Research Paper

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Role of Emotional Intelligence in Higher Education with emphasis on Teachers Training

Commerce

KEYWORDS : Emotional Intelligence, Higher Education, Teachers training, Transformational learning.

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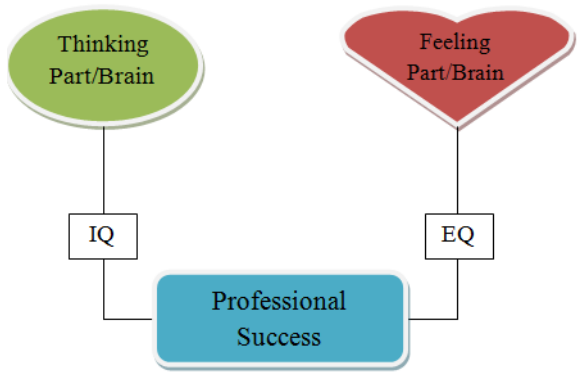
ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, control and evaluate emotions. It is often said that emotional intelligence can be learned, strengthened, while it is also believed that it is an inborn characteristic. It is also paramount in personal, academic and career success. Different studies indicated that the key to success is not just cognitive intelligence rather 80% success in life depends on emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2005). In view of the primary role of teachers in training students, it seems that strengthening emotional qualifications of teachers and including these qualifications in tactical plan of teacher training is inevitable. This paper is aimed to shed light on scientific evidences about the basic role of emotional qualifications in improvement of personal, social, scientific performance of students and effectiveness and efficiency of teachers. It symbolizes its relation with objectives of present education and prerequisites for developing emotional qualifications in Education. It suggests that as a prime pedagogy, pre-service training is necessary for professional development of a teacher.

INTRODUCTION

Emotions are the fuel of life. There is nothing wrong with being emotional if the impulses are positive and aimed at greater benefit of the society at large. One can draw a contrast of negative and positive emotions of Hitler & Gandhi in their leadership of influencing people. The phenomena of emotions have traditionally been considered of limited value by the mainstream psychological scholarship. Emotions are held as stirred up condition or perturbations in the mind. Instead, it assigned relatively greater value to the rational and cognitive part of mind. It is only recently that there is revival of interest in the study of emotions. It is being gradually recognized that a dichotomy that posits reasons against passion and cognitive aspects against affective, is misconstrued and misplaced. IQ has no heartbeat. Emotional Intelligence, on the other hand, focuses like a laser beam what is important to us. Without the signals communicated by emotions, earning employees' dedication & commitment and harnessing all their energies towards enhanced efficiency & effectiveness seems a far cry.

Emotional intelligence theory first propounded by Peter Salovey and John Mayer in 1990 was aimed to recognize place of emotions and feelings and their vital roles in diverse rational and mental actions of human beings. It was later popularized by Daniel Goleman. According to Goleman, today the rules for work are changing. We're being judged by a new yardstick: not just by how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other. This yardstick is increasingly applied in choosing who will be hired and who will not, who will be let go and who retained, who passed over and who promoted.The new rules predict who is most likely to become a star performer and who is most prone to derailing. And, no matter what field we work in currently, they measure the traits that are crucial to our marketability for future jobs.These rules have little to do with what we were told was important in school; academic abilities are largely irrelevant to this standard. The new measure takes for granted having enough intellectual ability and technical know-how to do our jobs; it focuses instead on personal qualities, such as initiative and empathy, adaptability and persuasiveness. If you are part of a management team, you need to consider whether your organization fosters these competencies or discourages them. To the degree your organizational climate nourishes these competencies; your organization will be more effective and productive. You will maximize your group's intelligence, the synergistic interaction of every person's best talents.



Emotional Intelligence & Higher Education

Emotional Intelligence plays a vital role in social sciences; it has direct impact on a teacher's behavior working in an institution and it is important for the success of his/her profession. Teachers are considered as the main pillars in the educational system. They are the mediators through which knowledge can be passed on to the students who represent the foundation of the society. Teachers cannot be the effective source of knowledge unless they are possessed with the necessary skills, knowledge and aptitude. In fact, emotional intelligence is a type of social intelligence that includes to control own and others emotions; make a choice between them and the ability of managing these emotions to set one's life. Therefore, this skill is essential to make the teachers performance very effectual. This skill can make the teachers not only able to deal with their students but also with their colleagues.

Higher education institutions are also among the organizations that are moving forward in dealing with issues of globalization. Therefore, to produce the workers who can display high performance in any situations, emotional intelligence is one of the factors that should be emphasized by these education institutions. In order to be successful in implementing this mission, higher education institutions must have employees who are well,both physically and mentally.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The term Emotional Quotient (EQ) was first introduced by Bar-On in 1988 as a counterpart to intelligence quotient (IQ), i.e. cognitive ability. Bar-On thought of EQ as representing a set of social and emotional abilities that help individuals cope with the demands of daily life. Salovey and Mayer (1990) had something different and more restricted in mind when they introduced the

term EI several years later. For them, EI concerned the way in which an individual processes information about emotion and emotional responses. Goleman (1995) initially saw EI as an idea or theme that emerged from a large set of research findings on the role of emotions in human life. These findings pointed to different ways in which competencies such as empathy, learned optimism, and self-control contributed to important outcomes in the family, workplace and other life arenas. Goleman later made a distinction between EI & EC. Managers who possess a high level of what Salovey & Mayer (1990) think of as EI will not necessarily be more effective than other managers in dealing with conflict among their employees. However, they will be able to learn the conflict management skills more readily than individuals who bring less EI to the job. It is fortunate, then, that emotional intelligence can be learned. This process though isn't easy, but the benefits that come from having a well developed emotional intelligence, both for the individual and for the organization, make it worth the effort.

Teachers Training & Emotional Education

Since 1990 when Mayer and Salovey initiated the concept of emotional intelligence theory, studies and researches in this area have begun. Researches were conducted to recognize effect of emotional intelligence in varied contexts, one of the most important research areas has been the effect of using emotions on social knowledge that causes training to be required in all contexts including education and emotional intelligence which was introduced as one of the qualifications shaping creativity and innovation, effective leadership, emotional adaptation, personal pleasure, success in life and interpersonal relationship. From studies done, it was known that teaching is considered one of the most stressful professions. Today teachers are living in an era where changes are taking place quickly and demands are being increased. Multi- tasking expected from teachers has imposed stresses on them. Emotional skills play significant role in stress process and emotional intelligence is the means to manage stress and pressures during life. Teachers should be able to restrain emotions of students, parents, coworkers and principal. Presence of emotional intelligence creates an opportunity for improvement of education through emotions. Education is necessary for emotional qualification and both teachers and students benefit from it. Strong teachers provide a secure condition for growing and learning of students. Psychological Studies showed that a safe climate and having positive feeling in the classroom offer growth, pleasure and convenience for students. It has been established that positive feelings create correct learning and relationship among people. It was seen that in a school where there were enough positive effects on students, the health, adaptation, learning of students have increased and inconsistent behaviors have been abridged. Learning emotional qualifications is a transformative learning model which makes teacher or student more effective and gives them authority and power. In a transformative learning condition, teachers and students engage in positive and mutual actions. This learning affects growth of knowledge, behavior and skills which students can acquire to enhance their scientific and professional growth and personality throughout their lives. Although the most central goal of each institute in higher education is scientific growth, a more vital goal is that students should direct towards a healthy life including personal, professional, scientific aims. Thus, it is necessary that universities and institutes of higher education serve as grass root institutions for emotional scientific growth of students based on an all inclusive curriculum pattern. Then, teachers should learn how to manage their feelings and attainment of emotional qualification is essential to reach scientific goals, they should make a positive social relationship and control processes in classroom.

Emotional Intelligence:Role in Teaching

Carl Rogers in his "Freedom to Learn" (1983) said that the teachers who are genuine, empathetic and accepting with their learners would, by that fact alone, bring about change in their learners as they have a genuine desire to create a climate in which there is freedom to learn. He saw procedures and techniques as less important than attitudes. Emotional Intelligence development serves two broad purposes. One is to recognize and respond to the feelings of oneself and that of students in the classroom. The other is to encourage the emotional state in the learners that is conducive to learning.

Goleman(1998) has identified five 'social and emotional competencies' which make up Emotional Intelligence. These competencies are:

- Self Awareness: Being alert to your feelings
- Self Regulation: Managing your feelings
- Motivation: Using feelings to help achieve your goals
- Empathy: Tuning into how others feel
- Social Skills: Handling feelings well in interaction with others

Each of these competencies directly or indirectly influences the teaching and learning environment. Teachers with these competencies are able to make the experience of teaching and learning more unforgettable, pleasant and mentally stimulating, both for themselves and for the students.

Self Awareness

Gold and Roth (1993) described self-awareness as a "process of getting in touch with our own feelings and behaviors." Enhanced self-awareness in teachers involves a more precise understanding of how students affect their limbic processes and behaviors and how their behavior affects students. Teachers are seldom unmoved by the behaviors of their students and often the students bring out the best and the worse in teachers (Richardson, 2001). The development of the teachers, to a large extent, depends on their readiness to take risks and to repeatedly ask themselves as to which of their behaviors is helping or obstructing their personal or professional growth. Awareness of their own emotional triggers perks up their chance of making rational decisions based on mindful processes rather than unconscious emotional conditioning. The alert, ongoing efforts to improve self-awareness can augment their overall effectiveness and job satisfaction.

Self Regulation

Orme (2001) defined self regulation as 'being able to face disruptive emotions like anger and fear and making choices when you are in the middle of a crisis'. Teaching is a tough profession and unlike many other professions, teachers are continually exposed to emotionally provocative situations. The worsening climate in the classrooms is leading to an addition in the bothersome student behavior, and teachers become emotionally worn out as they try to control them. When the feelings are highly provoked and the circumstances demand a strong emotional response, self regulation becomes very difficult as the teacher cannot merely excuse herself until she calms down. Thus, teachers with high level of self regulation are able to manage their behavior in the classroom well and build up and manage nurturing relationships with their students.

Motivation

Motivation is one of the most significant qualities that a teacher should have. Students have different kinds of preferences, fears and reservations over the subjects. It is the task of the teacher

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to build enthusiasm and curiosity and to allay any fear and inhibition that a student may have towards the subject. This is not possible unless the teacher is herself motivated and passionate about the subject.

Highly motivated teachers see teaching as enjoyable and ensure that students enjoy it too. Motivation is highly infectious and gets passed on easily from teachers to students and makes the environment of the classroom favorable to learning.

Empathy

An empathetic temperament has been seen as a pleasing trait for the teachers especially for those working with students from varied backgrounds. Empathy can promote openness and flexibility and therefore, the teachers are better able to adjust the pedagogy and curriculum to fit with their students' requirements.In order to get feedback from their students, empathetic teachers push them to voice their observations and ideas explicitly to make teaching a two-way process rather than one-way flow of data/information.

Social Skills

Social skills involve skills like conversing, understanding the students and managing them in order to make the setting in the classroom more beneficial to teaching and learning. Teachers are constantly delivering new knowledge, but it is of no use if the students have difficulty grasping it. To be more effectual, teachers should get regular feedback from the students in order to know if the students really comprehend what the teachers are saying. For this, informal communication is as important as the formal communication. By observing the body language of the students, the teachers come to know when the students are perplexed or uninterested. The teachers high on social skills also give importance to the personal differences in their students as it helps to handle them in a better way. Some students are intrinsically motivated to learn and do not require any extrinsic reward or reinforcement. On the other hand, some students will require steady monitoring and optimal use of rewards, reinforcements and sometimes punishment. Understanding these differences and coping with different students in a different way can increase the efficacy of teaching.

CONCLUSION

The construct of Emotional Intelligence is of great consequence in education and teaching as it helps the teachers understand their students in an improved way. They can then align their pedagogy to meet the needs and aspirations of the students. Empathy, a key EI concept, is necessary for the teachers to appreciate and impart the knowledge in a way suitable to the background and culture of the students. The social skills and motivation are useful for the teachers to achieve the ultimate objectives of the subject being taught. EI can also help improve the achievements of students and offer them skills for their personal and professional lives. Thus, it has been shown that emotional intelligence is considered a main qualification due to following reasons:

1) Outcomes resulted from emotional qualification in different learning areas, making a good climate in classroom.
2) Multiple tasks expected from a teacher in 21st century.
3) Educational objectives which consider full growth of student (personality growth).
4) Humanistic approach of present curriculum.

Teachers and institutions which incorporate the concept of EI, not only produce happier and well rounded students but also the ones who are better adjusted and more successful. Hence, the inevitability of Emotional Intelligence in Higher Education as has been explained in this paper.

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