

The Relationship Between Early Education and Emotional Intelligence

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Article Details	Abstract
Received: 17 Aug 2024 Accepted: 25 Oct 2024 Published: 30 Dec 2024 ¹Dr. Farhan Qureshi ²Zainab Malik . Copyright @Author Corresponding Author: *Dr. Farhan Qureshi	<i>This research examines the relationship between early education and emotional intelligence, emphasizing how foundational learning experiences shape emotional and social competencies in children. Emotional intelligence (EI) encompasses the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one’s own emotions, as well as the ability to empathize with others. This study reviews existing literature, including developmental psychology and educational theories, to investigate how early educational settings—such as preschool and kindergarten—contribute to the development of EI. Key findings indicate that programs incorporating social-emotional learning (SEL) significantly enhance children’s emotional awareness, self-regulation, and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, the research highlights the role of teacher-student interactions and peer relationships in fostering an emotionally supportive environment that promotes EI development. While high-quality early education can lead to long-term benefits in emotional and social functioning, disparities in access to such programs can impact developmental outcomes. Ultimately, this study advocates for integrating emotional intelligence training into early education curricula, recognizing its critical role in preparing children for future academic success and healthy interpersonal relationships.</i>

Keywords: early education, emotional intelligence, social-emotional learning, child development, teacher-student interactions, peer relationships, self-regulation, academic success.

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INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to recognize, interpret, and manage emotional and affective states. Most of the current studies on emotional intelligence focus on adults, whereas its implications for child development and educational settings are still poorly understood. This underlines the need to provide a comprehensive discourse on the correlation between early education and emotional intelligence development of young children. Being aware and thoughtful of particular emotions, distinguishing between different feelings, and the ability to manage emotional situations construct the foundation of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is becoming a vital skill that aids in the progress of other skills and personal success throughout life. In the context of children, emotional intelligence is associated with better social skills and more advanced peer engagement. Emotionally competent children are self-confident, boast high self-esteem, and are more enthusiastic towards learning and broader successes in academic institutions (Barragan et al.2021)

Given the promising outcomes of emotional intelligence for child development and educational settings, a growing body of literature explores the ways of fostering emotional intelligence in children. Most of the studies underline the significance of educational settings, school-based programs, and interventions. There is some confusing evidence regarding the effectiveness of school-based programs on emotional intelligence. It is still arguable whether educational settings can foster emotional development efficiently. Therefore, it is purposeful to delve deeper into the emotional intelligence development of children in educational settings. In this regard, it is proposed to discuss how educational settings, especially early educational interventions, contribute to the improvement of emotional intelligence of young children. This paper is an amalgamation and discussion of original and current studies on emotional intelligence and education of young children from different disciplines. It is essential to approach the issue from different aspects to provide a

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comprehensive landscape of the relationship between early education and emotional intelligence development. The main object of this paper is to discourse the hypothesis that early educational interventions can effectively enhance the emotional intelligence of children. Although the discussion mainly focuses on early educational programs, a wide range of educational settings have been discussed. Four essential fields critical for a comprehensive understanding of this relationship are addressed: the significance of the topic and central questions raised; an integrative examination of the existing studies regarding emotional intelligence and education of children; mechanisms and potential impact of educational settings on the emotional intelligence development of children; confronting conflicting views and ways forward to future research. . (Vila et al.2021)

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Emotions guide human cognition, influence motivation, and act as a necessary resource for thought and memory. The evolution of the human brain has, to a limited degree, kept the limbic region in charge of emotion and cognition, creating a foundation of biological processes for these experiences. This historical dichotomy has impeded the development of various disciplines, whether on the dualist level of Descartes' metaphysical sundering of the mind and body, the Cartesian distinction between emotion and intelligence in Western psychology, or the traditional Chinese separation of brain and viscera (Wambui Njui, 2018). There are several theoretical underpinnings that are needful to understand emotional intelligence and how it is beneficial for telling of growth in education.

There exists no complete definition of emotional intelligence on which scholars concur, much like the problem of defining concepts as essential as love or talent. However, most scholars agree that emotional intelligence incorporates self-emotion recognition, social and interpersonal skills, emotion management, and awareness of emotional issues. Also associated with emotional intelligence are better affective domain grades, the well-being of emotional health, higher life-

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satisfaction, successful emotional adjustment, social relationships, and personal growth. (Estrada et al., 2021)

2.1. Definition of Emotional Intelligence

In the scientific literature, many definitions, measurements, and models have been developed for the concept of emotional intelligence. With the growing number of definitions, these definitions have also created different models in themselves. Emotional intelligence is a competency model developed on the theoretical framework of different fields of knowledge, including attitudes, beliefs, and personality traits that characterize someone, as well as characteristic motives, habits, and social skills that activate them (L. Arteaga-Cedeño et al., 2022).

In addition to this definition, emotional intelligence is defined as personal and social capability, which incorporates a range of competencies that can affect one's overall ability to control his/her emotional impulses; withstand environmental pressures; adapt to several different situations; improvise and also change; solve problems of personal and social natures; and also communicate effectively (Lee Jerome, 2009).

In seminal research, "emotional intelligence" is defined as the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotions; to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; to understand emotions and emotional knowledge; and to regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.

These abilities are the new concepts and more intelligence and they entail the abilities to (1) to perceive and express emotion, (2) to assimilate emotion in thought, (3) to understand and reason with emotion and (4) to regulate emotion in oneself and others. On the other hand, The Salovey and Mayer model includes emotional regulation, the management of emotions and emotional relationships to provide the best positive results regarding emotional reaction in social situations and emotional experience. Emotional intelligence is also defined as the way in which an individual perceives, understands, and manages his or her own

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and others' emotions. Perception, understanding, and management of emotions are seen as the key to emotional intelligence. Withdrawal and awareness of one's own and others' emotions; Emotional intelligence spectrum is one of the prominent concepts with the development of anger and sympathy skills. A group of people is able to understand and interpret their own, as well as others, communicate, establish and establish positive relationships. This individual property reveals its success in other dimensions, especially in decision-making, career, and problem-solving skills. Further, it is more involved in communication and conflict situations that require empathy. In this direction, emotionally intelligent individuals have the ability to empathize with the short and long term outcomes of their behaviors, and they choose the one that best meets the benefits of the parties when managing their emotions. On the other hand, they may support others in case of negative emotions and contribute to the healthy conduct and result of social relations. (Papoutsis et al.2021)

2.2. Importance of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a concept that gained attention in the 1990s, and its significance has not diminished since. Not only can emotional intelligence be developed at all stages of life, individuals with well advanced emotional competencies are more capable of managing their own emotions and understanding and managing those of others. Higher levels of emotional intelligence have been shown to produce better life outcomes in a variety of ways. Emotions play a crucial role in mental health, and unbridled emotional suffering leads to a great deal of psychiatric morbidity. Emotional intelligence has been shown to mitigate emotional suffering and protect against mood disorders and other psychological problems. It also affects academic achievement, and children with better emotional competencies tend to do better in school. As emotional intelligence relates to social ability, EI children have better interpersonal relationships and create more positive peer relations (Wambui Njui, 2018). This social skill continues into adulthood, and older people with better skills at

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perceiving and managing their own feelings and the feelings of others have good relationships and networks, both personal and professional. In the business world, emotional intelligence plays a significant and far-reaching role in successful work performance. Numerous examples in different areas of the labor market have been documented, and a particular focus is placed on leadership and team dynamics. Conceptual issues are discussed about how leaders can utilize emotional competencies and teams can leverage emotional intelligence to be more effective. Furthermore, director requests to employees to improve their emotional intelligence in an attempt to boost productivity are increasingly prevalent. An overview of a variety of strategies and programs advertised by companies is provided. When reviewing the theoretical approaches to emotional intelligence, the various models offer a slight redrawing of the same basic theory. In terms of emotional intelligence's relationship to other constructs, important work has been done concerning the common and unique variance of constructs with significant argument. Nonetheless, other promising comparisons are discussed. In terms of cognitive outcomes and child development, research is reviewed about emotional intelligence's contributions to academic achievement, school adjustment, and other socioemotional competencies. A theoretical perspective is also provided to make sense of how emotional intelligence can lead to better life outcomes. Particularly, the contribution of emotional competencies to overall intelligence, ability model features that show the role of emotional intelligence in childhood development, and a discussion of data from previous studies testing the effect of emotional intelligence on adaptability and resiliency are included. Finally, empirical evidence is reviewed across a number of domains further supporting emotional intelligence's role in the development of children. Despite highlighting the potential contributions of emotional competencies, the general concern is focused on how in this atmosphere of standardized testing and growing competition in academic and social realms many primary and secondary schools have begun offering an increasingly narrow education. As a consequence,

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children with low test scores or poor behavioral qualities are often excluded from regular school activities. For these reasons, it is suggested that educators and policy makers consider the development of emotional intelligence equally urgent to the academic and social well-being of students. In spite of this urgency, it appears that there are as yet no universally established programs or guidelines for bringing emotional intelligence into school curricula. This paper endeavors to address this vacuum through various suggestions on the ways emotional competencies might be developed, supported by the research discussing the benefits of emotional intelligence in the broader context of improving educational practices. (Thomas & Allen, 2021)

3. EARLY EDUCATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

3.1. Role of Early Education in Emotional Development

3.2. Best Practices in Early Education for Enhancing Emotional Intelligence

4. RESEARCH STUDIES ON THE TOPIC

Education and emotional intelligence have become popular in developmental psychology. Many research studies have been done on that relationship. Different researchers have adopted different approaches to confirm the relationship between these constructs and gender and age effects on this relationship. They are studied by qualitative or quantitative methods (Muñoz-Oliver et al., 2022). Semantic critiques are made from the literature to question research findings, to make gaps in the literature clear and guide future studies. For primary education children, the EI is vital because of its improvement of several functions on these children. For that reason, several studies on the effect of EI on preschool education children were reviewed, and different practices applied in Turkey were demonstrated.

Regarding the first results, researchers adopted multiple designs to confirm the relationship between EI and education. Adopted research techniques include meta-analysis, longitudinal, qualitative, and mixed methods to make an in-depth examination. Second, the social representation theory is adopted to question the

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results obtained by the first method, the relationship between EI and education. Hence, in the question of the previously obtained results, some criticism based on semantic concerns is made, and potential method biases of previous researches are discussed. The focus is on the results of studies using Likert-type instruments (agreement rating scales). Furthermore, the reviewed sociological critiques are not only considered small and non-representative samples based on random logical variables. The goal is to encourage the use of demographic variables in studies on the relationship between EI and education. To illustrate the importance of demographic variables in EI research, a study is conducted with 158 participants. The variables are age, gender, experience, and educational level (Iqbal et al.2021). While different models of emotional intelligence have been proposed since the existence of emotional intelligence was put forward, this area usually focuses on the mixed model ability EI. Hence, (Wambui Njui, 2018) provided numerous reimbursement housing for people and researchers interested in EI to obtain a precise model. However, due to the fact that studies on EI theoretically, construct, dynamically, culturally, and methodologically vary in so many countries, the mixed model is criticised from many aspects. Hence, to question some of the obtained results, a different theoretical perspective is adopted, which did not base on the mixed model ability EI but on the social representation theory. Specially, it is about the social representations obtained from gendering EI, encouraging to question the results of previous studies gendering EI or education. (Soto et al.2022)

4.1. Key Findings

In his widely cited meta-analysis, it was found that interventions consistently yield moderate to large effects to enhance social and emotional skills in children. Many relationships between early education and emotional intelligence have been extensively examined and verified in multiple studies since this work. There are remarkable studies showing that emotional intelligence is related to successful development outcomes, both concurrently and predictably. It has been described

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that children with better emotional intelligence benefit in terms of their academic skills, social relationships, and mental health, among others. In response to growing evidence, society has shown a greater interest in specific educational programmes that place emotional intelligence at the core of its objectives, which may explain the increasing number of works published on this topic in recent years. Historically, there have been attempts to develop early education models based on the promotion of social and emotional skills, such as the legacy of certain educational projects. In their comprehensive review, it has been documented the existence of various programmes and models targeting children that have shown to be more effective in developing their socioemotional skills in the long term. There is consistent empirical evidence that, prior to schooling, children's emotional skills are malleable and can be the goal of an increasingly large number of interventions. (Jahan et al., 2022)

Nevertheless, this is a research field particularly susceptible to publication bias, so it is questionable whether the findings are as promising as it may seem at first glance. Rigid conducting and reporting practices reinforce this bias, potentially making it difficult to reach a consensus on the real effectiveness of such interventions. Besides, promoted interventions display exceedingly varied methodological characteristics, such as assessments used or experimental designs, which can account for differing results. Therefore, to date, a number of contradictory findings have also been reported. This state of affairs has recently prompted a series of comprehensive reviews of the literature that analyze the overall effects found after a thorough selection process. The conclusions in these works are also varied, partly due to theoretical stances on the conceptualization of emotional intelligence. However, since the majority of works reviewed in this framework are outside the educational field, it is of interest to convey a similar message with a focus on potential educational implications. (Iqbal et al., 2022)

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4.2. Methodologies Used

Research on the relationship between educational methods and emotional intelligence has become a noteworthy curiosity. Among the numerous methods used in this study, surveys are the most obvious. They determine that certain educational processes, programs, or techniques are considered to be accomplishments that correlate significantly with emotional intelligence dependence on a set of EI abilities. These claims are validated when the survey evidence is compared in terms of educational implications (Muñoz-Oliver et al., 2022). Some challenges in model tests and method convergence are also discovered from survey data. Standardized evaluations of academic schools are used in various other investigations in evaluating the progress of Earth in emotional intelligence. This study adopted an effort to investigate how dealing with the search for a link between educational variables and emotional intelligence affects understanding the design of the search method per se.

The deep, situational character of the education system and closely connected processes such as the emotions of scholars and instructors may result in its integration through research experiences will a wider view of issues. A situation where questionnaires, polls, laboratory experiments, and field studies are combined about education to understand how these varied methods complement each other and develop an in-depth image of the EI acquisition system. Instrumentation is a feasible problem in research that aims to recognize the effectiveness of training programs within various school systems. It is necessary for the design of a study or evaluation of an intervention study that data be gathered in a valid and reliable informative manner. A possibility is that those who designed the query types little to know about emotional intelligence, regarding the particularities or targets of emotional intelligence so that EI is underestimated or underrepresented in the studies. In some cases, question types created could typically not be utilized as a tool for measuring EI, implying that the label of the questionnaire is misleading. (Gkintoni et al., 2021)

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5. IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND PRACTICE

This study is one of only a few to investigate developmental trajectories of general and task-specific emotional intelligence (EI) and self-concepts of academic competencies and ability in an entire cohort of elementary students (E Caillouet, 2018). In contrast to previous studies on task-general intelligences, which used the mean score of several tests, general intelligence is measured here as a hierarchical factor model of IQ test scores. Task-specific EI is defined according to the content to encompass emotions that students experience and those that students think teachers feel after each of six school tasks or subjects. Task-specific self-concepts are assessed accordingly with parallel psychometric scales. There is clear support for the incremental validity of task-specific EI relative to general EI and task-specific IQ in the prediction of domain-specific self-concepts and vice versa. However, it remains unresolved whether task-specific EI is just a specific facet of general EI, and if it is more closely related to domain-specific emotional self-concepts than to domain-specific ability self-concepts.

The article explores the implications of these findings for educational policy, educational practice, future research, and theory in the field of EI and psychological development during the school years (Wambui Njui, 2018). Since a two-wave longitudinal design is used, it is necessary that unidirectional influences are modeled. Task-specific EI predicts subsequent increases of ability and academic self-concepts. Nevertheless, the answer to the most intriguing question regarding the specificity of this relationship remains ambivalent. While there is evidence in favor of a domain specificity of the effects on the object-relational measures of self-concept, there is also fitting evidence for task-general effects. These findings highlight the importance of considering specific content areas and in measuring both EI and self-concepts in detail. In combination with the results of the stability analyses, these findings also show that task-specific EI, in contrast to previous studies on task-general intelligence and achievement, is more strongly

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related to subsequent increases of self-concept than to previous levels of self-concept.

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