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Developing emotional intelligence in education: Need and opportunities

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a critical role in shaping individuals' personal, social, and professional lives, especially in the context of education. As the modern educational landscape continues to prioritize holistic development over rote learning, integrating emotional intelligence into teaching and learning processes has become a pressing need. This abstract explores the significance of developing emotional intelligence in education, highlighting its impact on students, educators, and institutional environments.

EI fosters self-awareness, empathy, and effective communication, and interpersonal skills- attributes essential for thriving in an increasingly interconnected and complex world. By equipping students with the tools to understand and regulate their emotions, EI supports better academic outcomes, reduces stress, and promotes a positive learning atmosphere. Educators, as role models, also benefit from enhanced EI, enabling them to create supportive classrooms, address student needs with sensitivity, and navigate diverse challenges.

Opportunities to develop EI in education include integrating EI-focused curricula, leveraging digital tools and programs, and emphasizing experiential learning. Schools can employ mindfulness exercises, collaborative activities, and social-emotional learning frameworks to cultivate emotionally intelligent learners. Teacher training programs must also prioritize EI development to ensure educators are equipped to nurture students' emotional and social skills effectively.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence (EI), education, self-awareness, empathy, social-emotional learning

Introduction

Relational systems of emotional intelligence in education - Educational aspects of empathy

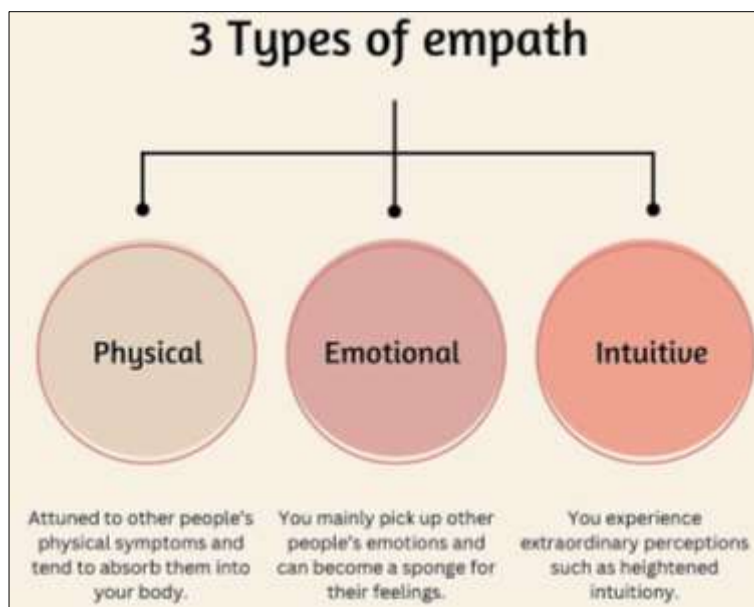
In 1978, Béla Buda released *Empathy - the Art of Empathy*, which is associated with the concept of empathy in Hungary. The book made empathy a common feature of professional and intellectual language. According to Béla Buda, empathy involves seeing, hearing, and feeling via the eyes, ears, and heart of another individual. (Buda, 1985) ^[10].

In 2004, Baron Cohen defined empathy as the ability to identify and respond to the feelings and thoughts of others with appropriate emotions.

According to Carl Rogers (1959) ^[20], empathy is accurately understanding the interpretative framework of others, including their emotional meanings and components, without losing the 'as if'. Much research has been done on the development and neurobiology of empathy since Béla Buda's book. Empathy is a complex notion with emotive and cognitive components, as agreed upon in the literature (Preston, 2002) ^[21]. The affective component involves empathy and care, whereas the cognitive component involves a new perspective (Figure 1). Affective empathy can be distressing for the empathizer, who may suffer distress and anxiety around the other person's bad emotions. Affective empathy without cognitive empathy can lead to hypersensitivity and fragility. Empathic distress, a self-referential reaction to others' pain, can compromise empathy and care (Hoffman, 1991) ^[22].

Undergraduate mental health students were assessed for empathy and emotional intelligence. The study included 104 university students and lecturers. They examined whether empathy can be taught, or how to "walk in someone else's shoes." Pre- and post-tests were used to measure the Davis IRI Interpersonal Reactivity Index Scale (Davis, H. M., 1983) ^[14]. Between measurements, Rogers-based skills training was used.

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In interviews and surveys, teachers discussed their training, teaching experiences, and student empathy. According to the assessments, the development of empathy, 'teachability', is statistically significant in empathetic caring and perspective taking. Unlike the training group, the control group did not improve in any subscales. Although female students had stronger empathy abilities at the start of the measurement, the development demonstrated that male students' empathy skills could be enhanced similarly, reducing the major inequalities. Davis advised factor analysis to determine the empathy mean without personal suffering, not the entire empathy factor from all four subscales. The empathetic mean (Sum of fantasy scale, empathic concern, perspective shift subscale scores) improved. Davis claims that the IRI cannot effectively estimate independent and dependent variables on empathy subscales. Since personal distress is the most primal empathy component, he proposes not adding it to the other subscale scores. It has been observed that as people mature, their empathy component of the personal suffering subscale decreases. In addition, the study found that actual empathy begins with communication in childhood and identification with imagined events and characters in adolescence. The ability to imagine and identify is the foundation of empathy. Thus, empathy develops gradually. The IRI scale shows this. For instance, university students score higher on the fantasy scale than teenagers. Thus, university students have stronger empathy skills, as shown by the fantasy scale. These can be strengthened by mature empathic components including perspective-taking cognitive and empathic caring attitudes. Further findings of the study are that women's empathic communication is better than men's, but that this is levelled out by the effect of developmental training based on Carl Rogers' person-centred principles. This means guys can develop empathy skills in the same way. Empathy is teachable regardless of gender. The total empathy potential as an emotional empathy skill, calculated from the scores of the three subscales, was investigated in this research (S., Nadeau, K., & Marz, 1994) [23].

The relationship between emotional intelligence and empathy: Mental abilities that maximize emotional adaption are called emotional intelligence. Three main

interpretations of this notion exist. The cultural level, which describes how a person with expected talents interacts and adapts to diverse social groupings, is the broadest. The second perspective is that emotional intelligence encompasses tenacity, accomplishment motivation, social skills, and self-discipline, which are necessary for assertiveness, success, and goal realization. Academic psychology's third and narrowest view defines emotional intelligence as the skills we employ to process emotions (Oláh, A., 2005) [24]. The internal components of intelligence have been separated for decades. Create, then emotional intelligence, from its aggregate concept. Some studies emphasize emotional, social-relational intelligence over cognitive intelligence. Thorndike (1920) [25] defined social intelligence as a vital component of interpersonal relationships. In his opinion, understanding others and acting accordingly is crucial. Gardner's (1993) multiple intelligence idea includes intrapersonal intelligence (self-monitoring and activating) and interpersonal intelligence (Relating). Empathy is key to a person's self-efficacy, alongside equally important perceptions of reality, intelligence and creativity. It has important preventive potential in maintaining mental health (S., Nadeau, K., & Marz, 1994) [23].

The relationship between emotional intelligence and coping strategies

Coping abilities, or techniques, measure how individuals handle difficult life situations. According to behavioral science, the human-environment system dynamically shapes a person's behavior. Decision-making in this system procedure matters. The individual must continually assess their ability to address environmental difficulties and identify answers. To handle it.

Since lifelong learning demands coping skills (Molnár, 2015) [26], they are crucial.

The human-environment model suggests that individuals aim to maintain equilibrium. Stress in this way can induce mental imbalance. Coping involves cognitive and behavioral efforts to resolve conflict and reduce stress.

Lazarus and Launier (1978) [27] identified two coping styles (Margitics & Pawlik, 2006) [28]:

Problem-focused coping is focusing on the circumstance to

prevent it in the future.

The person focuses on reducing emotional reactivity to a stressful situation and prevents negative feelings from taking over. The person uses it despite unchangeable circumstances.

Problem-focused coping involves problem-solving tactics, both externally (At the problem scenario) and internally (by changing oneself rather than the environment).

Research by Lazarus and Folkman (1986) ^[29] identified eight additional problem-focused and emotion-focused coping techniques (Margitcs & Pauwlik, 2006) ^[28].

Confrontation: actively coping with the problem; - Disengagement: emotionally and mentally distancing to gain energy for further coping; - Regulating emotions and behavior: finding the best emotional expression and behavior for resolution; - Seeking peer support: using available resources and support in the peer environment.

Problem-solving planning is a cognitive, reasonable method that evaluates choices to resolve a predicament.

Avoidance: avoid confrontation and leave the situation;

To find positive meaning in unfavorable events, evaluate them as challenges.

Attila Oláh's research reveals that adolescents in various cultures (Hungarian, Indian, Italian, Swedish, Yemeni) use constructive coping strategies for low to medium anxiety and avoidance for high anxiety (Oláh, 2005) ^[24].

The need to develop emotional intelligence in education

Understanding the differences between emotions and EQ is key. Emotion is a normal response to current and past experiences and situations.

Our surroundings, circumstances, knowledge, and moods affect our emotions. Relationships. Feelings and experiences affect emotions. Conversely, EQ involves understanding and utilizing emotions in a positive manner. Emotional intelligence (EQ) involves managing emotions and applying this knowledge to decision-making, problem-solving, self-management, and leadership. EQ is linked to improved self-esteem, well-being, and motivation (Faltas, 2017) ^[16].

Individuals are typically shocked to discover three theories inside the emotional intelligence paradigm. All of these ideas aim to clarify the skills, traits, and abilities linked to social and emotional intelligence. I believe that different theoretical perspectives in the emotional intelligence paradigm demonstrate the field's scope, not a shortcoming. The concepts of emotional intelligence vary, complimenting one other rather than contradicting each other.

Despite its importance, schools seem to neglect the formation of emotions. A US study found that 50% of 150 teachers were unfamiliar with emotional intelligence. Most familiar with the notion viewed it as a crucial life skill or something that enhances learning and well-being. A third of teachers found it 'interesting but confused', while others saw it as a 'new sentimental craze' (Claxton, 2005) ^[11].

A 2019 study indicates that teachers and trainers' emotional intelligence is influenced by their years of education. Results indicate a significant difference in emotional intelligence between full-time students and trainers in teacher school. Additionally, teachers with established jobs exhibit higher empathy variables. Practice and age also significantly impact this. Two-way variant. Students exhibit greater fantasy scale scores, indicating a desire to identify with fictitious characters. Less experienced individuals find it easier to imagine themselves in hypothetical situations.

They are more aligned with students' thoughts and more engaged. Teachers in the field tend to be more distanced from events requiring creativity. Students have higher personal distress values than professional educators, making it harder for them to handle stressful situations effectively. Students are more empathetic and experience others' sorrow and fury more acutely due to their increased emotional engagement component. They become involved faster. However, this emotional aspect can hinder empathic caring, a crucial teaching role. Empathy enhances practitioners' perspective-taking abilities, enabling them to shift attention or adopt a new perspective during affective engagement. Another distinguishing strength was empathic care. Empathy was higher among field trainers than students, resulting in easier action in response to affective impacts.

Additionally, the study discovered a link between intrapersonal traits (Confidence, self-awareness, self-esteem, independence, self-actualization) and self-punishment as a coping method. Self-awareness helps trainers, educators, and developers address issues effectively. Individuals tend to prioritize maintaining their personality stability in stressful times, shifting focus from the threat to themselves. People tend to seek external support and help in difficult situations. The intrapersonal scale and distraction coping strategy were correlated for trainers in the labor market, suggesting that individuals may avoid situations, delay intervention, or focus on themselves.

The study found that students had considerably lower stress control scores than teachers when comparing coping mechanisms. Thus, maintaining stability demands greater effort. Teachers are more flexible and confident. They have the ego power to preserve stability. Teachers find it easier to recognize and utilize the two coping steps. The initial stage is to assess the impact of stress on an individual's life and aspirations, and determine if and how to eliminate the stressor. In the second step, it assesses available internal resources for coping (Problem-centered or emotion-regulating strategies, potential consequences of inaction), and adjusts its attitude if resources are exhausted.

A key aspect of emotional intelligence growth is self-awareness, which involves understanding and managing one's emotions, desires, and motivations to achieve a better future. Success leads to self-control, self-mastery, and self-direction, enabling successful coping in many aspects of life. Having these talents helps us recognize, manage, and cope with stressful circumstances and conflicts, balance emotions, and perform well under pressure.

This mind-set is crucial for effective collaboration, conflict management, and relationship building (Balázs, 2014) ^[2].

Why it that people with higher EQ is will be more successful?

Success in work-including teaching-is crucial. This includes our own and our graduate students' success. Increasing emotional intelligence can impact instructors' success and quality of work. Compare personnel, and those with higher Furnham (2012) ^[30] defines emotional intelligence as:

- People with high EQ convey ideas, intentions, and goals more effectively.
- EQ is linked to crucial social abilities for collaborating at work.
- Higher EQ individuals foster a supportive environment, leading to increased organizational commitment.

- High EQ individuals recognize and utilize their own and others' strengths and limitations, allowing them to capitalize on the former and adjust for the latter.
- Higher EQ correlates with improved adaptive skills, enabling better stress management and expectation management.
- High EQ individuals correctly understand feelings and needs, leading to increased motivation and support. They boost enthusiasm and optimism.

Example of developing emotional intelligence in pre-primary education

Students at the University of San Francisco's teacher education department now take a course on emotional intelligence. The training included various components, but the most engaging were the tasks for developing new instructional contexts. Theoretical approaches and methods. Additionally, the course explored and applied emotional intelligence ideas in teaching and learning. (<https://www.usfca.edu/education> Download 2022.01.06)

Development topics and methods:

- Sessions 1-7: Emotional intelligence and creativity theory review. (The module included readings, forums, case studies, and assignments.) Tasks included literature review, pedagogical relevance research, and group brainstorming on integrating intelligence theories into teaching. Participants used feedback circles to explain one other's projects after the presentations.
- The project design process began in session 7. The finished projects covered ice-breaking exercises, social emotional display, self-awareness, empathy, emotion management, and classroom anxiety management. The project will create web-based lesson plans and outlines for instructors, students, and parents on these themes. Brief descriptions and presentations have been created for the internet interface. Then everything was tested.
- Everyone had to provide sophisticated project paperwork at the end.

The main goal was to foster a healthy emotional environment for pupils through a creative initiative. Students blended emotional intelligence development into cognitive courses such as music, physical education, geography, biology, arithmetic, and economics. In each discipline, they aimed to showcase unconventional thinking. To lessen classroom emotional anxiety.

Emotional intelligence is crucial to education. The course successfully inspired teacher candidates to implement emotional intelligence theory in practice. The strategies for developing emotional intelligence were also effective in teaching. Students experienced positive learning experiences, used expressive teaching gestures, and encouraged a collegial culture. The study recommends incorporating emotional intelligence into teacher education to improve student development, particularly emotional awareness, and promote methodological diversity (Kaplan, 2019) ^[31].

Summary

Learn emotional intelligence. According to Kádár (2012) ^[32], children learn to manage their emotions from infancy, including decoding others' emotions, expressing their own, and delaying or controlling their own emotions. Therefore, more must be placed.

Developing emotional intelligence is emphasized in teacher training institutions and programs. We need this progress for two reasons. Our research indicates that experienced instructors are more likely to become emotionally frail over time, putting their own and their pupils' mental health at risk. Despite their strong desire to conform, most teachers possess effective interpersonal skills, including well-meaning care for others and a desire to maintain good social relationships.

EQ development typically begins in the home, with children benefiting from a parental attitude that allows for mistakes within limitations. While parents can admit their feelings and make errors, children should also have the same opportunity.

'Dare to feel' is another crucial slogan. Being brave enough to be myself and discuss sentiments is a basis of EQ. Many families conceal weaknesses and follow the belief that parents cannot make mistakes, making EQ development a responsibility for teachers and educators. A process of integrated development is crucial for children as it allows for fresh opportunities for growth and transformation.

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is a complicated psychological system. Our psychological 'fingerprint' is distinct and unrepeatable. There are three key aspects to consider. One factor is emotional connection to oneself and beliefs, known as 'self-awareness'. The second aspect is how individuals develop 'self-knowledge' through their relationships with others. The third factor is how emotional experiences shape his personality and influence his behavior in later life through stimulation and inhibition. Considering the emotional impact of crises and traumas on emotional intelligence is crucial. It is crucial to introduce children to emotionally intelligent and transformed adults in early infancy, when they enter the school system. Hungary need all newly qualified instructors due to the high average age of the teaching profession. The EQ scores of students leaving the faculty are irrelevant. Research indicates that EQ levels improve with age and practice, yet we still impact many youngsters. Higher EQ scores for university graduates are desirable. This would improve child education and enhance teachers' professional competences, interpersonal, and intrapsychic skills.

The intervention showed that developing EQ is possible, but personality development is not a cognitive ability that can be learnt quickly. According to Goleman's 1997 book, cognitive capacity (Intelligence) accounts for 20% of life achievement, while emotional intelligence accounts for the remaining 80% (Goleman, 1997) ^[19]. Therefore, developing EQ can also improve cognitive performance. Early emotional intelligence development in school positively impacts personality development.

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