teachers face negative attitudes from students and parents. Anger, the fourth emotion, arises from external criticisms, challenges related to shift work, frequent relocations imposed by educational bureaucracy, and student neglect. Finally, fear, the fifth emotion, relates to concerns about student performance, peer competition, high parental expectations, and maintaining a work-life balance. The training of character empowerment can significantly influence these variables. In a study conducted on law students, Seligman demonstrated that the use of character strengths is associated with a reduced likelihood of depression and stress, as well as increased student satisfaction (2). Furthermore, in another longitudinal study, the application of character strengths was identified as a key predictor of well-being. It led to reduced stress levels and increased positive emotions, vitality, and self-confidence during three-month and six-month follow-up periods (15). Leveraging character strengths enables individuals to experience higher levels of positive emotions, enhance

relationships, and achieve personal goals. Strengths such as humor, enthusiasm, hope, social intelligence, and love are positively correlated with positive emotions (16). Teaching character empowerment to students has been shown to increase happiness, particularly among girls (3). It can also effectively improve well-being and academic enthusiasm (17). Adolescents participating in character empowerment programs report significantly higher life satisfaction compared to those who do not (15). Character empowerment plays a crucial role in promoting positive character development and offers benefits to all individuals in the school environment, including staff, teachers, students, and instructors (18). Additionally, teaching character empowerment, when combined with factors like teachers' social support, can help predict the academic progress of high school students engaged in risky behavior (19). Various factors, such as self-efficacy, also influence character abilities (20).

In recent decades, growing interest has emerged in exploring the relationship between character empowerment and positive experiences, as it is increasingly recognized as fundamental to leading a fulfilling life. Character empowerment significantly reduces psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and hopelessness among students (21). Stress reduction is similarly effective for improving teachers' mental health (22). The overarching factor of character empowerment contributes significantly to overall well-being (23).

Teachers derive emotional experiences from school and classroom contexts through primary and secondary evaluations. Primary evaluation involves assessing whether a situation aligns with desired goals (24). When teachers perceive a situation as congruent with their goals, they are likely to experience positive emotions. Conversely, incongruence between the situation and goals may lead to negative emotions. Teachers who employ effective coping strategies are more likely to experience emotions such as joy and pride, while those using ineffective coping strategies may experience anxiety and anger (25). Teachers experiencing anger often place blame on others, while unprepared teachers may feel heightened anxiety.

The process of acquiring emotional experiences is influenced by the socio-historical context of individuals, including factors related to family, school, and society. Thus, emotions like enjoyment, anxiety, pride, and anger are directly linked to teaching methods, interactions with students, and other key aspects of the educational process.

Indeed, teachers play a pivotal role in educational development, transforming the school environment into one that is nurturing, growth-oriented, and enjoyable. With their knowledge and skills, teachers effectively transfer cultural elements to the younger generation and employ appropriate educational methods. This contributes significantly to the holistic development of children and teenagers, including fostering character empowerment, thereby underscoring the crucial role of teachers in society. Various studies have explored the positive effects of teaching character empowerment on different individuals. However, research conducted on character empowerment in Iran has not sufficiently addressed the emotional aspects of teachers.

## 2. Objectives

This study aims to determine whether interventions in character empowerment can influence the emotions of teachers working in primary schools by analyzing the outcomes. The primary hypothesis of the research is that character empowerment training can enhance positive emotions in teachers while reducing negative emotions.

## 3. Methods

### 3.1. Study Design

The current research was applied with a quantitative approach and utilized a semi-experimental design with a pre-test-post-test framework, including a control group.

### 3.2. Participants

The statistical population for this study consisted of all female primary school teachers in Yazd city during the academic year 2021 - 2022.

### 3.3. Sample and Sampling Method

Using the available sampling method and considering the inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 30 teachers were selected as the study sample. Among them, 15 teachers were randomly assigned to the experimental group, while the remaining 15 teachers were assigned to the control group. According to Cohen et al. (26), experimental methodologies require at least 15 participants, and Gall et al. (27) recommend at least 15 participants in both control and experimental groups for comparison. The inclusion criteria for participants in this study were as follows: Satisfaction and willingness

to cooperate, employment in the field of education and teaching at a primary school in Yazd city, and possessing a minimum of 2 to 5 years of teaching experience in primary schools. The exclusion criteria included missing more than two sessions and expressing unwillingness to cooperate with the researcher.

### 3.4. Randomization

Due to the limitations of conducting experimental operations in Iranian educational schools, the researcher selected accessible schools with similar regional characteristics. All teachers in these schools, totaling thirty individuals, were selected as the sample. To control confounding variables and enhance the generalizability of the findings, these teachers were paired based on characteristics such as teaching experience and educational level. Thirty teachers were randomly selected, and the assignment of sample teachers to the experimental and control groups was done completely randomly. Initially, the teachers were paired based on factors such as teaching experience, prior participation in similar courses, and educational level. Subsequently, one individual from each pair was randomly assigned to the experimental group, and the other to the control group.

### 3.5. Procedure

The research plan was carried out in three stages. In the first stage, after selecting participants for both the experimental and control groups, a pre-test was conducted to measure the dependent variables using a four-factor teacher's emotion questionnaire. In the second stage, the experimental group received training focused on character strengths. In the final stage, following the intervention with the experimental group, a post-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups using the same questionnaires to assess the outcomes. The training program was conducted over 12 sessions, with each session lasting approximately 50 minutes, over a span of two months. The results from the questionnaires were then analyzed.

### 3.6. Intervention

A summary of the content of the educational intervention is presented in [Table 1](#).

### 3.7. Blinding

In this study, a double-blind method was employed, meaning that both the participants and the researchers were unaware of the group assignments. Additionally,

**Table 1.** Description of Intervention Sessions in Character Empowerment [The Self-compassion Workbook (25)]

| Sessions      | Description of Sessions   | Description  |
|---------------|---|--|
| -             | Conducting the pre-test   | -  |
| 1st session   | Knowledge of capabilities (familiarization of teachers with the types of character empowerment, definitions, and examples of behavior related to each capability)   | A sheet containing 24-character empowerment abilities was given to the teachers, and they were asked to answer any questions about the abilities during the class wherever they were asked, referring to the answer sheet. Character Empowerment abilities have common language features, dimensionality, texture, and collectivism, which will be briefly explained later.  |
| 2nd session   | Knowledge of capabilities (familiarization of teachers with the definitions of all 24-character empowerment and mention of examples of behavioral examples of capabilities)                                   | Each of the abilities was briefly defined and its behavioral examples were mentioned for a better understanding.   |
| 3rd session   | Knowledge of abilities (teachers' familiarity with the sub-sets of outstanding, encouraging, less, periodical, middle, and lost character empowerment)  | We ask teachers to categorize their abilities into these subgroups: Outstanding, exhilarating, less, periodic, moderate, lost.   |
| 4th session   | Knowledge of capabilities (teachers' familiarity with the definition and importance of prominent capabilities)  | Teachers are asked questions about each outstanding ability. For example, outstanding abilities include creativity, leadership, social intelligence, and kindness.   |
| 5th session   | Teaching ideas to help teachers get started and find their strengths  | Four categories of neglecting abilities were explained through a question-and-answer format. These include common unawareness about abilities, disconnecting from meaning, viewing abilities as default rather than extraordinary features, excessive use of abilities, and ambiguity in the domain of abilities.  |
| 6th session   | Knowledge of capabilities (familiarizing teachers with how to use outstanding capabilities in new ways)   | Question-and-answer sessions were conducted regarding the four strategies (simple behavior, hooking, mapping the texture, and comprehensive mapping) for utilizing outstanding abilities in a new way.   |
| 7th session   | Exploration of capabilities (familiarization of teachers with the search for various capabilities of story characters)  | In this session, a story from the book "Good Stories for Good Kids (Mousi and Shaban)" by Mahdi Azar Yazdi was read. While reading the story, a worksheet containing the text of the story was given to the teachers, and they were asked to identify where in the story each character used their character empowerment.  |
| 8th session   | Exploration of capabilities (creating insight into capabilities, selectively focusing on our capabilities or the capabilities of others)  | Presentation of the talent exploration assignment: Think about a specific time, Recently or some time ago, when you were at your best, when you were performing strongly. This could be a time at school, work, home, or elsewhere, where you were behaving in your true self. Turn this into a story and write it with a beginning, body, and end.  |
| 9th session   | Exploring capabilities (searching for the abilities of your family members)   | In this session, the teachers were asked to reflect on the behavior of their family members in the past few days and write what abilities each of them used?   |
| 10th session  | Exploration of capabilities (searching for the character empowerment of students in the classroom)  | In this session, they were asked to consider the behavior of some of their students during the past week and write what ability they used.   |
| 11th session  | Application of capabilities (strengthening goal-setting skills, strengthening good morals, advancing goals, integrating character empowerment related to goals, creating a framework for future goal-setting) | Goal setting steps: (1) Visualize the goal you would like to achieve. (2) Design your goal according to the SMART solution. (3) Enter the relevant capability into the program. (4) Starting to move towards the goal: How can your perseverance ability support you in overcoming obstacles and staying focused on the goal? (5) Make a list of supports. After explaining the above, the teachers were asked to choose a goal according to the 5 steps and evaluate their success in achieving it using their character abilities.   |
| 12th session  | Application of character empowerment (appreciation and acknowledgment of others' abilities by teachers)   | People around us are present in different contexts of life such as family, circle of friends, acquaintances, work environment, etc., and they show their character abilities on the day. We can give them a good feeling and motivation by acknowledging and praising these abilities. Identify their capabilities in your interactions with others. 9. Lack of details about the sampling method: The description of the sampling method lacks specific details, as the text only mentions the utilization of available sampling without providing any additional information regarding the sampling process and how schools were selected. |
| 6 weeks later | Conducting post-test  | -  |

the outcome assessors were completely blinded and were not provided with any information about the group details. These measures were implemented to prevent bias and ensure the accuracy of the results.

### 3.8. Instruments

The instruments used in this research included:

#### 3.8.1. Achievement Emotions Questionnaire-Teachers

To measure the emotions of teachers, the Four-Factor Teacher's Emotions Questionnaire developed by Hong et al. (28) was utilized (Table 2). This questionnaire consists of 15 questions, with each question graded on a Likert Scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Each option is scored on a scale of 1 to 6.

#### 3.8.2. Components and Scoring

The reliability of each component was calculated using Cronbach's alpha method. The reported reliability values were 0.891 for the Enjoyment component, 0.845 for Pride, 0.824 for Anxiety, and 0.823 for Anger (29), indicating good reliability. The validity of this questionnaire was examined using confirmatory factor analysis, with the four factors explaining 70.123% of the variance. Hong et al. (28) identified four factors—

Enjoyment, Anxiety, Anger, and Pride—through exploratory factor analysis using the principal component factorization method and promax rotation. The factor loadings for the questionnaire items ranged from 0.421 to 0.864. According to their findings, the teacher emotions model explained 66.90% of the variance across the four factors. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha method was used to calculate the reliability coefficient, which was 0.81 for the overall questionnaire. For the individual components, the reliability coefficients were as follows: Enjoyment (0.80), Pride (0.82), Anxiety (0.84), and Anger (0.79).

### 3.9. Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki and its subsequent revisions and was approved by the Research Committee and the Human Subject Review Ethics Committee of Yazd University (Ethics Committee Reference Number: IR.YAZD.REC.1401.102). All participants were included after providing their informed consent to participate in the study.

### 3.10. Statistical Analysis

To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed. The normality of the

**Table 2.** Achievement Emotions Questionnaire-Teachers (28)

| Row | Sub-scale | Row | Item  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----|-----------|-----|---|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| 1   | Anxiety   | 1   | Preparing to teach often causes me to worry.                |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 2   | I feel uneasy when i think about teaching.                  |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 3   | I generally feel tense and nervous while teaching.          |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 4   | I am often worried that my teaching isn't going so well.    |                |       |          |                   |
| 2   | Pride     | 5   | I feel proud of the way i prepare for my teaching.          |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 6   | I get a feeling of pride as a result of my work.            |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 7   | I am proud of the way i am teaching.                        |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 8   | Thinking about my success as a teacher makes me feel proud. |                |       |          |                   |
| 3   | Enjoyment | 9   | I often have reasons to be happy while i teach.             |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 10  | I generally have fun preparing my lessons.                  |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 11  | I generally enjoy teaching.                                 |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 12  | I generally teach with enthusiasm.                          |                |       |          |                   |
| 4   | Anger     | 13  | Sometimes I get really mad while i teach.                   |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 14  | I often have reasons to be angry while i teach.             |                |       |          |                   |
|     |           | 15  | Some days teaching just infuriates me.                      |                |       |          |                   |

**Table 3.** Frequency of Distribution of Respondents According to Teaching Experience and Level of Education

| Groups and Teaching Experience | Frequency (%) | Level of Education | Frequency (%) | Gender; Female |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Experimental</b>            |               |                    |               | 15 (100)       |
| From 5 to 10 years             | 7 (46.67)     | Bachelor's degree  | 11 (73.33)    |                |
| From 11 to 20 years            | 5 (33.33)     | Master's degree    | 4 (26.67)     |                |
| From 21 to 30 years            | 3 (20)        | Total              | 15 (100)      |                |
| <b>Control</b>                 |               |                    |               | 15 (100)       |
| From 5 to 10 years             | 7 (46.67)     | Bachelor's degree  | 11 (73.33)    |                |
| From 11 to 20 years            | 5 (33.33)     | Master's degree    | 4 (26.67)     |                |
| From 21 to 30 years            | 3 (20)        | Total              | 15 (100)      |                |

research data, the linearity assumptions of variable relationships, the homogeneity of variances, and the homogeneity of regression slopes were assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. The significance of the research hypotheses was examined using the ANCOVA model, conducted by employing the MANCOVA test with SPSS software version 26.

#### 4. Results

The participants consisted of 30 female primary school teachers, ranging in age from 23 to 42 years, with a mean age of 32.4 years. The frequency distribution of respondents based on teaching experience and level of education is presented in Table 3.

As shown in Table 4, the post-test scores for the experimental group were higher than those of the control group in terms of positive teaching emotions, specifically enjoyment and pride. Conversely, for negative teaching emotions, the post-test scores of the

experimental group were lower than those of the control group.

##### 4.1. Examining the Assumptions of Covariance Analysis

In this research, multivariate covariance analysis (MANCOVA) was employed for inferential analysis of the results. To ensure compliance with the assumptions of the statistical methods, preliminary investigations were carried out. The findings of these investigations are as follows:

One fundamental assumption for parametric tests is the normality of the score distributions within the groups. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to verify this assumption. Based on the test results, the significance levels for most variables in the pre-test and post-test of emotional factors in both the experimental and control groups exceeded 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the distribution of the variables is normal, allowing for the use of parametric tests.



**Table 4.** Pre-test and Post-test Statistics of Teaching Emotions in Experimental and Control Groups <sup>a</sup>

| The Excitement of Teaching and Stages | Experimental | Control      |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Enjoyment</b>                      |              |              |
| Pre-test                              | 16.66 ± 2.38 | 18.13 ± 1.54 |
| Post-test                             | 18.33 ± 1.54 | 18.26 ± 1.94 |
| <b>Pride</b>                          |              |              |
| Pre-test                              | 16.60 ± 2.13 | 17.06 ± 1.75 |
| Post-test                             | 17.80 ± 1.85 | 16.46 ± 1.76 |
| <b>Anger</b>                          |              |              |
| Pre-test                              | 7.20 ± 2.305 | 8 ± 1.253    |
| Post-test                             | 5.66 ± 1.29  | 7.60 ± 1.24  |
| <b>Anxiety</b>                        |              |              |
| Pre-test                              | 17.13 ± 1.35 | 16.26 ± 1.70 |
| Post-test                             | 16.54 ± 1.93 | 16.60 ± 1.72 |

<sup>a</sup> Values are expressed as mean ± SD.

To check the linearity of the relationship between the dependent and auxiliary variables (covariates), regression lines were assessed using scatter plots. The regression line between the auxiliary variable (pre-test scores of the emotional factors: Enjoyment, anger, anxiety, pride) and the dependent variable (post-test scores of the emotional factors: Enjoyment, anger, anxiety, pride) is assumed to be linear. The scatter plot confirmed the linearity of the relationship between the pre-test and post-test scores.

The interaction F-value for all research variables—Enjoyment (0.419), anger (0.449), anxiety (1.108), and pride (0.940)—was non-significant, confirming the assumption of the homogeneity of regression slopes.

To assess the equality of variances, the Levene's test results were examined. The significant values obtained for anxiety (0.203), Enjoyment (0.698), and anger (0.166) were all greater than 0.05, indicating no violation of the assumption of equality of variances. However, the significance level for the pride variable was 0.037, less than 0.05. This indicates a violation of the equality of variance assumption for this variable. Nevertheless, the analysis of variance and covariance is considered robust to such violations, provided the group sizes are relatively similar.

After confirming that the assumptions for covariance analysis were met, MANCOVA was applied to test the research hypotheses. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 5. First, the results of the M-box test were reviewed to ensure that the variance-covariance matrix assumption was not violated. An M-box value of 21.761 and an F-value of 1.836 were obtained, with a significance value of 0.05, which exceeds the threshold

of 0.001. Therefore, it was concluded that the variance-covariance matrix assumption was not violated.

The significance levels reported in Table 5 confirm that, with a 99% confidence interval, a significant difference exists between the experimental and control groups in at least one dimension of teachers' teaching emotions ( $P < 0.01$ ;  $F = 41.8$ ). To identify which specific components of teaching emotions differ between the two groups, an ANCOVA model was conducted within the MANCOVA framework. The detailed results of this analysis are presented in Table 6.

As shown in Table 6, by controlling the effect of the auxiliary variable (pre-test) on the dependent variable, there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of positive emotions (pride) with a 99% confidence interval and negative emotions (anger and anxiety) with a 95% confidence interval. The adjusted scores for the emotion of pride show a 32% difference, the adjusted scores for the emotion of anger show a 47% difference, and the adjusted scores for the emotion of anxiety show an 18% difference, which can be explained by the character empowerment tests. However, there is no significant difference between the two groups in the mean scores of the positive emotion of enjoyment. Therefore, character empowerment training can increase teachers' positive emotions and decrease negative emotions. Thus, the research hypothesis is confirmed. According to Cohen's (30) criteria (0.1 to 0.3 as small, 0.3 to 0.5 as medium, and 0.5 and above as large), the magnitude of the effect of personality empowerment training on the positive emotion of pride and the negative emotions of anger and anxiety in teachers is at the medium level.

**Table 5.** The Results of MANCOVA Analysis on the Mean Scores of Teacher's Emotions

| Title of Exam    | Amount | F-Value | Degrees of Freedom of the Hypothesis | Error Degrees of Freedom | Significance Level | Eta Squared | Test Power |
|------------------|--------|---------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------|
| Pillai effect    | 0.616  | 8.410   | 4                                    | 21                       | 0.0001             | 0.616       | 0.993      |
| Wilks lambda     | 0.384  | 8.410   | 4                                    | 21                       | 0.0001             | 0.616       | 0.993      |
| Hotelling's work | 1.602  | 8.410   | 4                                    | 21                       | 0.0001             | 0.616       | 0.993      |
| The largest root | 1.602  | 8.410   | 4                                    | 21                       | 0.0001             | 0.616       | 0.993      |

## 5. Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effectiveness of character empowerment training on the teaching emotions of primary school teachers in Yazd city. According to the hypothesis of the current research, the effect of teaching character empowerment on the dimensions of teaching emotions of primary school teachers was examined. The results of the research showed that there is a significant difference between the averages of the control and experimental groups in the scores of positive emotions (pride) and negative emotions (anxiety and anger). In other words, training in character empowerment can increase positive emotions (pride), reduce negative emotions (anger and anxiety), and have no effect on positive emotions (enjoyment). These findings are in line with the research results of Rim et al. (21) and Lee et al. (31), which indicate that receiving humor training is effective in controlling teachers' emotions. In explaining these findings regarding positive emotions (pride and enjoyment), it can be stated that the emotion of pride is a controllable positive emotion, to which teachers attribute their efforts. People who have participated in the character empowerment training course learn to focus on their positive qualities during the courses and exercises in the learning sessions instead of focusing on the negative ones (2). Subsequently, they attribute the performance results and successes that occur in the classroom to themselves and experience a greater sense of excitement and pride. Teachers achieve success and receive positive evaluations of their teaching, considering the progress and learning outcomes of their students as a result of their education in addition to the individual efforts of their students. Therefore, it can be concluded that if targeted exercises are planned for teachers during the character development training sessions, the increase in their sense of pride will appear natural (20). Furthermore, when explaining the findings related to the experience of enjoyment, it can be stated that one of the factors contributing to enjoyment in any job is satisfaction with the salary payment situation.

Perhaps the low salaries of Iranian teachers and the lack of suitable welfare and living conditions are some of the reasons that hinder the enjoyment of teachers in this field of work. Regarding the results of the research on negative emotions (anxiety and anger), it can be explained that one of the causes of teachers' anxiety before entering the classroom is the lack of preparation for teaching and the absence of a proper lesson plan. By utilizing their abilities such as a love for learning, caution, and perseverance, teachers can enter the classroom with the necessary preparation and create a suitable lesson plan (1). Another factor contributing to anxiety in the classroom is the lack of effective management and leadership. Teachers who have participated in character empowerment training courses, aiming to develop this ability, can effectively lead the classroom environment (8) and subsequently create a conducive atmosphere for their students' education. Even when they encounter educational problems among their students in the classroom, teachers can effectively manage those problems by utilizing their capabilities of having a broad vision, exercising judgment, demonstrating kindness, and practicing forgiveness and understanding (1). By using the ability of enthusiasm, they can enter school every day with enthusiasm and positive energy (17), and by using the ability of creativity in teaching, they can employ various educational methods in the classroom. In general, it can be concluded that by employing their character strengths in the classroom environment, teachers can create a conducive atmosphere to effectively manage the situation and achieve their goals. As a result, they experience job satisfaction and, concurrently, a reduction in anxiety levels (6, 21, 24). Therefore, training in character empowerment and then using those capabilities in the classroom environment can prepare the classroom conditions for the teacher to teach as effectively as possible and reduce the teacher's anxiety. Regarding the negative emotion of anger, it can be said that anger arises as a result of failure and negative evaluation of the teacher. In the experimental group, exercises were conducted to apply 24-character abilities in daily life during the character empowerment training sessions. Following these exercises,

**Table 6.** The Results of ANCOVA Model in the MANCOVA Text on the Average Scores of the Dimensions of Teachers' Teaching

| Variables and Sources | Sum of Squares | Degrees of Freedom | Mean Square | F      | Significance Level | Eta Squared |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|--------|--------------------|-------------|
| <b>Enjoyment</b>      |                |                    |             |        |                    |             |
| Pre-test              | 23.505         | 1                  | 23.505      | 15.603 | 0.001              | 0.394       |
| Group                 | 0.024          | 1                  | 0.024       | 0.019  | 0.90               | 0.001       |
| Error                 | 36.154         | 24                 | 1.506       | -      | -                  | -           |
| <b>Pride</b>          |                |                    |             |        |                    |             |
| Pre-test              | 24.198         | 1                  | 24.198      | 18.279 | 0.0001             | 0.432       |
| Group                 | 15.575         | 1                  | 15.575      | 11.765 | 0.002              | 0.329       |
| Error                 | 31.772         | 30                 | 1.324       | -      | -                  | -           |
| <b>Anger</b>          |                |                    |             |        |                    |             |
| Pre-test              | 12.233         | 1                  | 12.233      | 12.675 | 0.002              | 0.346       |
| Group                 | 21.292         | 1                  | 21.292      | 22.062 | 0.0001             | 0.479       |
| Error                 | 23.162         | 24                 | 0.965       | -      | -                  | -           |
| <b>Anxiety</b>        |                |                    |             |        |                    |             |
| Pre-test              | 11.829         | 1                  | 11.829      | 10.577 | 0.003              | 0.306       |
| Group                 | 6.155          | 1                  | 6.155       | 5.504  | 0.028              | 0.187       |
| Error                 | 26.841         | 24                 | 1.118       | -      | -                  | -           |

participants learned to recognize their positive abilities and shift their mindset towards focusing on their strengths rather than their weaknesses. As a result, negative evaluations are reduced (23, 24), and consequently, they experience less anger. Character empowerment provides a shared language to describe the best qualities and attributes in human beings. According to the theory of self-affirmation (32), affirming personal values expands an individual's self-perception, facilitates a broader perspective on important issues, and serves as a protective factor against stressors such as anger and anxiety. Individuals who affirm their abilities can benefit from the insights provided by this theory.

### 5.1. Limitations

However, when using this intervention and instruments and interpreting the results, one should consider the limitations of generalizing the results. Firstly, this study was performed on teachers, and it is necessary to conduct additional studies on other professional jobs. Secondly, it is important to pay attention to influential demographic variables (e.g., gender) in future studies. In this study, parametric tests and analysis of covariance have been used to analyze the data despite the small sample size and few quantitative variables. It is advisable for the current research to also be examined using non-parametric tests. Given the key role of the teacher in the education system, they are considered a major factor in providing and maintaining the mental and emotional peace of students

unconsciously by transmitting their moods and behavior (18, 19). Therefore, for the teacher to have a positive influence on the students and foster effective learning, it is necessary for mental and spiritual peace to prevail in the learning environments and for negative emotions to be absent in individuals.

### 5.2. Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on the findings of this research, it is recommended that teachers integrate the teaching points related to the 24 abilities into their daily lives to enhance the effectiveness of character ability training. It is also recommended that school administrators provide training opportunities for teachers by organizing empowerment training workshops.

### 5.3. Conclusions

Increased awareness of character empowerment and its application in daily life can enhance teachers' experience of pride while reducing their levels of anger and anxiety, and help them recognize their positive abilities.

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### Footnotes



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**Data Availability:** The dataset presented in the study is available on request from the corresponding author during submission or after publication. The data are not publicly available due to privacy.

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