

Integrating Emotional Intelligence into the Curriculum: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence gained worldwide attention as it got revealed that having good Emotional Intelligence (EI) is more important than that of IQ. It becomes even more important to study about emotional intelligence among students as they are the building blocks of the future (Goleman D, 1995). Integrating EI equips students with the tools to manage interpersonal relationships, build resilience, and adapt to the complexities of the modern world. Furthermore, the integration of emotional intelligence into school curriculum fosters a culture of inclusivity and understanding. The effects of high and low emotional intelligence are tried to study in here, how the emotional intelligence effect the overall growth of the student in all fields. It is found that the emotional intelligence of the students have a strong connection to their overall development and growth academic wise as well as career wise. Traditional education has long focused on the development of cognitive and academic skills, often overlooking the importance of emotional intelligence. However, recent research suggests that EQ plays a significant role in a person's overall well-being, happiness, and success. By incorporating emotional intelligence education into the curriculum, schools can equip students with essential life skills that foster resilience, empathy, effective communication, and emotional well-being, preparing them for the challenges they will encounter in their personal, academic, and professional lives.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence (EI), Students, Psychological issues, IQ

Introduction:

In the ever-evolving landscape of higher education, the pursuit of knowledge encompasses a complex interplay of emotions, relationships, and personal growth, leading to the growing importance of Emotional Intelligence or EI (Brackett MA, Rivers SE, Shiffman S, Lerner N, Salovey P, 2006). This refers to the ability to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively use one's own and others' emotions. It involves empathy, self-awareness, social skills, and emotional regulation. While it has been widely recognized as a valuable skill in the workplace, its importance in the realm of higher education should not be underestimated. In the context of higher education, EI plays a pivotal role in shaping the academic experience of students, faculty, and administrative staff. It influences interactions in and out of the classroom, the dynamics of campus culture, and the overall learning environment. Educators, administrators, and students with higher EI levels are better equipped to navigate the complexities of academia and contribute positively to their institutions. Cooper and Sanaif (1997) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to sense , understand and effectively apply the power and emotions as a source

of human energy, information, connection and influence. Emotional intelligence is the measure of one's emotional quotient. It explains the characteristics in a person such as self-awareness, self-motivation, impulse control and empathy. A person who is emotionally intelligent can better adapt to today's fast changes and do better in the personal and professional life. In a study began in the 1950s at the University of California at Berkeley, eight Ph. D. students in science completed a series of IQ tests, personality tests, and extensive interviews with psychologists who assessed them on such qualities as emotional balance and maturity, integrity and interpersonal effectiveness (Goleman, 1998). By this it is clear how important it is for a student to have good emotional intelligence for successful life. These days it can be clearly seen how many of the students and adolescents are having low emotional intelligence. They are losing themselves to emotions and taking drastic steps which prove to be bad to their overall development. There are many tests to be conducted to check one's emotional intelligence, one of them is mixed model (Goleman, 1998). Over time many researches were done and various tests for emotional intelligence were invented to better understand it and also find its relation with academics and other psychological issues (Trigueros R, Aguilar-Parra JM, Cangas AJ, Bermejo R, Ferrandiz C, López-Liria R, 2019)

What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify, evaluate, manage, and express emotions effectively and positively. This concept teaches the power of understanding and managing emotions. It involves skill sets that enable people to use their emotional awareness to make decisions, communicate better, reduce anxiety, resolve conflict, and improve relationships. Childhood is a crucial period when humans grow rapidly – physically and emotionally (Fernandez-Berrocal P, Alcaide R, Extremera N, Pizarro D, 2006). Emotions make us human. It's the moral responsibility of teachers to inculcate emotional intelligence in students, as it helps them develop social and emotional skills. By using social-emotional skills, students learn to understand who they are, what they feel, and what to expect when interacting with others.

Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Education

Emotional intelligence encompasses a range of skills, including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills (Mayer JD.2001). It involves recognizing and understanding emotions, both in oneself and in others, and using that awareness to navigate various situations. In today's rapidly changing world, emotional intelligence holds immense significance in education. Students who possess high emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle the challenges of school and life. They not only excel academically but also thrive socially and emotionally.

Why emotional intelligence should be studied in students?

Goleman explained that strong emotions are the basis for the impulse to action. The management of those impulses is the basis of emotional intelligence. An emotionally intelligent student would tend to seek mature and rational solutions to problems, a lack of emotional intelligence tends to lead to anger and defiance, loneliness, and depression, impulsive aggression, and a worried and nervous outlook. It was found out that EI offers students the possibility of eliminating their levels of social anxiety and their attitude towards smoking (MacCann, C., Jiang, Y., Brown, L. E. R., Double, K. S., Bucich, M., & Minbashian, A. 2019), which enhances their quality of life (Poropat, A. E. (2009). After reviewing research studies about emotional intelligence in relation to university students, Webb, T. L., Miles, E., &

Sheeran, P,2012, concluded that training in appropriate emotional skill for career success and fulfillment. Greenstein (2001) conducted a study that looked at the successes and failures of 11 American President. They were assessed on six qualities: organization, communication, political skill, cognitive style, and emotional intelligence. The results that showed Emotional intelligent was the key ability the distinguish the successful (e.g. Roosevelt) from the unsuccessful (e.g. Carter). Many researches have been conducted in India on the relationship between EI and other Mental Health disorders, in an research paper written by Priya Y. Kulkarni, Gajanan Velhal (2023) revealed that a multitude of factors influence EI and Mental health(MH)of an individual since birth, as observed by them but higher EL levels protect people from MHDs and people with MHDs have a significantly lower level EI than the general population. Thus low EI is direct psychological parameter that can be easily detected by screening utilizing available tools. In another study it is also revealed that the people who committed crimes have lower EI than the people without criminal record (Peña-Sarrionandia, A., Mikolajczak, M., & Gross, J. J, 2015) Hence it becomes very important to study EI in students as it affects every aspect of their life and coming future.

Is there any need in stressing Emotional Intelligence in students?

According to Brittney-Nichole Conner-Savarda (2022) in an article suggested that there is a decline in EI in today's youth. It should also be noted that it is not just today's youth that suffers from EI deficit. EI is a skill that has been neglected for centuries and is just now getting recognized as an essential skill for life and business. The reasons for the decline can be said to be many reasons like Individualisms, detached from reality , current generation is getting exposed to things that they should not worry about at such a young age for example climate change political disorder and violence etc, Pandemic isolation, less communication etc. Today's students deal with a lot of stress from peer, academics, family etc. If they are not taught on how to manage it then it can cause a serious problem as it will give rise to unconventional routes of expressing emotions (Haines, S. J., Gleeson, J., Kuppens, P., Hollenstein, T., Ciarrochi, J,2016). Every fifth individual in India is adolescent and in 2019, it was estimated that one in seven adolescents experience some sort of Mental Health disorder. In India, almost 1 and 20 people over 18 years suffer the consequences of depression once in a lifetime with the roots being in a adolescence. (Resurrección DM, Salguero JM, Ruiz-Aranda D, 2014). By improving EL many of the situations students go through can be reduced. It may be noted that unlike intelligent quotient (IQ),EL can be gained and improved at any point of life(Goleman,2015).Emotional intelligence can be improved by training and this should be taught in every school and college so that the student can do emotional management, emotional perception, emotional integration, emotional understanding.

Benefits of Emotional Intelligence for Students

While academic achievements are undoubtedly important, emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in a student's overall success and well-being. Let's take a look at all the benefits of emotional intelligence for students.

- a. **Improved Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation:** Emotionally intelligent students have a keen understanding of their emotions and motivations. This self-awareness empowers them to recognize their strengths and weaknesses guiding them to set realistic goals and make informed decisions. As a result, students are able to effectively regulate their emotions and avoid erratic impulsive behavior that might be detrimental to their endeavors.

- b. **Effective Communication and Improved Relationships:** Clear and effective communication is a skill that serves students well throughout their lives. Emotional intelligence enhances this skill by enabling students to express themselves articulately with appropriate emotion. It also helps them understand the emotions and objectives behind others' words. Students are hence able to build better relationships with their peers, teachers and even family members.
- c. **Conflict Resolution Skills with Enhanced Empathy:** Conflicts are inevitable, but emotionally intelligent students are equipped with the tools of empathy, active listening, and compromise to navigate through them and foster a harmonious environment. Empathy, the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, is a cornerstone of emotional intelligence and conflict resolution. Students who can empathize with people around them are more likely to form meaningful connections and resolve conflicts amicably.
- d. **Stress and Anxiety Management:** The demands of education and future careers in today's highly competitive world can often lead to stress and anxiety. Emotional intelligence equips students with healthy coping mechanisms like deep breathing exercises, mindfulness techniques, or engaging in joy-bringing techniques to help manage stress and maintain mental well-being. Students are thus more likely to bounce back from setbacks and maintain a positive outlook.
- e. **Developing Leadership and Decision-Making Abilities:** Leadership requires effective communication, empathy, the ability to inspire others and diplomatic resolution of conflicts. Emotional intelligence nurtures these qualities, preparing students to become influential and compassionate leaders. Emotionally intelligent students also excel in decision-making since they consider both rational and emotional factors, leading to well-balanced choices that align with their values and goals.

Strategies for Integrating Emotional Intelligence Education:

- a) To successfully integrate emotional intelligence education into the curriculum, schools should consider the following strategies:
- b) Embed EQ concepts in existing lessons: Introduce discussions about emotions, empathy, and effective communication into relevant subject areas, such as literature, history, and social studies.
- c) Develop a dedicated EQ course or program: Design a comprehensive emotional intelligence program that covers all aspects of EQ, including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, motivation, and social skills.
- d) Utilize project-based learning and group work: Encourage students to work collaboratively on projects, helping them develop teamwork, communication, and conflict resolution skills in a practical setting.
- e) Foster a supportive classroom environment: Create a positive learning space where students feel comfortable sharing their feelings, thoughts, and concerns, and where teachers model and promote emotional intelligence.

Conclusion:

Emotional intelligence helps students better analyses situations. It not only helps students interact with others better but also helps them tackle academic issues with greater panache (Liberante L,2012) The better a student is able to come to grips with a situation, the more in control they are of it. The schools and colleges should promote the education of emotional intelligence in their curriculum. Having right

knowledge at the right age will help them to overcome many hurdles in their future. Many researchers gave many definitions and test for emotional intelligence, it up to us how we use them and help the students achieve their goals with proper mindset. The strategies mentioned above should be followed and make sure that everyone have good emotional intelligence and can effectively deal with mental health issues which comes with being a student in this fast paced life. Emotional intelligence is an invaluable tool for students, shaping their personal growth, relationships, and academic success. By developing skills such as self-awareness, empathy, and effective communication, students are better prepared to navigate life's challenges and contribute positively to society. Incorporating emotional intelligence education in schools is an invaluable investment in students' future. By integrating EQ education into the curriculum, fostering a supportive learning environment, providing professional development for educators, engaging parents and the community, assessing progress, encouraging extracurricular activities, implementing social-emotional learning programs, and cultivating a school culture that values emotional intelligence, schools can develop the essential life skills that contribute to personal growth, academic success, and long-term well-being. Embracing emotional intelligence in education empowers students to develop resilience and empathy.

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