

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: WHY IT MATTERS FOR TEACHERS?

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### Abstract

*Emotional intelligence is deemed as one of the important aspects in educating a person to be balanced as a whole. The national philosophy of education (1987) outlined a number of key factors that need to be implemented in the education field in order to produce individuals that are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced. In the process of development in today's modern era, individuals encounter several situations, which later on result with creating various problems. The problems of adjustment occur because of the existence of conflict towards humans themselves, in order to fulfill the need of their surroundings. In education field, emotional intelligence has a large implication especially in ensuring the students' ability to compete in their life and self development. The teachers can play their role with helping the students which had been encountered with a high level of anxiety, by practicing an actively teaching and learning method in class, such as collaborative learning, cooperative learning and learning process based on problem.*

**Keywords:** Emotions, Emotional Intelligence (EI)



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### Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on the role of emotional intelligence in teaching –learning and in the life of a teacher. Education is the most effective instrument to meet the challenges. Education to be meaningful should not only aim at the physical and mental growth of the individual, but also take into account the needs and the aspirations of a developing society. Emotions of teachers are vital in this regard. The conventional teaching just impart knowledge or fill students' brains with facts, but today's educators having a broader role of shaping students skills to manage their emotions, resolve conflict nonviolently, and make responsible decisions. There is a growing body of evidence that the ability to work with emotion is an important part of the teachers' skill set. The factor of emotional intelligence is looked as one of the factors that influence students' learning process.

## **What are Emotions?**

Emotions refer to a feeling state. It is similar to waves of the sea totally unpredictable of its power and strength, some time it may take you along. In schools, we might also remember that the humanities have long been helping young people to become more thoughtful and articulate about emotions. Emotional decisions would lack fairness of judgment and affect others.

## **Emotional Intelligence**

The term emotional intelligence was popularized by Goleman (1995). Prior research has explored the concept of emotional intelligence, which is the ability both to know one's own emotions and to read others' emotions as well (Davies, Stankov, & Roberts, 1998; Zadel, 2008). In this 1995 version, Goleman cherry-picked bits of both Gardner's and Mayer and Salovey's definitions to put together his own version of Emotional Intelligence, comprising knowing one's emotions, managing one's emotions, motivating oneself, recognising emotions in others, and handling relationships skilfully. There are a number of different definitions of emotional intelligence in the psychological literature, but in general it is defined as an ability to identify, regulate, and manage emotions in the self and in others. Emotional intelligence is about the connection we feel between body, mind, and spirit-and how we make sense of sensations, thoughts, and feelings. Emotional intelligence is a blend of capabilities that incorporates the possibility to discern feelings in the self and in other individuals, utilize feelings to improve execution, comprehend feelings and enthusiastic information, and direct feelings in the self and in other individuals (Mayer and Salovey, 1997).

Emotional intelligence promotes tolerance and optimism in a person and he manages to create comfort for himself by using emotional intelligence. (Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S., Shiffman, S., Lerner, N., & Salovey, P). The strong appeal of concepts like 'Emotional Intelligence' reflects a shift in social attitudes generally, as well as in education. We must also remember that Emotional Intelligence is by no means the first attempt to help people learn how to live happier, more fulfilled lives.

Salovey, P., Mayer, J. (1990) coined the term 'emotional intelligence' they defined emotional intelligence as, "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action." They concluded that emotional intelligence comprised of four mental processes

1. *Perception* – Perceiving and identifying emotions.
2. *Assimilation*- Integrating emotions into thought patterns.
3. *Understanding* – Understanding one’s own and others emotion.
4. *Managing* – Managing emotions

Cooper and Sawaf (1997) defined Emotional Intelligence as the ability to sense understand and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of human energy, information connection and influence. Goleman, D. (1998) defined it as the capacity to recognize our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. Bar - on et.al, (2006) defined EI as the sum of social and emotional competencies of individuals communicating with himself and others in order to cope with environmental pressure and demands. He also maintained that emotional intelligence is a series of collection of unknown capabilities, competencies, and skills which can have a strong effect on individual’s capabilities in order to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to reason about emotions to enhance thinking, to process emotional information, which includes perception, assimilation, understanding, and management of emotions, to meet the requirements of day-to-day living and learning (Cherniss, 2000). Several studies have found that emotional intelligence can have a significant impact on various elements of everyday living. Palmer, Donaldson, and Stough (2002) found that higher emotional intelligence was a predictor of life satisfaction.

#### **A Research-Based Education Model of Emotional Intelligence**

The educational model of emotional intelligence at Texas A&M University-Kingsville defines emotional intelligence as a confluence of developed abilities to (1) know and value self, (2) build and maintain a variety of strong, productive, and healthy relationships, (3) get along and work well with others in achieving positive results, and (4) effectively deal with the pressures and demands of daily life and work (Nelson and Low,1998).

Emotional intelligence can be organized, integrated, and taught in a sequential, step-by-step, learner-centered process. Through long-term study, research, and experience with personal skills and emotional intelligence, the *Emotional Learning System* (a systematic emotional skills learning process) was developed. This learning process or system consists of five essential, interrelated, sequential steps (Nelson and Low, 1999, 2003).

## **Why Emotional Intelligence is relevant for Teachers?**

Teachers are the backbone of the educational institutions, without teachers, these institutes are considered the body without soul. Good teachers need a strong emotional intelligence. Successful teaching requires not just subject knowledge and appropriate teaching methods, but also affective skills. Emotions are critical ingredients for optimal information processing, social communication, written communication, motivation, attention, concentration, memory, critical thinking skills, creativity, behaviour, physical health, and even our very survival (Goleman 1995; Jensen 1998; Kusche and Greenberg 1998; Sylwester 1995). These are aspects which cannot be done away with, in any kind of teaching learning process. What seems to have warranted research on EI is that teachers' role is not, any longer, restricted to the one-way transmission of knowledge, but encompasses teaching learners how to learn, augmenting their confidence, boosting their self-esteem, motivating them and organizing an appropriate learning context (Williams & Burden, 2000).

The teachers having good emotional intelligence, can teach the students in effective manner, But it is needed to measure this phenomena, at what level the emotional intelligence can plays its role in learning process. It is also necessary that the teachers have all the knowledge, about their subject and teaching methodology, and specific skills like emotional intelligence. A central concern for teachers is the effect of emotions on learning. Emotional Intelligence is relevant for teachers as well as learners. The present generation faces new problems in their life. Teachers need to be equipped with skills to help them tackle these new and more complex problems. The present generation believes in scientific theories and experiments, so there is a tendency to reject religion, religious practices, cultural traditions and values.

Teachers can ease interpersonal conflicts and contribute to the students' emotional and social development by helping them to regulate their emotions. Sutton & Wheatly (2013) have stated that emotional competence of teachers is necessary, both in general for their own well-being and for effectiveness and quality in carrying out teaching-learning processes in the classroom and in particular for the socio-emotional development of students. These can be improved with effective intelligence of the teachers. Emotional intelligence tells the teacher the way for easy solution. (Hargreaves, A. (1998).

The emotional skills of teachers have been found to influence how students behave, their engagement and attachment to school, and their academic performance (Baker, 1999; Battistich, Schaps, Watson, Solomon, & Lewis, 2000; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor,

& Schellinger, 2011; Hawkins, 1999; Wentzel, 2002; Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, & Walberg, 2007). The bulk of research on emotional intelligence has focused on leadership, where it finds a commercial market (for example, Cherniss and Goleman, 2001). There has long been a recognition that teachers experience a wide range of positive and negative emotions while teaching and interacting with pupils (Hargreaves, 1998). But emphasis on emotional problems, such as dealing with teacher anger or anxiety, has helped retain a traditional caution towards the subject (Sutton & Wheatley 2003).

Teachers cannot be the effective source of knowledge unless they are possessed with the essential skills, knowledge and talents. In the recent years, the concept of the emotional intelligence among teachers has been taken attention in the educational institutions due to its great importance. This skill is really required to make the teachers performance very effective. This skill can make the teachers not only able to deal with their students but with their colleagues as well. An Emotionally Intelligent teacher will be a better guide. Teachers who intentionally develop emotional skills and model emotionally intelligent behavior on a daily basis experience more success and satisfaction in their professional career and life. Teachers who model emotional intelligence are characterized by: intentional reflective (not reactive) behavior, more flexible (not resistant to change), assertive communication (not aggressive or passive), more optimistic and hopeful (not pessimistic and negative), and relies on skills and positive habits (not reactive habits).

The main aim of education is the all round holistic development of the students. In the pursuit of this goal, teachers play a significant role. Emotionally healthy behavior is reflected in characteristic ways of (1) thinking, (2) identifying, managing, and expressing feelings, and (3) choosing effective behaviors. Becoming an emotionally intelligent teacher is a journey and process, not an arrival state or end result. Emotionally Intelligent teachers help students with improved motivation, enhanced innovation, increased performance, effective use of time and resources, improved leadership qualities and improved team work. Emotional intelligence seems to be the key factor in understanding the students, regarding what motivates them, what they desire and how teachers can work better with them. Teachers' emotional intelligence has an influence on the behavior of the students through their taking into account of the needs of their students.

Emotional rather than cognitive learning techniques must be utilized to teach emotional intelligence. This less traditional training approach, based on self-directed and more individualized learning engagements, encompasses the following components:

1. Visioning around reaching one's ideal self.
2. Self-assessment and self-awareness of current strengths and weaknesses.
3. Ensuring that strengths and limitations improve so that they do not detract from the achievement of goals.
4. Creating and committing to a learning agenda that builds on strengths and reduces weaknesses.
5. Active and frequent experimentation with new behaviors that support and develop emotional intelligence competencies.
6. Reliance on a coach to regulate progress (Goleman, 1995).

There are list of traits, traditionally which are considered as important for a teachers, they are ability to listen and create an atmosphere conducive to learning that interests the students; effective teaching methods; believes students can do well; able to connect with students; non-judgmental; optimistic/ positive/smiling; exudes a great sense of humor; promotes active and collaborative learning; is very engaging, adaptable; flexible; understands that every student is different and need to treat them all fairly.

### **Measuring EI of an Individual**

If Emotional Intelligence is to be taken seriously as a complement to more familiar 'measures' of intelligence such as IQ, it has to be measured. Measuring Emotional Intelligence is no easier than measuring any other human quality. One of the first, and still most widely-used is the Emotional Quotient Inventory, EQ-I, of Israeli psychologist Reuven Bar-On. Drawing on Howard Gardner's terminology, Bar-On calls these *intrapersonal intelligence* (which contains selfawareness, self-esteem and assertiveness); *interpersonal intelligence* (empathy, social responsibility and social awareness); *adaptability* (problem-solving, reality testing and flexibility); *stress management* (stress tolerance and impulse control); and *general mood* (happiness and optimism). People with very low scores on Emotional Intelligence tests are indeed more likely to be involved in substance abuse, more at risk of eating disorders, more likely to suffer from panic attacks, have a greater tendency to violence, and have more severe problems in relationships. Those with higher Emotional Intelligence, as judged by self-report questionnaires, perform considerably better than do those with lower Emotional Intelligence.

The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002a), was designed to measure the four-branch model of EI. The four EI abilities were first measured with a test called the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Test (MEIS; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999). This instrument was improved upon, leading to a briefer test that was produced professionally, the MSCEIT (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002a). The items developed for the MEIS served as the starting point for the MSCEIT. The MSCEIT assesses the four-branch model of EI (perceiving, using, understanding, and regulating emotions) with 141 items that are divided among 8 tasks (two for each branch).

### **Conclusion**

The recognition of the role of emotions in learning and teaching in higher education is long overdue. The most important goal for every institution of higher education is academic development. It is crucial for institutions of higher education to develop academic advising and student learning models that embodies both the academic (cognitive) and emotional (affective) development of students. Education and learning require the perspective of balance between academic achievement and becoming emotionally intelligent. The study of emotional intelligence needs to be widened to open up the minds of parents, teachers and the authority that are directly and indirectly involved in the process of development and learning of the students.

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