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## EMOTIONAL STABILITY OF TEACHERS IS ASSOCIATED WITH CONSCIENTIOUSNESS AS MEDIATORS TOWARDS TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

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### ABSTRACT

High-effort teachers tend to experience a higher level of exhaustion and emotional instability. Recent research suggests talent development training is needed to cultivate teachers' personalities. This research aims to investigate how talent development is correlated with teachers' conscientiousness and emotional stability among teachers in MICSS and examine whether conscientiousness among MICSS teachers in Malaysia serves as a mediator for talent development and is associated with emotional stability. The researcher implemented quantitative research methodologies to collect numerical data from 357 Malaysian teachers serving at MICSS. It was found that talent development, conscientiousness, and emotional stability showed a weak-to-moderate correlation. Teachers' conscientiousness plays a full mediator role in the correlation between talent development and emotional stability among MICSS teachers in Malaysia. To the best of our knowledge, this is the initial endeavour to examine the relationship between the emotional stability, conscientiousness, and talent development of MICSS teachers in Malaysia.

**Keywords:** Talent development, teachers' conscientiousness, teachers' emotional stability, MICSS (Malaysian Independent Chinese Secondary School), professional development.



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## INTRODUCTION

Professional educators may not always be able to ensure that instructional materials are effective and inspire students' academic achievement and learning. Emotional and personality factors are considered critical factors in the teaching profession (Maamari & Salloum, 2023; Wang & Burić, 2023). An issue that arises in this domain is the potential for teachers to experience neuroticism and exhaustion due to their excessive diligence and conscientiousness (Angelini, 2023; Hu et al., 2023). Additionally, around 30–40% of the teacher population, including MICSS instructors, have experienced burnout due to emotional instability (Zawar Hussain et al., 2024). Talent development was required to address this issue, which involved professional training for teachers in emotional stability and conscientiousness (Bølstad et al., 2023; Schelhorn et al., 2023). Teachers who can effectively manage their emotions in a composed manner are capable of suppressing negative emotions (Ma & Liu, 2024) and are motivated to improve their performance (Burić et al., 2024).

Consequently, this research is necessary to ascertain the development of teacher talent to improve their emotional stability and conscientiousness, thereby ensuring the provision of sustainable education in the MICSS and Malaysian educational environments. As there is less research on this topic, it is important and interesting to observe the link between personality traits (Rolloff et al., 2022), such as being responsible and emotionally stable, and talent professional development among MICSS teachers (Wang & An, 2023) in this study.

Accordingly, the investigation's objectives are:

1. To what extent is talent development correlated with various facets of teachers' conscientiousness and emotional stability among teachers in MICSS?
2. To examine, does conscientiousness among MICSS teachers in Malaysia serve as a mediator for talent development and emotional stability?

Additionally, the research questions for this study are as follows:

1. To what extent is talent development correlated with various facets of teachers' conscientiousness and emotional stability among teachers in MICSS?
2. Does conscientiousness among MICSS teachers in Malaysia serve as a mediator for talent development and emotional stability?

### ***Malaysian Independence Chinese Secondary Schools (MICSS)***

MICSS are private non-profit educational institutions that are independently managed by their respective boards of directors. In other terms, MICSS is a vernacular school applying the mother tongue and is separate from the Malaysian national education system (Yoong & Abdullah, 2023). Consequently, MICSS has greater autonomy in administering and recruiting teachers than government schools (An et al., 2022b). Since this juncture, the operation has been funded by students' monthly fees and local communal fundraising activities (Thien et al., 2021). Due to their position as stakeholders in the MICSS organisation, the principals and instructors of the MICSS were held accountable for the academic performance of their students. Given the close relationship between this endeavour, the creation of educational policies, and the recruitment of teaching staff within the school organisation, it is imperative for the management line, including in the context of MICSS, to invest in professional teaching staff and talent development to ensure the quality of teachers (Mgaiwa & Milinga, 2024).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### ***Talent Development in MICSS***

The Talent Management model (Davies & Davies, 2011) identifies talent development as a crucial subconstruct essential for organisations, especially schools (Kaliannan et al., 2023; Oppong, 2023), like MICSS, as it facilitates teachers in achieving their objectives. Nevertheless, the training approaches used in MICSS have a limited



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timeframe and specific objectives which hinder their ability to promote significant and long-lasting professional growth among educators (An et al., 2022a). The results of a study conducted in Malaysia (Kaliannan et al., 2023) suggest that there is a scarcity of comprehensive research on successful talent development. This is because students' learning and development processes are not progressing and are not properly linked with contemporary demands.

Additionally, to ensure the successful implementation of the talent development programme, school principals must develop appropriate programmes to assist teachers in enhancing their understanding of the subjects they teach and in developing pedagogical strategies that are appropriate for students of varying abilities (Zeng, 2023). This is because the efficacy of the talent development programme relies on the course's relevance to the teacher's requirements for each subject in the class (Hamedinasab et al., 2023). Consequently, talent development programmes frequently incorporate professional learning communities (PLCs). The teachers involved can exchange lesson plans, experiences, teaching and learning pedagogy, and other information to offer new insights to other educators, particularly novice teachers who have recently served (Ehlert & Souvignier, 2023; Hamedinasab et al., 2023; Zeng, 2023).

Thus, the teachers who work at MICSS will hone their craft in areas such as pedagogy and subject matter expertise. Professional learning communities and talent development programs at MICSS consistently augment teacher competencies, focusing on classroom observation and collaborative learning facilitated by experienced educators (Wang & An, 2023). The effectiveness of talent development among teachers can be assured alongside their enthusiastic support for the commendable efforts of the school management or principal during the talent development activities, which have proven effective among primary school teachers in the Midwestern and North-eastern regions of the United States (Wadaani, 2023)

Nonetheless, certain scholars have identified certain limitations in the implementation of talent development programs in schools (Barros et al., 2023; Surahman & Wang, 2023; Wang & An, 2023). Scholars have identified a small number of educators who are deficient in motivation, interest, and the ability to share their extant experiences, as well as in competence and skills related to the subjects they teach. Some of the principals and administrators in MICSS schools in Malaysia lack skills in talent development, theoretical knowledge, and implementation (Wang & An, 2023). This circumstance arises from the predominance of teachers who are merely non-teacher training graduates and possess proficiency in only one subject, as corroborated by researchers (Surahman & Wang, 2023) in their systematic literature review, which leads them to be less involved in teacher training programs.

Recent research in German primary schools indicated that if this situation is widespread and inadequately addressed, the misallocation of talented individuals will inevitably occur (Ehlert & Souvignier, 2023). To resolve these limitations, school principals must acquire all the necessary competencies and provide comprehensive support to their teachers before supervising them in talent development programs through self-involvement (Wang & An, 2023). This will foster the teachers' self-motivation, as they will be assured that the programme's effectiveness will truly enhance their abilities, rather than merely a theoretical discussion, as research typically differs from a real classroom (Ehlert & Souvignier, 2023).

### ***Personality Traits in Teaching***

**Teachers' Conscientiousness.** In line with the Big Five Factor Theory (Goldberg, 1992), this study investigates the conscientiousness and emotional stability among MICSS teachers. According to scholars (Bahrami & Hosseini, 2023; Harris & Bostain, 2021; Singh & Arya, 2023), teachers who have a strong commitment to conscientiousness prioritise their performance and self-efficacy. Inaccurate evaluations, which fail to accurately represent teachers' capabilities and self-efficacy (Guenther, 2021), have resulted in frustration and the decision to leave the teaching profession (Taylor, 2023). Accountability for measuring teacher achievement has negative consequences for teachers, leading



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to stress (Taylor, 2023) and dissatisfaction with the intentionally projected image (Varis et al., 2023). This practice is crucial for teachers to achieve their desired objectives (Bahrami & Hosseini, 2023; Harris & Bostain, 2021).

Zadok and Benoliel (2023) assert that elementary school teachers who adopt conscientiousness will exert themselves to accomplish their objectives. Consistently reliable and highly self-disciplined teachers are hallmarks of goal-oriented educators. Scholars have extensively examined this topic, which adds a fresh dimension to the context of conscientiousness in school organisations (Ahmadi-Azad et al., 2020; Bahrami & Hosseini, 2023; Zadok & Benoliel, 2023) in several publications. In simpler terms, the effectiveness of the teacher is directly proportional to the degree of self-discipline in the practice of conscientiousness or vice versa (Harris & Bostain, 2021; Sari et al., 2021).

Recent research has highlighted varying perspectives on teacher conscientiousness, as evidenced in East Azerbaijan, Iran (Ahmadi-Azad et al., 2020) and an elementary public school located in Texas City, USA (Taylor, 2023). This issue is further examined on accountability, which measures a teacher's reliability and conscientiousness in both Western and non-Western countries. Teacher evaluations in various suburban districts of Michigan, USA, which inadequately represent teachers' competencies (Guenther, 2021), have led to frustration among some educators, prompting them to exit the profession (Taylor, 2023).

Consequently, teachers must exercise and implement conscientiousness, as the success of a school organisation depends on the level of conscientiousness among teachers to achieve the school's mission and vision in non-Western contexts, such as Malaysia.

**Teachers' Emotional Stability.** A teacher who consistently maintains a tranquil and stable demeanour in the classroom is referred to as maintaining emotional stability (Greenier et al., 2021). They exhibit patience and are not readily susceptible to anxiety (Fraschini & Park, 2022; Wang & Hall, 2021). Furthermore, they are capable of withstanding tension and burnout (Luque-Reca et al., 2022; McGrew et al., 2023). Conversely, educators consistently refrain from expressing their unfavourable emotions to preserve their image as professionals (Ntim et al., 2023; Wang & Burić, 2023). According to research, there is a robust correlation between exhaustion issues and diligent instructors (Hu et al., 2023). The retention of teachers in the school organisation is contingent upon the implementation of practical measures to ensure that they experience positive emotions (Burić & Frenzel, 2023), as this will prevent their resignation (McGrew et al., 2023).

Research findings from Croatia (Burić & Frenzel, 2023) and the USA (Snow et al., 2023) indicate that competent teachers exhibit substantially better emotional stability compared to novice teachers (Haerens et al., 2022) in Lima, Peru. As stated in the recent research above, in cultivating a resilient community of educators at the school level, the teaching staff and the management team, especially MICSS in Malaysia, should collaborate in identifying emotional instability and stress among teachers. Consequently, teachers' emotional stability influences the school's performance and students' academic achievement directly. Contrasting research findings are seen in several recent studies undertaken by scholars examining primary teachers in Oslo, Norway (Bølstad et al., 2023) and Ghana, Africa (Ntim et al., 2023) facing challenges in circulating positive emotion.

This study demonstrates that the phenomenon of exhaustion and lethargy is significantly associated with the dedicated efforts of teachers, as examined in primary and secondary schools in China (Hu et al., 2023). The inconsistencies observed in a global context necessitate additional investigation to obtain a more accurate and compelling explanation in developing countries, including Malaysia. Teachers will invariably exhibit a high level of effort and a stable emotional state when they receive constructive support for their emotions through recognition or rewards, instructions, and management that understands their situation (Schelhorn et al., 2023). Teachers can experience feelings of appreciation and belonging to the school's organisation while engaging with their school administrators.

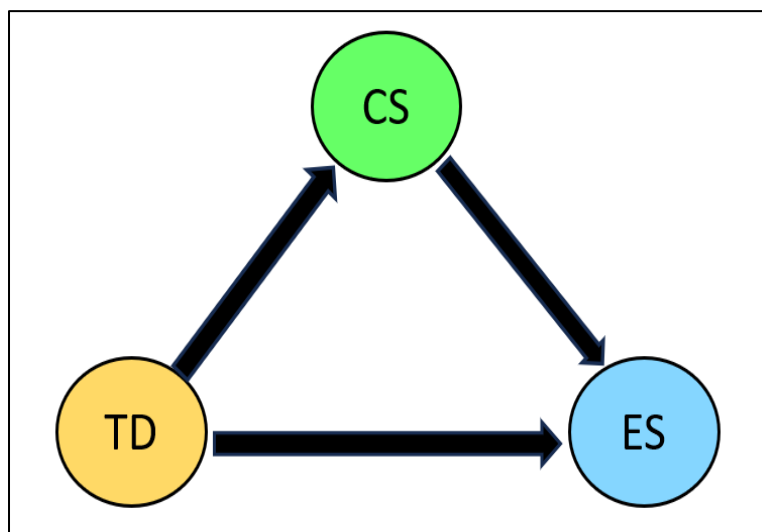


Teachers are not emotionless objects but rather human beings with complex lives and experiences that impact their work in the classroom and the school as a whole (Ntim et al., 2023). The risk of health problems among teachers, in particular, can be reduced if they can control their emotional stability.

**Conceptual Framework Emotional Stability of Teachers is Associated with Conscientiousness as Mediators Towards Teachers' Professional Talent Development in Malaysia.** The theory of purposeful work behaviour (Barrick et al., 2013) was the cornerstone of our research. This theory of purposeful work behaviour integrates explicit objectives with personality traits, utilising higher-order implicit goals derived from the Big Five Factor Model to elucidate the impact of these traits on teachers' work performance. Furthermore, in the context of school organisations, which are regarded as social environments, leadership may be associated with personal agendas stemming from teachers' personality attributes, such as conscientiousness, to achieve significant objectives (Barrick et al., 2013; Frieder et al., 2018). Transformational leaders can impact followers by aligning routine duties with collective goals.

Conscientiousness and emotional stability are personality traits that affect a teacher's self-efficacy within a school organisation (Maamari & Salloum, 2023). Conscientiousness is considered a singular construct (Zewude et al., 2024), and conscientiousness attributes can function as mediators (Chen & Liu, 2025; Zadok et al., 2024) to examine the relationship between talent development and emotional stability among MICSS teachers in Malaysia. The teacher talent development program aids novice teachers' personality qualities and effective educational techniques. Moreover, attributes of conscientiousness are associated with inspiring individuals, including teachers, to maintain high levels of motivation and emotional stability during everyday tasks, as evidenced in the German context (Kehle & Urhahne, 2025). Figure 1 in the section below illustrates the conceptual framework.

**Figure 1.** *Conceptual Framework for Emotional Stability of Teachers is Associated with Conscientiousness as Mediators Towards Teachers' Professional Talent Development in Malaysia*



*Note(s).* TD (Talent Development); CS (Conscientiousness); ES (Emotional Stability)

*Source(s).* Author's work

As a result, the present investigation has confirmed the importance of a more comprehensive understanding of personality traits to examine a teacher's motivation, resilience, and emotional stability, particularly among Chinese teachers (Yan et al., 2024), who constitute the majority in the context of MICSS. For teachers to gain practical experience, training is needed due to the primary obstacles that educators encounter when implementing innovation practices in schools: emotional labour, which includes forgetfulness, anxiety, insecurity, fatigue, and



mental confusion (Di-Giusto et al., 2022; Wang & Hall, 2021; Yan et al., 2024).

## METHODOLOGY

In this investigation, the researcher implemented quantitative research methodologies to collect numerical data from 357 Malaysian teachers serving at MICSS. This was accomplished through stratified random sampling and questionnaires. The researcher integrated the Talent Management Model by Davies and Davies (2011) and the Big Five Structure by Goldberg (1992) to develop research instruments. The proposed conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

### *Participants*

A stratified random sampling procedure was implemented to select 357 teachers (152 males and 225 females) for the study. Subsequently, the teachers were distributed to five zones in Malaysia. The study covers sixteen MICSS schools in Malaysia from five different zones: Borneo Zone (Sarawak, Sabah), Central Zone (Kuala Lumpur, Selangor), South Zone (Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor), East Coast Zone (Pahang, Terengganu, Kelantan), and North Zone (Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Perak). Teachers from MICSS schools located in metropolitan areas, including Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru, comprise the study's participant populations for the MICSS school system (An et al., 2022a).

### *Procedure*

The university's research ethics committee granted authorisation for this investigation, along with approval from all sixteen MICSS principals. Teachers at specific institutions participated in this quantitative survey voluntarily (Amzat et al., 2021). The researcher ensured that all teachers had a thorough understanding of the study's objectives and the voluntary participation procedure before administering the survey. Additionally, the researcher distributed written consent forms and advised the participating instructors that they could withdraw from the study at any designated time. It took approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete the survey. They were allowed to contact the researchers with survey questions after submitting.

### *Measures*

**Talent Development.** The talent development instrument was created following the Davies and Davies (2011) talent management framework. This instrument exhibits a high degree of internal consistency and validity, with a Cronbach's alpha range of 0.88 to 0.92 for all items ( $\chi^2/df = 3.49$ ; CFI = 0.96; TLI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.08; SRMR = 0.04) (Hair et al., 2020). The survey utilised a seven-point Likert scale, where teachers provided responses ranging from 7 (indicating "always") to 1 (indicating "never"). The study demonstrated exceptional construct reliability for each item.

**Teachers' Conscientiousness and Emotional Stability.** The instrument measuring the personal qualities of teachers was constructed following Lewis R. Goldberg's Big Five Structure (Goldberg, 1992). Significant attention is paid to the conscientiousness and emotional stability of teachers in this study ( $\chi^2/df = 2.93$ ; CFI = 0.95; TLI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.07; SRMR = 0.04; Cronbach's alpha = 0.91 for the conscientiousness and emotional stability subconstructs). Teachers use a seven-point Likert scale to answer the survey, ranging from one (not accurately representing me) to seven (very accurate). The items of conscientiousness and emotional stability have a significant degree of reliability (Hair et al., 2020).

### *Data Analysis*

This investigation implemented SPSS version 24 to analyse descriptive statistics. Furthermore, in this investigation, the model was validated using AMOS SEM version 24. The focus of this investigation is to investigate the talent development, conscientiousness and emotional stability of MICSS teachers in Malaysia.

**Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA).** EFA revealed the following findings: The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic for talent





development was 0.855, surpassing the acceptable threshold of 0.60. In terms of emotional stability and conscientiousness, the EFA value for teachers was 0.837. The data sets were suitable for factor analysis when Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated a value of less than 0.05. Talent development characteristics were identified as the source of approximately 75.954% of the variance in the eigenvalues. Conscientiousness and emotional stability account for 77.665% of the variance in eigenvalues. Items with loading ratings below 0.6 are excluded from the analysis. Harman's One-Factor Test traditionally indicates that if an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) including all research variables yields eigenvalues demonstrating that the first factor explains over 50% of the variance among the variables, this signifies the troubling degree of common method variance (CMV) (Fuller et al., 2016). This research indicates that the Eigenvalues for the first factor account for 47.647%. Thus, the self-report questionnaire in this research is exempt from Common Method Bias (CMB) and is reliable for use.

**Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).** To assess the model fit of the combination SEM, the  $\chi^2/df$ , RMSEA, CFI, TLI, and SRMR indices were implemented. The studies mentioned (Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2023) say that the best model has cut-off values of  $\chi^2/df < 5.0$ ,  $RMSEA < 0.08$ ,  $CFI > 0.90$ ,  $TLI > 0.90$ , and  $SRMR < 0.08$ . The investigation examined emotional stability, teacher conscientiousness, and talent development. Most of the time, reliability cutoffs are set by three things: internal reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.70$ ), construct validity ( $CR > 0.60$ ), and average variance extracted ( $AVE > 0.50$ ) (Hussain & Husain, 2022). The values in Table 1 show that the minimum level of 0.70 for internal reliability is not met by Cronbach's  $\alpha$  values for talent development, teachers' emotional stability, and teachers' conscientiousness, from 0.878 to 0.899. The acceptable construct reliability (CR) values range from 0.884 to 0.900. The average variance extracted (AVE) was adjusted to fall within the range of 0.672 to 0.718. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , CR, and AVE scores show that the variables used in this research to look at social phenomena are valid (Hair et al., 2019). Because each measurement item undergoes independent examination, the overall Cronbach  $\alpha$  value is lower than the CR value (Hair et al., 2020).

**Table 1.** *Reliability Interpretation of Measurement Instruments for Talent Development, Teachers' Conscientiousness, and Emotional Stability among MICSS Teachers*

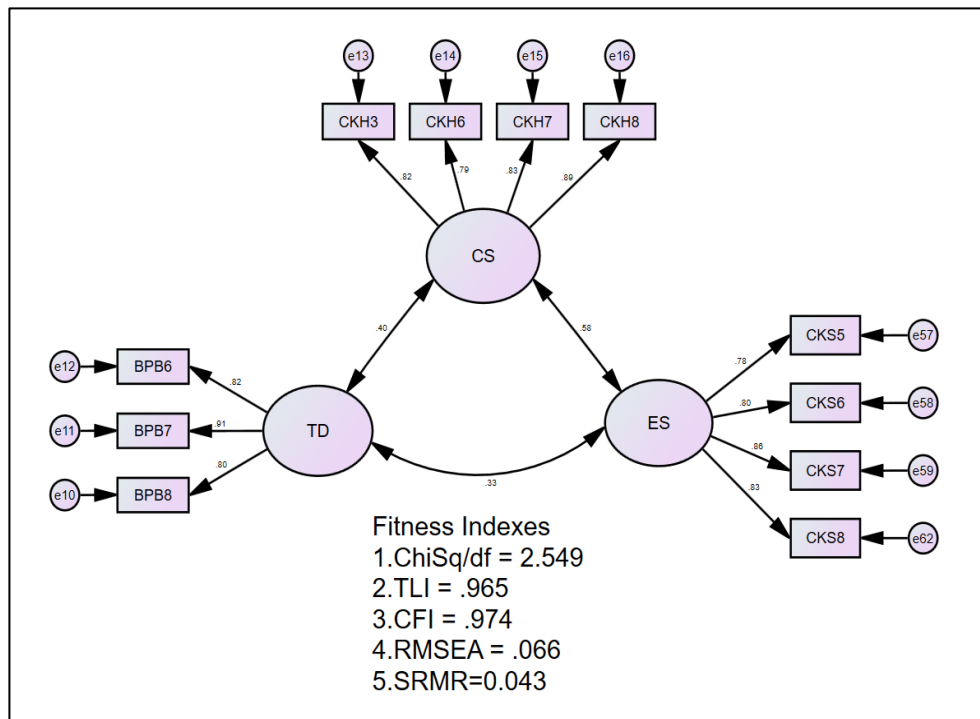
Sub-construct	Cronbach Alpha	CR	AVE	M	SD
Talent development	0.878	0.884	0.718	5.23	1.08
Conscientiousness	0.899	0.900	0.692	5.65	0.81
Emotional Stability	0.889	0.891	0.672	4.92	1.07

#### **Structural Equation Model**

All of the requirements for a good index are satisfied by the structural model for talent development, teachers' conscientiousness, and emotional stability in Figure 2. The specific values are as follows, as shown in Figure 2:  $\chi^2/df = 2.549$ ,  $CFI = 0.974$ ,  $TLI = 0.965$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.066$ , and  $SRMR = 0.043$ . The analysis employed threshold values of  $\chi^2/df < 5.0$ ,  $RMSEA < 0.08$ ,  $CFI > 0.90$ ,  $TLI > 0.90$ , and  $SRMR < 0.08$  (Hair et al., 2019). A factor loading value exceeding 0.6 confirms the model's suitability for this research (Hussain & Husain, 2022).



**Figure 2.** *Emotional Stability of Teachers is Associated with Conscientiousness as Mediators Towards Teachers' Professional Talent Development in Malaysia*



*Note(s).* TD (Talent Development); CS (Conscientiousness); ES (Emotional Stability)  
*Source(s).* AMOS graphics

## RESULTS

The data analysis reveals the results of the correlation and mediation between emotional stability, teachers' conscientiousness, and talent development among MICSS teachers in Malaysia. The analysis's results are detailed in the following section.

RQ1: To what extent is talent development correlated with various facets of teachers' conscientiousness and emotional stability among teachers in MICSS?

The study investigates the correlation between emotional stability, conscientiousness, and talent development among MICSS teachers, as in Figures 3, 4, 5, and Table 3. The weakest correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.33$ ) was identified by the study as the correlation between the emotional stability of teachers and the development of talent. Furthermore, after analysis, it was found that conscientiousness and emotional stability showed a moderate correlation ( $r = 0.58$ ), as indicated by Piaw (2014) in Table 2. Also, there is a weak correlation ( $r = 0.40$ ) between MICSS teachers' conscientiousness and talent development. To improve the emotional stability and conscientiousness behaviours of MICSS teachers in Malaysia, the results clearly indicate the necessity for additional research and efforts to improve the talent development programme.





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**Table 2.** *Interpretation Correlation Value*

Correlation, <i>r</i>	Interpretation
0.91 to 1.00 / -0.91 to -1.00	Very Strong
0.71 to 0.90 / -0.71 to -0.90	Strong
0.51 to 0.70 / -0.51 to -0.70	Moderate
0.31 to 0.50 / -0.31 to -0.50	Weak
0.01 to 0.30 / -0.01 to -0.30	Very Weak
0.00	No Correlation

*Source: Piaw (2014)*

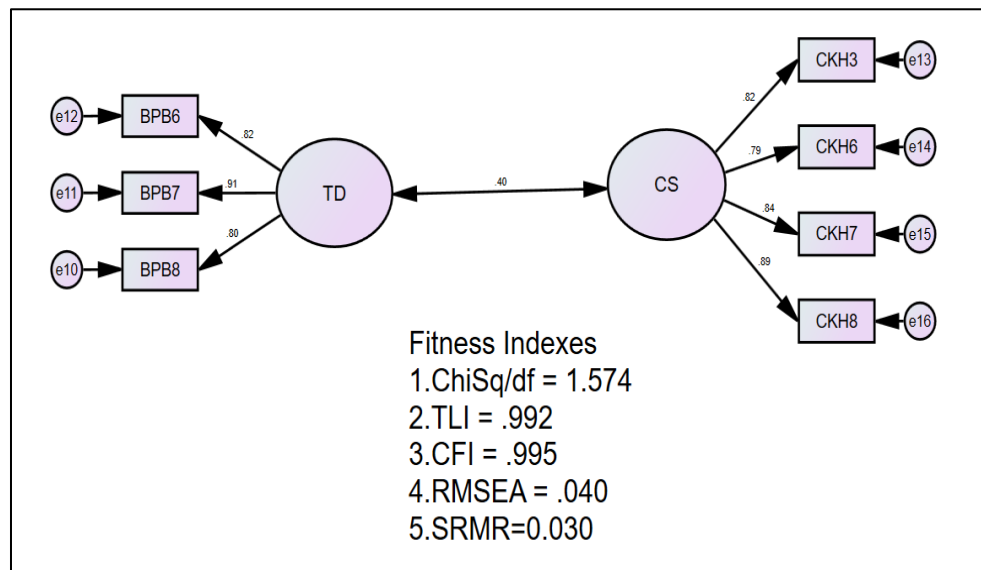
**Table 3.** *Interpretation of the Correlation for Emotional Stability of Teachers Is Associated with Conscientiousness as Mediators Towards Teachers' Professional Talent Development in Malaysia*

Variables	Estimate, <i>r</i>	Interpretation
TD <--> ES	.326	Weak
CS <--> ES	.578	Moderate
TD <--> CS	.397	Weak

*Note(s).* TD (Talent Development); CS (Conscientiousness); ES (Emotional Stability)

*Source(s).* Author's work

**Figure 3.** *Correlation Model Between for Talent Development with Teachers' Conscientiousness Among MICSS Teachers in Malaysia*

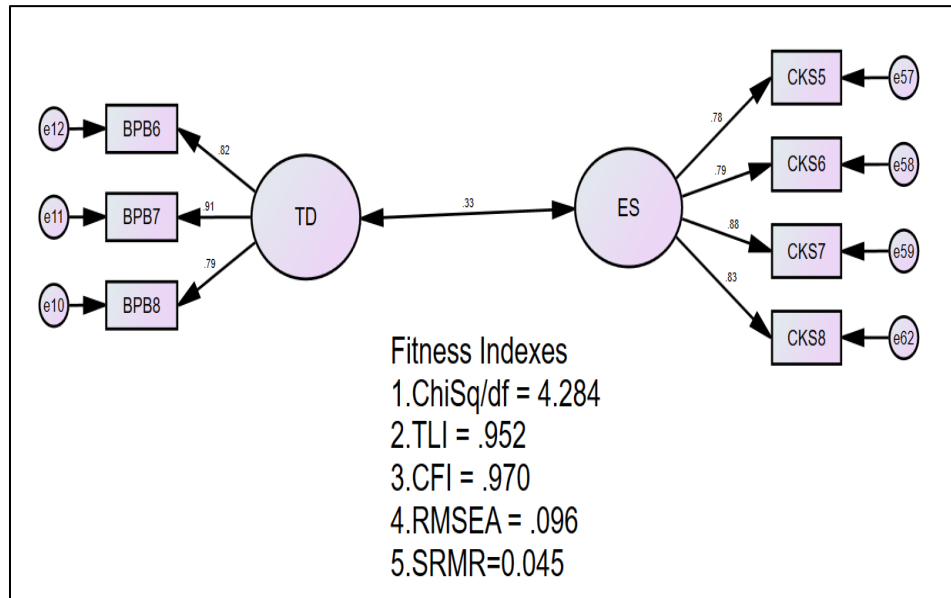


*Note(s):* TD (Talent Development); CS (Conscientiousness)

*Source(s):* AMOS graphics



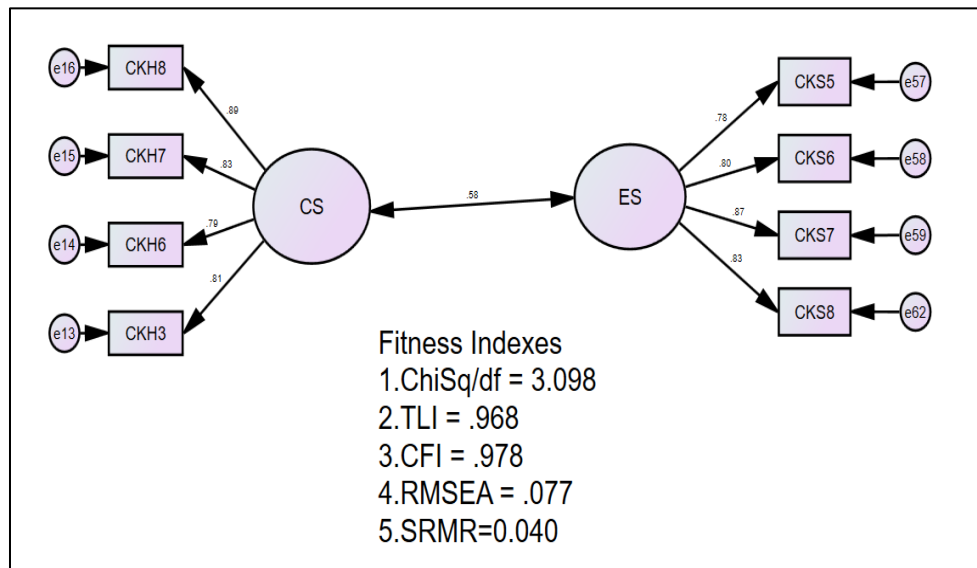
**Figure 4.** Correlation Model Between for Talent Development with Teachers' Emotional Stability Among MICSS Teachers in Malaysia



Note(s). TD (Talent Development); ES (Emotional Stability)

Source(s). AMOS graphics

**Figure 5.** Correlation Model Between for Conscientiousness with Teachers' Emotional Stability Among MICSS Teachers in Malaysia



Note(s). CS (Conscientiousness); ES (Emotional Stability)

Source(s). AMOS graphic



RQ2: Does conscientiousness among MICSS teachers in Malaysia serve as a mediator for talent development and emotional stability?

Talent development and emotional stability among MICSS teachers are mediated by the conscientiousness of teachers, as illustrated in Figure 6. Specifically, the coefficients are as follows:  $\chi^2 = 104.510$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 2.549$ ,  $p = 0.000$ , CFI = 0.974, TLI = 0.965, RMSEA = 0.066, SDMR = 0.043. RMSEA measures the disparity between the model and the data. RMSEA = 0.066 suggests that the model is a satisfactory approximation of the data structure, while CFI = 0.974 indicates that the model fits the data effectively, demonstrating that the hypothesised model is adequate and presents proof of its validity for the sample data in this research. The cut-off values for an ideal model were determined by this research:  $\chi^2/df < 5.0$ , RMSEA < 0.08, CFI > 0.90, TLI > 0.90, and SRMR < 0.08 (Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2023). Figure 6 illustrates the mediation effect, which is explained in Table 4 following the model's confirmation.

**Table 4. Result Emotional Stability of Teachers is Associated with Conscientiousness as Mediators Towards Teachers' Professional Talent Development in Malaysia**

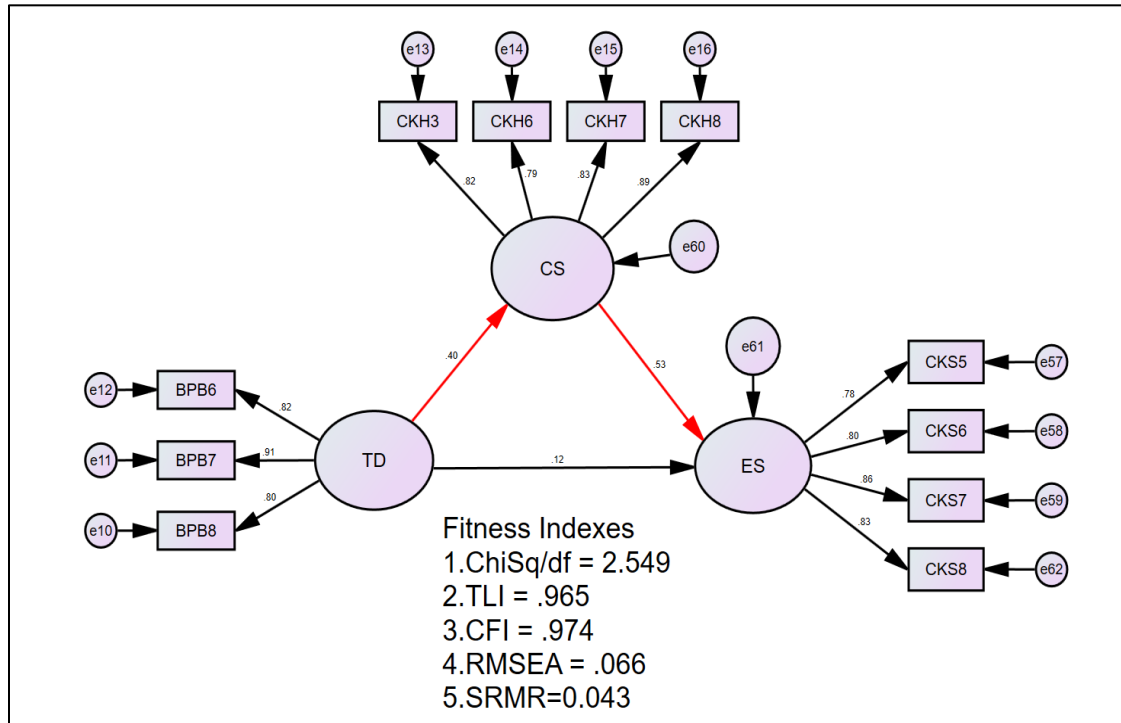
Variables	Regression Weights	Indirect Effects	p	Interpretation
TD ----> CS	$a = .331$	.000	***	Significant
CS ----> ES	$b = .690$	.000	***	Significant
TD ----> ES	$c = .130$	.211	.032	Not Significant
Conclusion	A full mediator with indirect effects 21%			
Note(s). TD (Talent Development); CS (Conscientiousness); ES (Emotional Stability)				
Source(s). Author's work				

Teachers' conscientiousness plays a full mediator role in the correlation between talent development and emotional stability among MICSS teachers in Malaysia (Hussain & Husain, 2022), as demonstrated in Table 4, with an estimated 21% indirect effect. In other words, the indirect effects of a teacher's conscientiousness are significant. Alternatively, in MICSS school settings, 79% of the other variables may impact teachers' emotional stability and talent development and remain unexplored.

This study employed SPSS version 29 to calculate the effect size by Cohen's  $f$  correlation analysis, as the research data are on a scale measurement. The effect size thresholds are classified into three levels: 0.10 is a little effect, 0.25 is a moderate effect, and 0.40 is a strong effect (Cohen et al., 2018). Talent development correlates with conscientiousness and emotional stability, with  $R^2 = 0.294$ . Furthermore, in Cohen's  $f$  correlation,  $f = 0.645$ , indicating that the effect size for teachers' conscientiousness as mediators in school organisations actively encourages Emotional Stability through Talent Development, is substantial. However, this study does not address additional personality traits among teachers, such as agreeableness or openness, which are worthy of investigation in the future.



**Figure 6.** Model Emotional Stability of Teachers Is Associated with Conscientiousness as Mediators Towards Teachers' Professional Talent Development in Malaysia



Note(s). TD (Talent Development); CS (Conscientiousness); ES (Emotional Stability)

Source(s). AMOS graphics

## DISCUSSION

This research determines the correlation between talent development, conscientiousness, and emotional stability among MICSS teachers in Malaysia. Additionally, the investigation demonstrated that teachers' emotional stability in MICSS was also associated with their conscientiousness as mediators for talent development. We employed AMOS SEM to investigate the correlation and mediation between variables. According to the findings, there is a weak to moderate correlation among MICSS teachers' conscientiousness, emotional stability, and talent development. This study revealed that teacher conscientiousness fully mediated the correlation between talent development and emotional stability, thereby supporting the theory of purposeful work behaviour (Barrick et al., 2013), as outlined in the conceptual framework section above.

The current investigation shares similarities with previous research that suggests the development of talent in the areas of emotional stability and conscientiousness is necessary for MICSS teachers in Malaysia (Bijender et al., 2023; Schelhorn et al., 2023; Zadok & Benoliel, 2023). Additionally, the results of the study on conscientiousness and emotional stability are consistent with recent research, which suggests that teachers are less likely to experience burnout when they possess emotional stability (Burić et al., 2024; Ma & Liu, 2024; Roloff et al., 2022) and are conscientious (Burić et al., 2024; Maamari & Salloum, 2023; Zawar Hussain et al., 2024). Nevertheless, the research demonstrated that the correlation between talent development in order to cultivate conscientiousness and emotional stability was weak to moderate among MICSS teachers in Malaysia. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the professional talent development program may have included senior teachers in order to motivate them to integrate the most recent teaching pedagogies and skills into their lessons (Bijender et al., 2023).



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From this point forward, particular personality qualities (Bijender et al., 2023), such as conscientiousness, were used, and research has shown that conscientiousness worked as a stimulant for talent development and increased teacher emotional stability. Because the MICSS school environment is dynamic, the distinction between personality traits could be attributed to activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003; Zadok & Benoliel, 2023), as certain personalities may influence MICSS leadership behaviour in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, it is somewhat surprising that 21% of teachers' emotional stability is influenced by their conscientiousness. In other words, approximately one-fifth of MICSS teachers' emotional stability is influenced by their conscientiousness. Several recent studies have also shown that the greater the MICSS teachers' conscientiousness and effort, the higher the levels of neuroticism among teachers in school institutions (Angelini, 2023; Hu et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2019). Highly conscientious teachers may have been reluctant to innovate or change due to their inclination to stick to conventional responsibilities (Zadok et al., 2024), which could have contributed to this situation and potentially increased the likelihood of teacher absenteeism (Bashkistrova et al., 2023). It may be difficult for them per the current educational environment's dynamic and ever-changing nature.

The research offers novel insights into the correlation between talent development and the personality traits of teachers, specifically conscientiousness and emotional stability, in Malaysia. The study's results have verified a low correlation between talent development, emotional stability, and conscientiousness among MICSS teachers. One possible explanation is that the majority of schools have limited financial resources to allocate to teacher talent development programs. This is because MICSS is a private educational institution that is not government-sponsored, and the costs associated with professional and talent development programs for teachers are significant (Langelaan et al., 2024; Mgaiwa & Milinga, 2024). The school administration line must prioritise and engage teachers in the development programme, regardless of their tenure (Langelaan et al., 2024).

This investigation, like other studies, possesses limitations and deficiencies. Limiting MICSS investigation constitutes a significant constraint, as MICSS is rooted in Chinese Confucian culture, which emphasises resilience in overcoming challenges and perseverance in pursuit of excellence (Sun et al., 2024). Therefore, teachers at MICSS must possess emotional intelligence to regulate their emotions and demonstrate conscientiousness to attain school objectives. The study only employs AMOS structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis and quantitative survey research, which may be considered a limitation in this investigation. Additional research could provide useful results regarding the emotional stability, conscientiousness, and talent development of teachers employed in both domestic and international secondary institutions in Malaysia. Despite these limitations, this study adds to the growing body of knowledge about non-Western cultures, particularly Southeast Asia, in comparison to the Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Democratic (WEIRD) educational system (Zawar Hussain et al., 2024). This is, to the best of our knowledge, the first attempt to investigate the correlation between Malaysian Independence Chinese Secondary School (MICSS) teachers' emotional stability, conscientiousness, and talent development throughout Malaysia.

### IMPLICATIONS

#### *Theoretical Implication*

This research contributes to the theory of purposeful workplace behaviour (Barrick et al., 2013). This research addresses the Big Five Factor Personality theory (Goldberg, 1992). Moreover, the Talent Management model (Davies & Davies, 2011), which emphasises a talent development strategy, also contributes to this research. The proposed approaches and best practices are moderately associated and yet possess opportunities for enhancement in conducting investigations using qualitative or mixed methods to acquire diverse perspectives for their theories and models.

#### *Policy and Practical Implication*

In addition, academic institutions and universities, as well as school management that cultivates prospective



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educators, should integrate the talent development approach and personal qualities of teachers into the teacher training modules to ensure that these individuals are not only adequately prepared but also confident in their ability to fulfil all duties professionally (Langelaan et al., 2024). This can be further elaborated upon by the management and policymakers, who can concentrate on interventions that are pertinent to specific personality traits that have a true impact on the teacher rather than simply being equal (Yan et al., 2024).

The principal or administrator of MICSS may implement special talent development programs that fulfil teacher-specific needs because they correlate with emotional stability and conscientiousness among teachers. Thereby addressing the combined results model that currently justifies this research as reflecting moderate levels of talent development and teacher personality traits among MICSS educators. The personal attributes exhibited by a teacher are crucial in talent development, as they profoundly impact the teacher's efficacy. Furthermore, to ensure student learning results, it is imperative for school administrators to foster an inclusive and supportive work culture that prioritises teacher well-being (Thien & Lee, 2023) to retain talented and experienced educators and mitigate turnover.

## CONCLUSION

Talent development and teacher personality traits, specifically emotional stability and conscientiousness, were examined in Malaysian Independent Chinese Secondary Schools (MICSS). The study identified a weak to moderate correlation between talent development, emotional stability, and conscientiousness among MICSS teachers. Furthermore, this investigation determined that teachers' conscientiousness served as a full mediator in the process by which talent development is associated with their emotional stability. The integrated model produces a model that combines talent development and the teacher's personal quality. The chosen MICSS framework for Malaysia integrates and evaluates the two models. The Malaysian Ministry of Education (KPM) places particular emphasis on the personal traits of teachers and the talent development initiative, areas that policymakers may further encourage.

There is less scholarly research on teachers' personal qualities and talent development in MICSS settings (Da'as, 2023; Kaliannan et al., 2023; Liu, 2023). As such, this study is seen as a good start. Future research may focus on educational institutions, including boarding schools, daily government-funded secondary schools, international schools, and similar entities. This approach enhances the generalisation process and the identification of method weaknesses during comparison investigations. Moreover, future research should incorporate additional variables, such as stress management and institutional support, as mediators to yield a more precise and thorough understanding within an educational framework. To improve the thoroughness and effectiveness of future research, it is advisable to employ hybrid methodologies that combine qualitative and quantitative approaches. Ultimately, Mplus, NVivo, and additional programmes can be employed to analyse information obtained from pertinent field research projects. In any Malaysian educational context, a teacher is a valuable asset. Thus, it is imperative to consider and promote their mental health and well-being to establish a more inclusive and conducive learning environment in a school setting.

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