

The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Student Learning

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Abstract: *Emotional intelligence is very critical to student learning. Emotional intelligence allows the individual to communicate, lead and negotiate with others. A person with emotional intelligence is able to understand his or her own emotions and also the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence actually enables a person to gain more in an educational setting since the individual is able to integrate well both socially and academically. A person with emotional intelligence is a team player, and gains a lot from positive interaction with lecturers and other students.*

Keywords: *Emotions, Intelligence*

1. INTRODUCTION

Emotions are complex states of mind and body, consisting of physiological, behavioural, and cognitive reactions to situations that can be managed and directed. Events may be interpreted as sad, dangerous, or joyous, and physically, a sad situation may yield tears, or a dangerous situation may result in increased heartbeat. It is critical to realise that emotions, thought and action are intricately interwoven and linked. Emotional maturity and social skills along with intelligence bring adjustment and success in one's life. An emotionally intelligent person can manage his / her feelings in a better way and cope with stress, with the effective ability to solve problems. An emotionally intelligent person is well adjusted and more successful in various areas of educational and other professional fields. In this assignment, the writer is going to explore the impact of emotional intelligence on student learning.

2. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EMOTIONAL QUOTIENT AND INTELLIGENCE QUOTIENT

Emotional quotient is a way to measure how a person recognizes emotions in himself or herself and others, and manages these emotional states to work better as a group or team and on the other hand intelligence quotient is a value that indicates a person's ability to learn, understand, and apply information and skills in a meaningful way. The major difference between emotional quotient and intelligent quotient is what part of a person's mental abilities they measure that is understanding emotions or understanding information. Both intelligent quotient and emotional quotient are critical in ensuring ability to succeed, but due to the fact that humans are gregarious and social animals, some psychologists argue that emotional quotient becomes more important in leading a happy and successful life. Social skills are required in every facet of an individual's life, be it in business or otherwise. According to a recent Forbes article carried out by the Carnegie Institute of Technology 85 percent of an individual's financial success is due to skills in "human engineering," that is an individual's personality and ability to communicate, negotiate, and lead. Surprisingly, only 15 percent is due to technical knowledge. Daniel Kahneman, found that people would rather do business with a person they like and trust rather than someone they don't, even if the likeable person is offering a lower quality product or service at a higher price."

3. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Farooq (2003) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive and recognise emotions, to assimilate emotions, to understand the message and meaning of the emotions. Emotional intelligence is the ability to managing and regulating emotions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Emotional intelligence reflects not a single trait or ability but, rather a composite of distinct emotional reasoning abilities like perceiving, understanding and regulating emotions.

Farooq (2003) posited that perceiving emotions consists of recognising and interpreting the meaning of various emotional states, as well as their relations to other sensory modalities involving comprehension of how basic emotions are blended to form complex emotions, and how emotions are affected by events surrounding experiences. Regulating emotions, as submitted by Mayer and Salovey (1997) involves control of emotions in oneself and others. According to Salovey and Mayer (1990), in sum, emotional intelligence is a form of 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 actions.

4. EMOTIONS

Yang (2009) pointed out that emotions are a result of evaluation of internal and external pieces of information, which basically arise and change in response to a person's interaction with his or her environment. Spirrow and Knight (2006) regarded emotions as multi-component response tendencies that unfold over a relatively short time span. Reiff et al (2001) are of the opinion that emotions are primarily motivating forces which arouse, sustain and direct activity. Emotions are reported to influence learning, and a range of behaviours, such as helping, negotiating, altruism, risk taking and compliance.

Roberts, Schulze and MacCann (2008) pointed out that our emotional state has the potential to influence our thinking, and students learn and perform more successfully when they feel secure, happy and excited about the subject matter. Oatly and Nundy (1996) argued that although emotions have the potential to energise students' thinking, emotional states also have the potential to interfere with learning. If students are overly excited or enthusiastic, they might work carelessly or quickly rather than working methodically or carefully. Pekrun (2006) submitted that emotions such as anger, anxiety and sadness have the potential to distract students' learning efforts by interfering with their ability to attend to tasks at hand.

Li (2012) pointed out that a study carried out in Spain by Valle et al in (2009) found out that students with higher self-efficacy were more likely to put more effort into their academic studies. Reynolds and Walberg (1992) in a longitudinal study conducted in USA, which assessed the relationship between attitude towards mathematics and their academic performance of mathematics, found out that attitude have a powerful influence on student's academic achievement. Ma and Kishoe (1997) also argued that attitude was a significant predictor of academic achievement. Turner, Chandler and Heffer's study (2009), assessed self-efficacy on college student's academic achievement, and the results indicated that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of one's academic achievement. Literature actually points to the fact that self-efficacy which invariably is part of emotional intelligence has an impact on retaining facts learnt, persistence in educational course and effort put to achieve a set task.

Pool (1997) noted that emotional intelligence predicts success in academic achievement, employment, marriage and physical health. Gross and John (2003) pointed out that emotional literacy, is having the skills to understand and manage emotions, to communicate effectively in order to become an autonomous person. Goleman (1995) explained intelligent behaviour by stating that people who know and manage their feelings and deal effectively with other people's feelings are at an advantage in any domain of life as compared to those people who have no control over their emotional life. Bar On (1997) pointed out that researches have indicated the relevance of emotional intelligence with respect to social and emotional competencies, which are consider vital for a successful performance in academics. The same author went on to argue that emotional intelligence not only brings psychological wellbeing by making students good at interpersonal relationships, resiliency and stress management, but also enhances their creativity, which flourishes their academic success.

Goleman (1995) as quoted by Schutte et al (2001) hypothesized that emotional intelligence plays a role in establishing and maintaining relationships, and Saarni (1999) posited that the related construct of emotional competence is a crucial component of social development and contributes to the quality of interpersonal relationships. Good personal relationships are crucial for academic success, as they allow the student to be socially integrated in the school system, and is able to discuss academic issues with peers, effectively. Schutte et al (2001) pointed out that social skills are the lubricants of social life that help individuals to interact in mutually better ways. Gouldner (1960) submitted that social skills tend to be reciprocal; persons who display good social skills tend to receive good treatment in return and are liked by others. According to Schutte et al (2001) people with high emotional intelligence also have been found to have high levels of interpersonal skills.

Cutrona and Associates (1994) pointed out that the stronger the social support the more confidence a person will have to fight with challenges. Hackett and Associates (1992) reported that encouragement from faculty, members predicted university students' academic performance. This social support which is crucial to students' academic performance can be enhanced by a person who has high levels of emotional intelligence. Trockel et al (2000) observed that students with high emotional intelligence listen to their feelings and feel good about themselves and tend to accept and respect themselves and perform well in school because of their raised self-esteem.

Walter (1991) pointed out that high emotional intelligence is associated with good stress management. According to Walter (1991) an emotionally intelligent person is better able to manage stressful situations with the effective ability to meet challenges at school. Vance, Fernandez, and Biber (1998) found out those characteristics of high emotional intelligence such as good problem solving skills, reading at or above grade level, ability to get along with peers and adults. Likeability and a sense of humour are associated with the positive educational progress. Goleman (1995) pointed out that the school success is not predicted by a child's fund of facts or a precocious ability to read much as by emotional and social measures such as being self-assured and interested, knowing what kind of behaviour is expected and how to restrain impulse to misbehave, being able to wait, to follow directions and expressing needs while getting along with children.

Low and Nelson (2006) claimed that emotional intelligence is crucial to a student's personal health and college success. These authors went on to argue that students with emotional intelligence skills are better able to cope with demanding and complex college experience. Low and Nelson (2006), submitted that students who are able to lead their life successfully in academic can focus on their learning and perform well academically. Low and Nelson (2006) argued that it is apparent that having high emotional intelligence gives an added advantage to individuals, be it in educational pursue or career development. Aminuddin, Tajularipin and Rohaizan's (2009)'s study examining emotional intelligence level among 223 form ones and four students in rural areas and the findings also supported the fact that emotional intelligence has an influence on academic achievements. They found that the emotional intelligence is closely related to the students' academic achievement which they added, corroborates with these findings by Parker et al and Petrides et al. Bar-on (2007), one of the proponents and leading researchers in the study of emotional intelligence also recognises the influence of this non-cognitive ability in success of a student's life, as he posited that ability to manage one's emotions, to be able to validate one's feelings and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature are important for being academically successful. Doctor Bar-On (2007) went on to suggest that academic performance appears to be facilitated by being able to set personal goals as well as to be sufficiently optimistic and self-motivated to accomplish them. Bar-On (2005) postulated that an assessment of emotional intelligence levels among students can be significantly used to predict their scholastic performance. Low, Lomax and Nelson (2004) asserted that emotional intelligence, skills and intelligence hold a major key to improve education and helping students, teachers, and faculty and student development professionals attain higher degrees of achievement, career success, leadership and personal wellbeing.

Cherniss and Goleman (201) submitted that a student who is able to relate on an interpersonal basis with faculty, peers and the college community at large will be better prepared to initiate and maintain vital interpersonal relationships while in college, and in the future, in a professional environment. A student who knows himself / herself well enough to keep impulses in check and delay gratification, control anger and maintain composure will probably be more successful in the classroom and beyond. Lee (2011), Hill and Craft (2003) posited that a student who is able to juggle the demands and rigor that becoming a young adult entails such as striking a balance among developing independent living skills, limiting excessive personal diversion and cultivating strong academic skills will more likely be a better student and more prepared to enter a professional working environment. According to Goleman, the standard measure of intelligence, IQ contributes no more than 20% towards one's success, while the remainder is determined by emotional intelligence. Low and Nelson (2004) reported that emotional intelligence skills are key factors than the academic achievement and test performance of high school and college students respectively.

Kang and Goo(2007) argued that recent researcher on emotional literacy demonstrates the bridge between cognition, that is critical thinking, such as use of language, affect, that is experience of emotions and physiology, the body's response. Eckman (1999) pointed out that emotional intelligence appears to be a core ingredient that, when developed and well employed, has wide-ranging benefits

for learning relationships and wellness. Pool and Qualter (2012) pointed out that students with high emotional intelligence have better school attendance records, their classroom behaviour is more constructive and less often disruptive and they like school more, and are less likely to be suspended or otherwise disciplined. Moon (1997) submitted that recent studies of emotional intelligence and college retention indicate that students with higher emotional intelligence are less likely to drop out of school than their peers and the implication of the above statement is that students with high emotional intelligence are more likely to persist in school and graduate than their peers. The mere fact that the probability of the students who have high emotional intelligence to graduate is high; it also means that the probability of them succeeding is also high.

Eckman (1999) pointed out that students with higher (EQ) were less involved in aggressive interactions and more accepted by their peers. This social integration is critical to academic achievement of a student. Students with high EQ were also recognised by teachers and peers both as cooperative and as leaders, which are attributes which bring success to an individual, including academic success. Dennis Tridad and Anderson Johnson assessed 205 middle school students in Southern California, measuring both emotional intelligence and use of alcohol and tobacco. The results were that teens with high EI were less likely to use alcohol and tobacco. The fact that the students with high EI are less likely to be involved in alcohol and drug abuse, inevitably means students with high EI are likely to have and devote more time to academic issues, which will more likely result in them achieving high academic success.

It is also critical to note that despite the overwhelming evidence that points to the fact that emotional intelligence accounts for 80% success of an individual's learning, it should also be noted that some academic tasks, also require high IQ for them to be accomplished, and where this is low, then the individual may face problems. There are some, mathematical problems which require high IQ in mathematics, not EI. The individual may have high EI but lacking high IQ in mathematics, the individual may still fail to perform well. Despite the fact that EI is the key determinant of academic success, but high IQ also compliments and makes academic achievement a reality.

In sum, literature clearly shows that emotional intelligence is critical in student learning, and its impact on education in general is great. EI may influence academic achievement through the ability to cope with stressors, such as assessment, the dynamics of group collaboration, and the social and emotional demands of academic life. EI allows the student to fully integrate academically and socially within the educational setting.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since both types of intelligences are required, it is important to ensure that both are developed and avoid stressing on intelligent quotient only. Students are supposed to be taught to manage their emotions and the emotions of others and better still how to interact with others well.

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