

How Can Emotional Intelligence Make Teacher's Life Better?

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Abstract

In this fast growing competitive era where technical advancement is in the main focus to improve one's performance at workplace but dealing with human related issue we should not forget the role of emotions in human life. Like every profession, teaching is also full of challenges and pressures at every step where a teacher plays multiple roles in his/her profession, a teacher without having the capability of handling emotions at workplace cannot easily solve workplace challenges only with the sound academic background and technical advancement. Various researches show that emotional intelligence affects work performance quite effectively so in the present article author made an attempt to discuss the importance of emotional intelligence in teaching profession through some issues like role of emotions in human life, multiple role of a teacher, challenges/pressures in teaching profession, concept of emotional intelligence, importance of emotional intelligence in teaching profession, possibility of training to develop emotional intelligence and also discussed about the traits and skills that can be developed through the training of emotional intelligence. In the present article author discussed various earlier mentioned issues through the relevant studies for support to draw attention of policy makers to make training of emotional intelligence compulsory for in-service and future teachers so that teachers can give their best to prepare students with the qualities that enable them to face the challenges of life successfully.

KEYWORDS: emotional intelligence, quality enhancement, personal traits, social skills

INTRODUCTION

Like every professional, teacher is also facing the advancement and challenges of rapidly changing world of globalization. The teacher occupies pivotal position in system of education. A teacher, being a member of the modern society, has to play diverse and dynamic roles to meet his various expectations in different situations. To the extent he/she perceives difficulty in an emotionally intelligent manner so that the students in turn can imbibe these positive characteristics and can turn out to be productive and dutiful citizens of the nation. A study was conducted for "*Investigating the relationships between emotional intelligence and pre-service teachers' views of teacher effectiveness*" by **Ogrenir (2008)** at the Pennsylvania State University, USA. This study was aimed to examine the relationship between EI and teacher effectiveness beliefs of Elementary and Kindergarten Education pre-service teachers. The researcher also studied pre-service teachers' beliefs about teacher effectiveness with regards to their number of years in college of education, gender, and GPA. Besides these, the study examined the pre-service teachers' EI with regards to their years in college of education and GPA. The sample included 99 students at The Pennsylvania State University, College of Education, with Elementary and Kindergarten Education Major. Data were collected using two tools: Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory Short Form and Teacher Effectiveness Beliefs Survey. Data analyses involved descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Pearson correlation.

This study found that pre-service teachers are concerned mostly with teacher related factors, and then student-related factors and the least in other personnel related factors. Some significant differences existed in pre service teachers' teacher effectiveness beliefs associated with emotional intelligence skills. Moreover, this study found that teacher effectiveness is influenced by years in College of Education and gender. The findings indicated that Pre-service teachers possess EI skills in average range, but their EI with respect to stress management, and adaptability account for some differences in GPA. It was recommended that future research should be conducted to improve the quality of teacher education.

Some important issues discussed in the present article to draw attention of teacher educators toward training need of Emotional Intelligence to enhance quality in teacher education.

Some important issues:

- *Role of emotion in human life*
- *Multifarious roles of a teacher*
- *Emotional pressures/challenges in teaching profession*
- *What is emotional intelligence?*
- *Does emotional intelligence matter?*
- *Does EI affect performance?*
- *Can emotional intelligence be developed in the teachers through training?*
- *What can a teacher learn through the training for the development of emotional intelligence?*
- *Can emotionally intelligent teacher improve their personal and professional life as well as students' all round development?*

ROLE OF EMOTION IN HUMAN LIFE

There are many different ways of defining an emotion as a phenomenon of human experiences and in explaining its functioning in human life. **Philipp Lersch's (1952)** concept of emotion as a spontaneous, immediate and intimate ("endothermic") evaluation of situations as providing or preventing need fulfillment is the most convincing and useful one. In his "functional circuit of experience" (Funktionskreis des Erlebens), emotions are closely linked to cognitions and action impulses. Moreover, emotional responses to objects and events are embedded in more enduring states of mood reflecting a person's comprehensive feeling as a living organism and self-conscious individual striving for a meaningful human life.

MULTIFARIOUS ROLES OF A TEACHER

Ramama (2003) in his Ph.D thesis, presented multifarious roles of a teacher.

Confident: A teacher is expected to will and share the confidence of the students.

Democrat: He is expected to the promoter of democratic values.

Detective: He detects the rule broken students.

Facilitator of learning: A teacher is expected to promote effective learning in the student.

Acts as a friend and philosopher.

Group of Leader: He is expected to act as a leader in developing cohesion and suitable climate in the class as a social group.

Helpers: The teacher is expected to be helper to students providing them academic and personal guidance.

Inspirer and exemplar: He is expected to behave in manner that students get inspiration from him.

Judge: He is expected to evaluate the achievements of the students in a fair and judicious manner.

Limiter or reducer of anxiety: Teacher is expected to create such situations in the class that the students feel the least anxiety and the feel emotionally stable.

Missionary: He is expected to serve without any substantial reward.

Moralist: He is expected to inculcate the attitudes and moral values cherished by the society.

Parent substitute: A teacher is expected to act as a parent of the students and treat them with love and affection.

Rationalist: He is expected to promote actions based on reason.

Referee: He is expected to settle disputes among students in a fair manner.

Reformer: He is an agent of social change.

Secularist: He must promote secular values.

Scientist: Like a scientist he should promote a spirit of enquiry.

EMOTIONAL PRESSURES/CHALLENGES IN TEACHING PROFESSION

The key role of teacher is as facilitator and supportive to learning. Teacher is the one who facilitates learners to realize their potentials, articulate their personal and context specific experiences in ways that are acceptable in the wider context of nation. Teacher has to recognize that in learner centered learning situation, curriculum 'evolves' and is not 'pre designed'; teacher is merely 'prepared' for providing possible supports in the process of learning by learners. Every subsequent learning situation cumulatively provides better insight to teacher in discerning learner needs and, creates pool and identifies varied learning supports. In this sense, teacher is a participant in the learner's efforts at evolving learning experiences and helping to develop program for learning.

There is no one 'method' that is effective in causing all learners to learn in similar ways. Each teacher has to find one's own 'style' of learning through perceptive practice but recognize the fact that all learners learn in their own ways. 'Teaching method' therefore, has two aspects for assessing its effectiveness or appropriateness. One pertains to teacher's style with which he/she uses method or methods. It relates to one's own rationale. The second is the learner's (school students) way of learning. The participation in unique ways speaks of the role of teacher and learner in the pursuit of knowing or learning. While both Teacher and learner participate in learning situation, they are beneficiaries. Acquisition of learning on the part of the student has been a major concern in educational situations. In this sense, technically, they both are learners.

Teachers felt frustrated due to overcrowded class rooms, uncultured students falling academic standards, additional duties assigned to them by the municipal corporation, the functioning of the head masters and the monotonous routine of their school duties(Narang, 1992).Teachers are always under tensions and emotional pressures(Kapani, 2000) such as:

- *accountability,*
- *stress,*
- *political pressures,*
- *superior loads,*
- *classroom management problems,*
- *the pressure to implement new theoretical models in classrooms which they do not fully comprehend,*
- *parental pressures,*
- *weeping and screaming students,*
- *and other over whelming tensions both real and imagined.*

Teacher educators must not only understand the paradigm shift but also “Own” it. This requires well thought out orientation programmes where they get opportunity to discuss and understand their role alterations as well as become equipped to deal with learner dominant situations.

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

Some scholars define quality in higher education as the process of quality enhancement. Hau (1996) argues that quality teaching in particular, springs from a never-ending process of reduction and elimination of defects.

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Emotional intelligence refers to the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for motivating emotions well in us and in our relationships.

Emotional intelligence involves the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one’s thinking and actions. 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*).

Goleman (1995) defined emotional intelligence as a learned skill that a better predictor of life success than intellectual attainment or technical ability. Emotional intelligence has five elements: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Since people have different environment - family, community or place of work, their emotional intelligence needs will be different. EI affects our ability of decision-making. It is reflected in our relationship with each other. One of the important characteristic of EI is that it can be measured, directly or indirectly, but the extents might depend on the context.

The key domains of Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995):

Knowing One’s Emotions or Self-Awareness

The ability to “recognize a feeling as it happens and put it off if inconvenient” is the keystone to emotional intelligence. One has to be aware of his own and others’ feelings and emotions in order to have accurate data and information about the world around him.

An individual's ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment is crucial for his/her psychological insight and self-understanding. Being aware of other's emotions is essential for building a successful workplace environment and quality interpersonal relationships. One can respond appropriately to a situation only if he can read his emotions in that situation. The skill comes into play in most jobs particularly those that involve dealing with people. People who are unable to know their feelings are at a tremendous disadvantage. In a sense, they are emotional illiterates. Teachers with greater certainty about their feelings are better pilots of their lives/teaching.

Managing or Controlling Emotions

This domain of EI comprises of the ability to regulate moods and emotions in oneself and in other people. Emotionally intelligent people must be able to monitor, discriminate, and label their feelings accurately, believe that they can improve or otherwise modify these feelings, employ strategies that will alter their feelings, and assess the effectiveness of these strategies. i.e., emotionally intelligent people will be able to handle uncomfortable emotions once they have accepted that they are feeling them. At times, one can stay open to his feelings, learn from them, and use them to take appropriate action. Other times, however, it may be better to disengage from an emotion and return to it later. This work is mainly about developing an inner mothering mode and learning to soothe ourselves when things seem difficult. Teachers who are poor in this ability are constantly battling with feelings of distress, while those who excel in it can bounce back far more quickly from life's setbacks and upsets. The attitude one should have is 'whatever it takes, to make me feel' I care about myself and my value myself.

Motivating Oneself

Positive motivation – the marshalling of feelings of enthusiasm, zeal and confidence – is paramount for achievement. To motivate oneself for any achievement requires clear goals and an optimistic 'can-do' attitude. Emotions motivate us but also can disempower us if they are too strong and if we allow them to overwhelm us. It requires delaying gratification or stifling impulsiveness. People who have this skill tend to be more highly productive and effective in whatever task they undertake.

Recognizing Emotions of Others or Empathy

The capacity to know how another person feels is important in any job and in the classroom transaction too. As one begins to recognize emotions in oneself and realizes her/his own emotional weather systems, s/he will be able to sense them in others more accurately. This means one can feel with someone rather than feel about themselves. People, who are empathetic, are more attuned to the subtle social signals that others need or want. This would take them a long way especially in teaching. Understanding emotions includes knowledge of the emotional lexicon, including simple and complex emotion terms, and the ways in which emotions combine (anger and disgust form contempt), progress (annoyance to anger to rage), and transition to one another, the capacity to analyze emotions and their causes and the ability to predict how people will feel and react in different situations. This skill answers the reason for feeling anxious, the consequences of an action, etc. Empathy skills are most important in managing relationships. When a person is empathetic, s/he has the ability to have strong bonds with other people, can communicate more clearly, can understand others' view point, have compassion and can forgive others for their transgression. Goleman has explained

empathy as ‘social radar’. He explains empathy as being able to pick up another’s feeling without having a word uttered by them.

Handling Relationships or Social Skills

The art of relationship is, in large part, skill in managing emotions in others. Understanding of other people’s emotions, gives us the ability to motivate them, be effective leaders and to work in successful teams. People who excel in these skills do well at anything that relies in interacting smoothly with others. The old rigidities, born out of fear or anxiety, can dissolve into acceptance of others and ourselves. EI gives the ability to have ‘grace under fire’ and to act with integrity and courage.

It is important to understand that emotional intelligence is not the opposite of general intelligence (IQ); it is not the triumph of heart over head. Rather it is the unique intersection of both. Emotional intelligence (EI) is an array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one’s ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures. As such, ‘effective communication’ between children and adults might lay emphasis to the notion of emotional intelligence. Haim Ginott (in Goleman-1995) opined that ‘fish swim, birds fly, and people feel’. The emphasis on ‘feeling’ aids the ability to listen, to cooperate with others and develop personal values.

DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MATTER?

Human capital can be further characterized as employees ‘competencies, their attitude towards work and intellectual flexibility. Competencies reflect the understanding and use of knowledge, both theoretical and academic, corresponding to the level of individual’s education as well as learned skills – practical knowledge, gained by training or learned and obtained by experience; this also includes talents of an individual. Attitude towards work mainly depends on personal traits of each individual and represents the creation of added value through work motivation and testing of employees’ responses to new circumstances, including behavioral reactions and tendency to stay positive in terms of optimism and enthusiasm. Intellectual flexibility reflects in ability to transfer knowledge from one situation to another, the ability to integrate skills, to provide constant development of knowledge, the ability to be innovative and to transform ideas into products and services – all this can be understood as part of human capital(Sitar, 2006).

DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AFFECT TEACHERS’ PERFORMANCE?

Pathan (2004) conducted a study on Emotional intelligence of secondary teachers at D.Ed. College, Navapur, Maharashtra. This study examined the level of emotional intelligence (EI) of secondary school teachers in relation to gender and age. The tool used for the study was a structured questionnaire called ‘Emotional Intelligence Test’, developed by Chadha and Singh (2001). The results indicated that nearly all the teachers under study were under ‘low’ category of emotional intelligence. There was no significant difference between the emotional intelligence of males and females, and the age was independent of EI.

Drew (2007) conducted a study on “The relationship between emotional intelligence and student teacher performance” was conducted at The University of Nebraska – Lincoln, USA by. The objective of the study was to determine whether Student Teacher Performance (STP), (as measured by a behaviour-based performance evaluation process), was associated with Emotional Intelligence (EI), (as measured by a personality assessment instrument). The sample consisted of 40 student-teachers. The study revealed that EI, as assessed by the Bar On EQ-i, and College Supervisors' assessments of STP were related. However, data collected from the Cooperating Teacher and Student-Teacher perspectives did not reveal any statistically significant relationship for any EQ/STP variable pair studied. While total Emotional Quotient (EQ) scores and scores for the Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, and General Mood Scales had a statistically significant association with two or more individual aspects of STP, the Stress Management and Adaptability Scale scores did not have any statistically significant relationships with total or any aspect of STP. The four participants in the study who had the most anomalous EQ/STP combinations were contacted to participate in interviews. Two individuals agreed, and these interviews revealed the complexity surrounding assessment of STP, and four themes which fall within the following analogous EQ-i Subscales: Assertiveness, Interpersonal Relationships, Social Responsibility, and Flexibility.

Teachers high in emotional intelligence are more likely to regulate their emotions. One useful strategy to enable emotional control is psychological skills (**Becker, 2003**), which may help to raise emotional intelligence and enhance mental health. Therefore, it is needed to pay more attention on the development of emotional intelligence, mental and psychological skills of teachers.

CAN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE BE DEVELOPED IN THE TEACHERS THROUGH TRAINING?

Rao (2001) developed and implemented an in-service training programme for teachers of Navodaya Vidhyalayas in enhancing their ability in meeting students' emotional needs. The major objectives of the study were to identify the emotional need of students; to develop an in-service programme for teachers in meeting student's emotional needs and to implement and study the effectiveness of the developed programme for Navodaya Vidhyalayas. The training consisted of Counselling Skills, Rational Emotive Therapy and Transactional Analysis. These training inputs helped teachers to look at their own behaviour and the impact that they were making on students. This helped them to be more sensitive and caring towards their students.

Romould (2006) conducted a doctoral study on “Development of an Enneagram Educational Programme for Enhancing Emotional Intelligence of Student-Teachers” at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The study was intended to develop an Enneagram Educational Programme and to assess the effect of this intervention programme on the emotional competence of B. Ed student-teachers. A sample of 40 student-teachers, from the B. Ed colleges of Jharkhand State in India, was selected at random and twenty student-teachers each were allotted for the experimental group and control group. The data were collected with the help of Emotional Intelligence Scale (Shutte,1998), EQ map questionnaire and other techniques, and analyzed quantitatively and a significant difference was found between the Mean scores for the components of EI

of the experimental and control group, in the pre- and post- intervention administration of the scale.

Bharwaney (2008) has identified some of the characteristics of Emotional Intelligence. The first and foremost one is that EI can be learned and developed. EI can be improved at any age in life, if proper training is given. To be more specific, EI increases with life experience. *Training programs aimed at improving emotional intelligence can occur in several different areas of training and development within an organization, including management training, communication and empathy training, conflict resolution and stress management training, as well as self-management training and training provided to unemployed workers (Cherniss, 2000).*

WHAT CAN A TEACHER LEARN THROUGH THE TRAINING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Emotional Intelligence training program can help the teachers for the development of personal traits and social skill. EI prepare the teachers to develop the ability to recognize and adjust emotions that trigger their responses with certain situations or people. Teachers can learn how to gain control over their responses and actively participate in forming social skills through:-

DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONAL TRAITS

Self-awareness

- *Emotional self-awareness*: the ability to read and understand emotions as well as recognize their impact on work performance, relationships.
- *Accurate self-assessment*: a realistic evaluation of your strengths and limitations.
- *Self-confidence*: a strong and positive sense of self-worth.

Self-management

- *Self-control*: the ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses under control.
- *Trustworthiness*: a consistent display of honesty and integrity.
- *Conscientiousness*: the ability to manage oneself and one's responsibility.
- *Adaptability*: skill at adjusting to changing situations and overcoming obstacles.
- *Achievement orientation*: the drive to meet an internal standard of excellence.
- *Initiative*: a readiness to seize opportunities.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS

Social awareness

- *Empathy*: skill at sensing other people's emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking an active interest in their concerns.
- *Organizational awareness*: the ability to read the currents of organisational life, build decision networks, and navigate politics.
- *Service orientation*: the ability to recognize and meet customers' needs.

Social skill

- *Visionary leadership*: the ability to take charge and inspire with a compelling vision.
- *Influence*: the ability to wield a range of persuasive tactics.
- *Developing others*: the propensity to bolster the abilities of others through feedback and guidance.

- **Communication:** skill at listening and at sending clear, convincing and well-tuned messages.
- **Change catalyst:** proficiency in initiating new ideas and leading people in a new direction.
- **Conflict management:** the ability to deescalate disagreements and orchestrate resolutions.
- **Building bonds:** proficiency at cultivating and maintaining a web of relationships.
- **Teamwork and collaboration:** competence at promoting cooperation and building teams.

CAN EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT TEACHER IMPROVE THEIR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE AS WELL AS STUDENTS' ALL ROUND DEVELOPMENT?

Teachers do influence the personality of a student. The ongoing pattern of education is linear oriented or 'left-brain' oriented. We seriously lack a holistic and integrated approach. Emotional development changes the mindset of a teacher to deal with a situation in a positively manner. Only when the teachers are emotionally intelligent, they can manage the emotional development of their students. Teachers who recognize that emotional health and growth are essential to learning will deal carefully with children's outburst or unacceptable behavior. They will be aware that their modeling will influence the students' reaction to others. If the teachers are emotionally intelligent, they can manage their own and students' emotional traits in order to provide balanced environment in the classroom. Sense of self, empathy, kindness, intuition, motivation, awareness, social skills, forgiveness, reconciliation, dedication are some of the major components of emotion. All these aspects are very much needed for the enhancing quality in education.

Conclusion

Development of emotional intelligence is essential for all human beings and especially for would be and in service teachers who would like to be successful in their profession. Development of emotional intelligence will enable teachers to improve skills to balance emotions to avoid emotional laden at work place and home that affect their contribution to create a healthy teaching learning environment in school/college. Incorporating EI training programs for the in-service and pre service teachers can result in a number of advantages within the academic setting as well as may be a prominent step to improve teachers' performance, students' academic success. Emotional Intelligence training will contribute to establish strong interpersonal relationship of teachers' with students and all the stakeholders of school/college community that will play a prominent role in nation building through continuous development.

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