



Review **Open Access**

The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom

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Abstract: Emotional Intelligence (EI) has gained significant attention in educational psychology, shaping how educators understand the role of emotions in learning and development. This paper traces the historical evolution of EI, from Edward Thorndike's early concept of "social intelligence" to Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer's formal definition in 1990, which introduced the key components of perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions. Daniel Goleman's popularization of EI in his 1995 book further expanded its relevance in education, emphasizing behavioral aspects such as empathy and social competence. The integration of EI into Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs has demonstrated positive effects on academic performance, emotional regulation, and social skills. This review highlights the growing recognition of EI as an essential element in both student and teacher success, contributing to a more holistic approach to education.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence (EI); Educational Psychology; Social Intelligence; Social and Emotional Learning (SEL); Academic Achievement

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1. Introduction to Emotional Intelligence (EI) in Education

1.1. Definition and Key Components of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and regulate emotions in oneself and others. It is a vital aspect of human interaction and communication, particularly in educational settings where emotions play a significant role in shaping the learning experience. Originally popularized by psychologist Daniel Goleman in the 1990s, EI extends beyond traditional measures of intelligence (IQ), focusing instead on emotional awareness and control as key factors for personal and professional success.

Goleman identified five key components of Emotional Intelligence that form the foundation for understanding and applying EI in educational contexts:

1. Self-Awareness: The ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and tendencies. Self-awareness enables individuals to evaluate how their emotions influence their behavior and decision-making, particularly in stressful or challenging situations. In the classroom, a teacher with high self-awareness can reflect on their emotional state and adapt their teaching style to meet students' needs effectively.

2. Self-Regulation: This involves managing one's emotions constructively rather than being controlled by them. Individuals who excel in self-regulation are able to remain calm under pressure and respond to difficult situations thoughtfully rather than impulsively. For both teachers and students, self-regulation is critical in maintaining a

positive classroom environment, where emotional outbursts are managed, and conflicts are resolved with reason.

3. Motivation: Intrinsic motivation, driven by personal satisfaction and goals rather than external rewards, is another key element of EI. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are typically more driven to achieve their goals and demonstrate greater perseverance in the face of challenges. In education, both teachers and students who exhibit high levels of intrinsic motivation tend to be more engaged and resilient in the learning process.

4. Empathy: The capacity to understand and share the feelings of others is essential for building strong relationships within the classroom. Empathy enables teachers to recognize students' emotional states and address their individual needs, whether by providing support to a struggling student or acknowledging a student's success. Empathy fosters a compassionate classroom environment where students feel understood and supported.

5. Social Skills: Social skills encompass a range of abilities related to managing relationships, such as effective communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork. Teachers with strong social skills are more successful in managing classroom dynamics, while students with these skills are better equipped to collaborate with peers and form meaningful relationships.

Each of these components plays a crucial role in shaping not only interpersonal relationships within the classroom but also the overall learning experience. By fostering emotional intelligence in both teachers and students, educational settings can become more supportive, adaptive, and effective environments for academic and personal growth [1,2].

1.2. Historical Development of EI in Educational Psychology

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has evolved significantly over the past few decades, becoming a central focus in educational psychology. While the roots of EI can be traced back to earlier theories of social and emotional functioning, it was not until the late 20th century that the term gained widespread recognition. The development of EI in educational psychology reflects the growing understanding of how emotions influence learning, behavior, and social interaction within academic settings.

The earliest ideas that laid the foundation for EI can be traced to Edward Thorndike's concept of "social intelligence" in the 1920s. Thorndike defined social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage people and relationships, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal skills in social and educational contexts. However, these early ideas were overshadowed by the predominant focus on cognitive intelligence (IQ) as the main predictor of academic and professional success.

It wasn't until the 1980s that the field began to revisit the importance of emotional and social competencies. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences introduced the idea that intelligence is multifaceted, including not only linguistic and logical-mathematical abilities but also interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences [3]. Gardner's work laid the groundwork for later discussions on emotional intelligence by recognizing that non-cognitive factors play a crucial role in human development and learning.

The turning point for EI came in 1990, when psychologists Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer formally introduced the concept of Emotional Intelligence. They defined EI as "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." Salovey and Mayer's model of EI emphasized four distinct areas: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Their work provided a theoretical framework that linked emotional skills to cognitive processes, offering new insights into how emotions influence learning outcomes.

The mainstream popularity of EI can largely be attributed to Daniel Goleman, whose 1995 book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* brought the concept to public attention. Goleman expanded on Salovey and Mayer's work, emphasizing that EI is not only a set of cognitive abilities but also includes behavioral skills, such as empathy, motivation, and social competence. Goleman's model of EI found immediate resonance in educational psychology, as it aligned with growing efforts to promote holistic education that addresses both cognitive and emotional development.

In the early 2000s, educational psychology began to adopt EI as a key component of social and emotional learning (SEL) programs. SEL aims to teach students emotional regulation, empathy, and interpersonal skills, helping them succeed academically and socially. These programs have been implemented in schools worldwide, with research showing positive outcomes such as improved academic performance, better classroom behavior, and enhanced emotional well-being.

The historical development of EI in educational psychology marks a shift away from traditional notions of intelligence that prioritize only cognitive skills. By recognizing the importance of emotional competencies, the field has embraced a more holistic approach to understanding student success. Today, EI is seen as an essential component of effective teaching and learning, influencing everything from classroom management to student engagement and achievement.

1.3. Importance of EI in the Educational Setting

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical factor in shaping effective educational environments, influencing both teaching and learning experiences. In the educational setting, where interactions between teachers, students, and peers are frequent and emotionally charged, the ability to manage emotions constructively can significantly impact academic success, classroom behavior, and overall well-being. Research has demonstrated that EI plays a vital role in fostering positive relationships, enhancing student engagement, and creating a supportive and productive learning environment.

First and foremost, EI is essential for building strong teacher-student relationships. Teachers with high emotional intelligence are more attuned to the emotional needs of their students, enabling them to respond empathetically and provide the appropriate support. Such teachers are adept at recognizing when students feel overwhelmed, anxious, or frustrated, and they can effectively address these emotions to foster learning and personal growth. By fostering a positive emotional climate in the classroom, emotionally intelligent teachers help students feel more comfortable and motivated, reducing barriers to learning and increasing overall engagement [4-6].

Moreover, students with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage stress and anxiety, which are common challenges in academic settings. EI helps students recognize their emotional states and develop strategies for coping with the pressures of exams, deadlines, and social interactions. Students with strong emotional regulation skills exhibit greater resilience and tend to achieve higher academic performance, as they remain focused and maintain a positive outlook despite challenges. In contrast, students who struggle with emotional regulation may experience more frequent breakdowns or disengagement, leading to poorer academic outcomes.

Another key benefit of EI in education is its influence on peer relationships and collaborative learning. Classrooms often involve group activities where students must work together, communicate effectively, and resolve conflicts. Students with high emotional intelligence can navigate these interactions more successfully, using skills like empathy and social awareness to understand the perspectives of their peers. This enhances the quality of group work, fosters cooperation, and reduces conflict, which are crucial for creating a harmonious and effective learning environment. Schools that

prioritize EI development often experience fewer behavioral issues and cultivate a more inclusive classroom culture in which all students feel valued.

Furthermore, EI contributes to improved classroom management [7]. Teachers with strong emotional intelligence can anticipate potential conflicts, defuse tense situations, and maintain a calm and organized classroom atmosphere. Their ability to model emotional regulation helps students learn how to handle their own emotions, creating a ripple effect that benefits the entire class. By addressing students' emotional needs, teachers can preempt disruptions and cultivate a classroom atmosphere of respect and mutual understanding, both of which are essential for maintaining discipline and focus.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a powerful tool in the educational setting, benefiting both teachers and students. It facilitates better teacher-student interactions, helps students manage stress, enhances peer relationships, and improves classroom management. By incorporating EI into educational practices, schools can create more supportive, responsive, and effective learning environments that promote both academic achievement and emotional well-being.

1.4. Purpose and Structure of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in educational settings, highlighting its importance for both teachers and students. This paper seeks to illustrate how EI contributes to teaching effectiveness, student performance, and classroom dynamics.

The structure of the paper is divided into four main sections. The first section introduces Emotional Intelligence, defining the concept and outlining its key components. The second section traces the historical development of EI, focusing on its emergence in educational psychology. The third section examines the importance of EI in the classroom, exploring its effects on teacher-student relationships, student well-being, and classroom management. Finally, the fourth section discusses strategies for incorporating EI into educational practices to promote a more supportive learning environment.

2. The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Enhancing Teacher-Student Relationships

2.1. How Teachers' EI Affects Classroom Dynamics

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping classroom dynamics, and their Emotional Intelligence (EI) significantly influences how interactions unfold within this environment. A teacher's ability to understand and manage their own emotions, as well as those of their students, directly affects the atmosphere in which learning occurs. High EI in teachers fosters a positive climate that encourages student engagement, collaboration, and emotional safety, all of which are essential for effective learning.

First and foremost, teachers with high EI are more adept at recognizing and responding to the emotional needs of their students. They can perceive subtle emotional cues, such as changes in body language or facial expressions, which may indicate that a student is struggling, confused, or disengaged. By addressing these emotional states promptly, emotionally intelligent teachers can provide the necessary support, whether through one-on-one conversations, adjusting their teaching strategies, or creating a more inclusive classroom environment. This responsiveness helps students feel valued and understood, enhancing their motivation to participate and engage actively in their learning.

Moreover, emotionally intelligent teachers are effective at modeling appropriate emotional responses. By exhibiting self-regulation and emotional control, they serve as role models for their students. When teachers handle stress and frustration calmly, students are more likely to mimic these behaviors, learning how to manage their own emotions in challenging situations. This modeling is particularly important in conflict resolution, where teachers can guide students in navigating disagreements with

empathy and respect. As a result, a classroom culture of mutual understanding and emotional awareness is cultivated, leading to improved peer relationships and a more cohesive learning environment [8].

Additionally, high EI in teachers contributes to a more collaborative and supportive classroom atmosphere. Teachers who exhibit empathy and social skills foster strong relationships with their students, creating a sense of belonging and community. This emotional connection encourages open communication, allowing students to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment. In such environments, students are more likely to take academic risks, share ideas, and engage in group work, all of which enhance their learning experience.

Moreover, emotionally intelligent teachers are more adept at managing classroom behavior. They can recognize triggers for disruptive behavior and implement proactive strategies to prevent issues before they escalate. By employing techniques such as positive reinforcement and emotional check-ins, teachers can maintain a calm and focused classroom, minimizing distractions and fostering an environment conducive to learning. This proactive approach not only enhances classroom dynamics but also promotes student accountability and responsibility for their actions.

In summary, teachers' Emotional Intelligence plays a crucial role in shaping classroom dynamics. By effectively recognizing and responding to students' emotional needs, modeling appropriate emotional behaviors, fostering collaboration, and managing classroom behavior, emotionally intelligent teachers create a positive learning environment that benefits both students and the overall educational experience. This foundational support is essential for cultivating a classroom where all students can thrive academically and socially.

2.2. The Influence of EI on Teacher Communication and Feedback

Emotional Intelligence (EI) significantly influences how teachers communicate with their students and provide feedback, impacting student learning and motivation. Effective communication is a cornerstone of successful teaching, and teachers who possess high EI are better equipped to navigate the emotional landscape of the classroom, fostering an environment where open dialogue and constructive feedback thrive.

One of the key ways in which EI improves teacher communication is by enabling teachers to perceive and understand students' emotional states. Teachers with high emotional awareness can identify when students are feeling anxious, confused, or disengaged. This understanding enables them to tailor their communication styles accordingly, using language and tone that resonates with their students. For example, a teacher who recognizes a student's anxiety during a challenging lesson may choose to adopt a more encouraging and supportive approach, thereby alleviating the student's fears and fostering a positive learning experience. This tailored communication helps students feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts and concerns, ultimately leading to a more collaborative classroom environment.

Furthermore, teachers with high EI excel at delivering constructive feedback that is both motivating and supportive. They understand that feedback is not just about correcting mistakes but also about encouraging growth and development. Emotionally intelligent teachers are skilled at delivering feedback that focuses on students' strengths while addressing areas for improvement. This balanced approach helps students build confidence and resilience, as they feel recognized for their efforts and are guided towards enhancing their skills. For instance, rather than merely identifying errors, a teacher may first acknowledge a student's strengths before providing targeted suggestions for improvement. This method fosters a growth mindset, encouraging students to view challenges as opportunities for learning rather than as failures.

In addition, EI strengthens teachers' capacity for active listening. Teachers who possess high emotional intelligence are not only aware of their own emotions but also sensitive to the emotions of others. This awareness enables them to listen attentively to students, acknowledging their emotions and perspectives. Active listening involves responding to students' questions and concerns with empathy and understanding, which builds trust and rapport. When students feel heard and understood, they are more likely to engage in meaningful discussions, share their thoughts openly, and seek help when needed. This open line of communication is essential for creating a classroom atmosphere where students feel safe to express themselves.

Furthermore, EI positively impacts teachers' responses to student feedback. Emotionally intelligent teachers are open to receiving feedback from their students, viewing it as an opportunity for growth. They can manage their emotions and reactions when students express dissatisfaction or suggestions for improvement regarding teaching methods or classroom practices. This openness not only models a growth mindset but also encourages students to take an active role in their learning process. When teachers demonstrate that they value student input, it fosters a sense of ownership and investment in the educational experience [9].

In conclusion, the influence of Emotional Intelligence on teacher communication and feedback is profound. By understanding and responding to students' emotional states, providing constructive and balanced feedback, engaging in active listening, and being open to student feedback, emotionally intelligent teachers create a communicative and supportive classroom environment. This positive dynamic enhances student engagement, motivation, and overall academic success, illustrating the critical role EI plays in effective teaching.

2.3. Case Studies: EI in Action in Classroom Management

Understanding the role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in classroom management can be enhanced through case studies that illustrate its practical application. These examples demonstrate how teachers have effectively utilized their EI to create positive learning environments, manage student behavior, and foster a sense of community within their classrooms.

2.3.1. Mrs. Johnson's Fifth-Grade Classroom

In Mrs. Johnson's fifth-grade classroom, the teacher noticed that a few students often disrupted lessons by talking out of turn and engaging in off-task behavior. Instead of resorting to traditional disciplinary measures, Mrs. Johnson applied her Emotional Intelligence skills to address the underlying issues contributing to this behavior.

First, she observed the students and identified that their disruptive actions were often a response to feelings of frustration and inadequacy with the material. Recognizing this, Mrs. Johnson initiated a series of emotional check-ins at the beginning of each class, where students could express how they were feeling and any challenges they faced with the lessons. This practice not only gave students a voice but also allowed Mrs. Johnson to gauge the emotional climate of her classroom.

By creating an emotionally supportive environment, Mrs. Johnson encouraged students to articulate their feelings and engage in problem-solving discussions. When disruptive behavior occurred, she approached the students privately, asking open-ended questions to understand their perspectives. This empathetic approach led to a significant reduction in disruptions as students felt understood and more invested in their learning. Mrs. Johnson's ability to connect emotionally with her students not only improved classroom behavior but also fostered a sense of belonging and trust.

2.3.2. Mr. Lee's High School Science Class

Mr. Lee teaches high school science and often faces challenges related to student engagement, especially during complex topics. Recognizing the emotional barriers that hindered learning, Mr. Lee decided to incorporate Emotional Intelligence into his classroom management strategies.

During one particular lesson on chemical reactions, Mr. Lee noticed several students appearing disengaged and confused. Instead of pushing through the lesson, he paused to facilitate a brief discussion about their feelings regarding the topic. Mr. Lee asked the students how they felt about their understanding of the material and encouraged them to share any fears or anxieties related to the upcoming test.

This open dialogue encouraged students to voice their concerns, enabling Mr. Lee to offer reassurance and tailored resources. He then organized small group discussions where students could collaborate on problem-solving and peer teaching. This not only empowered students to support one another but also helped create a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

By leveraging EI to recognize and address students' emotions, Mr. Lee turned a potentially challenging situation into an opportunity for engagement and collaboration. His willingness to adapt his teaching approach based on students' emotional needs led to improved understanding of the material and a more positive classroom atmosphere.

2.3.3. Ms. Ramirez's Middle School Art Class

In Ms. Ramirez's middle school art class, she recognized that many of her students struggled with self-esteem issues, which often manifested as reluctance to participate in class activities. To combat this, Ms. Ramirez implemented strategies grounded in Emotional Intelligence to promote a supportive classroom environment.

She began each class with a "gratitude circle," where students shared something they appreciated about themselves or others. This practice fostered a positive emotional climate and encouraged students to celebrate their strengths and creativity. Ms. Ramirez also made it a point to provide individualized feedback, focusing on students' efforts and progress rather than solely on the final product.

When students felt anxious about sharing their artwork, Ms. Ramirez created a safe space by emphasizing that mistakes were a part of the creative process. Her empathetic approach empowered students to build confidence and embrace risks in their artistic expression. As a result, the classroom became a thriving community where students felt comfortable exploring their creativity without the fear of judgment.

In summary, these case studies illustrate the powerful impact of Emotional Intelligence on classroom management. By applying EI principles, teachers like Mrs. Johnson, Mr. Lee, and Ms. Ramirez have successfully navigated behavioral challenges, fostered positive classroom climates, and enhanced student engagement. Their experiences highlight the importance of understanding and addressing the emotional needs of students as a fundamental aspect of effective teaching and learning.

3. Emotional Intelligence and Student Academic Performance

3.1. EI and Academic Achievement: Theoretical Connections

Emotional Intelligence (EI) has emerged as a crucial factor influencing various aspects of academic performance. Theoretical connections between EI and academic achievement highlight how emotional skills impact students' learning processes, motivation, and overall educational success. Understanding these relationships can provide educators with insights into fostering student development and improving academic outcomes.

One foundational theory that explains the connection between EI and academic achievement is Salovey and Mayer's model of Emotional Intelligence. This model defines EI as the ability to perceive, use, understand, and manage emotions. These

abilities are essential for students to navigate their educational experiences effectively. For example, students with high emotional awareness can recognize when they are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, enabling them to employ coping strategies to manage their emotions and remain focused on their studies. This self-regulation directly contributes to better academic performance, as students are more equipped to handle challenges and setbacks.

Additionally, the Theory of Multiple Intelligences, proposed by Howard Gardner, complements the understanding of EI in the academic context. Gardner suggests that individuals possess different types of intelligences, including interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence. Emotional Intelligence aligns with these concepts, emphasizing the importance of understanding one's own emotions (intrapersonal) and recognizing the emotions of others (interpersonal). Students who excel in these areas are better able to collaborate with peers, seek help when needed, and build supportive relationships with teachers—all of which are conducive to enhanced academic performance [10].

Another theoretical framework that underpins the connection between EI and academic achievement is Bandura's Social Learning Theory. According to Bandura, individuals learn behaviors and attitudes through observation and interaction with others. In an academic setting, students with high EI are more likely to model positive behaviors such as persistence, resilience, and effective communication. They can learn from their peers and teachers, fostering a collaborative learning environment that enhances academic outcomes. For instance, emotionally intelligent students may be more inclined to participate in group discussions and study groups, where they can share knowledge and support one another's learning.

Moreover, the Achievement Goal Theory provides further insights into the relationship between EI and academic success. This theory posits that students' motivation and achievement are influenced by the goals they set for themselves. Students with high EI are often more intrinsically motivated, focusing on mastering tasks and understanding concepts rather than simply performing well on tests. Their ability to regulate their emotions and maintain a positive outlook allows them to approach learning with curiosity and enthusiasm, ultimately leading to higher levels of achievement.

Research studies have supported these theoretical connections, demonstrating a consistent positive correlation between EI and academic performance. For example, studies have found that students with higher emotional intelligence tend to achieve better grades, perform well on standardized tests, and exhibit improved study habits. This correlation highlights the importance of integrating emotional intelligence training into educational curricula, as it not only supports students' emotional well-being but also enhances their academic success.

In summary, the theoretical connections between Emotional Intelligence and academic achievement underscore the critical role that emotional skills play in students' educational experiences. By leveraging these theoretical connections, educators can cultivate supportive learning environments that nurture both emotional growth and academic excellence. As schools increasingly recognize the significance of EI, they can implement strategies and programs that cultivate these essential skills, ultimately benefiting students in their academic pursuits.

3.2. Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management in Students

Stress is an inevitable part of student life, arising from academic pressures, social interactions, and personal challenges. Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a vital role in helping students manage stress effectively, contributing to their overall well-being and academic performance. By enhancing students' ability to recognize, understand, and

regulate their emotions, EI equips them with the tools necessary to navigate stressful situations with resilience and composure.

One of the key components of EI, emotional awareness, helps students identify when they are feeling stressed. This self-awareness is crucial, as it enables students to recognize early signs of stress, such as anxiety, frustration, or overwhelm, before these emotions escalate. Students with high emotional intelligence are more attuned to their emotional states and can take proactive steps to address stressors. For example, a student who is aware of mounting exam anxiety may choose to implement stress-relief strategies, such as deep breathing exercises or time management techniques, to regain control of their emotions and focus on their studies.

In addition to emotional awareness, self-regulation is another essential aspect of EI that contributes to effective stress management. Students who can regulate their emotional responses are better able to maintain a balanced perspective when faced with academic challenges. Rather than succumbing to negative emotions, such as panic or frustration, emotionally intelligent students can calmly assess the situation and implement coping mechanisms. This ability to manage stress positively impacts their ability to concentrate, problem-solve, and persist in the face of difficulties. For instance, a student who encounters a difficult assignment might initially feel stressed, but by using EI to regulate their emotions, they can break the task into manageable steps and approach it with a clear mind [11].

Motivation, another dimension of EI, also plays a critical role in stress management. Students with high EI are often intrinsically motivated, meaning they are driven by personal goals and a desire for self-improvement rather than external rewards or pressure. This internal motivation helps them maintain a positive outlook, even in stressful circumstances. Instead of viewing stress as a threat, emotionally intelligent students perceive it as a challenge that can be overcome through perseverance and effort. This mindset not only reduces the negative impact of stress but also enhances their academic performance and resilience.

Another critical component of EI in stress management is empathy, which allows students to understand and respond to the emotions of others. Empathy fosters strong interpersonal relationships and provides a support system during stressful times. When students experience academic or personal stress, having emotionally intelligent peers and teachers who can offer empathy and support helps them feel understood and less isolated. This social support can alleviate stress and provide students with the emotional resources they need to cope more effectively. For example, a student dealing with the stress of group projects can benefit from empathetic classmates who understand the pressure and offer encouragement or assistance.

Lastly, EI also promotes the development of adaptive coping strategies, which are crucial for managing stress effectively. Emotionally intelligent students are more likely to engage in positive coping mechanisms, such as seeking help from teachers or peers, practicing mindfulness, or engaging in physical activity. These strategies not only help reduce the immediate impact of stress but also build long-term resilience, enabling students to bounce back from setbacks and maintain emotional balance throughout their academic journey. In contrast, students with lower EI might resort to maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance or negative self-talk, which can exacerbate stress and hinder academic success.

In conclusion, Emotional Intelligence plays a significant role in stress management for students [12]. Through emotional awareness, self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, empathy, and the use of adaptive coping strategies, emotionally intelligent students are better equipped to handle the stressors of academic life. By fostering EI skills in students, educators can support their emotional well-being and help them build resilience, which is essential for success in both academic and personal domains.

3.3. The Role of EI in Collaborative Learning and Peer Interaction

Collaborative learning, which involves students working together to achieve shared goals, has become a key component of modern education. Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays a significant role in facilitating effective collaboration and peer interaction, as it enables students to navigate the complexities of group dynamics, manage interpersonal relationships, and contribute to a positive learning environment. Through emotional awareness, empathy, and social skills, EI enhances students' ability to engage constructively with their peers, fostering collaboration that leads to improved learning outcomes.

One of the primary ways EI influences collaborative learning is through emotional awareness, which allows students to recognize and understand their own emotions as well as those of their peers. In group settings, students with high EI can identify emotional cues that may indicate frustration, confusion, or disengagement among team members. By being attuned to these emotional signals, they can intervene early to address conflicts or offer support, preventing negative emotions from derailing the group's progress. For instance, if a student notices a peer feeling overwhelmed by a task, they can offer assistance or suggest a break, helping to maintain a productive and harmonious group atmosphere.

Empathy is another crucial aspect of EI that enhances peer interaction in collaborative learning environments. Empathetic students are more likely to understand and appreciate the perspectives of others, which is essential for effective teamwork. In collaborative settings, students with strong empathy skills are better able to listen actively, validate their peers' contributions, and create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued. This promotes open communication and trust within the group, enabling students to share ideas freely and work towards common objectives. For example, when discussing a group project, empathetic students are more likely to ensure that quieter members are given a chance to speak and that differing opinions are respected.

In addition to empathy, social skills—such as effective communication, conflict resolution, and cooperation—are key elements of EI that contribute to successful collaborative learning. Students with high EI are skilled at expressing their thoughts clearly, resolving disagreements constructively, and fostering a sense of camaraderie among group members. These skills are especially crucial in group settings, where diverse perspectives and approaches naturally emerge. For instance, emotionally intelligent students can mediate conflicts by helping peers find common ground or suggesting compromise solutions. This ability to manage conflicts and maintain positive relationships ensures that group work remains focused on the task at hand, rather than becoming mired in personal disagreements.

Research has shown that students with higher levels of EI tend to perform better in group learning environments, as they are more adept at building and maintaining productive peer relationships. Research indicates that students with high EI frequently exhibit prosocial behaviors, including offering assistance, providing encouragement, and sharing resources. These behaviors not only enhance the learning experience for individual students but also contribute to the overall success of the group. For example, a student who encourages collaboration by sharing study materials or offering constructive feedback can significantly improve the group's ability to achieve its academic goals.

Furthermore, EI promotes adaptability in collaborative learning, as students with high EI can adjust their behavior and communication style to suit the needs of the group. Whether working with peers who have different learning styles, cultural backgrounds, or communication preferences, emotionally intelligent students are more flexible and open to finding solutions that work for everyone. This adaptability ensures that

collaborative learning is inclusive and effective, allowing diverse groups of students to thrive in various educational settings [13,14].

In conclusion, Emotional Intelligence plays a pivotal role in enhancing collaborative learning and peer interaction. By fostering emotional awareness, empathy, and social skills, EI helps students navigate the interpersonal challenges of group work, resolve conflicts, and build strong peer relationships. As a result, students with high EI are better equipped to contribute to and benefit from collaborative learning experiences. Future research could explore targeted EI training programs in educational settings to further enhance students' academic and social development.

3.4. Empirical Evidence: Studies Linking EI to Academic Success

Over the past two decades, numerous empirical studies have explored the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and academic success, providing compelling evidence that students with higher EI levels generally achieve better academic outcomes. These studies have examined various dimensions of EI, such as emotional regulation, self-awareness, and social skills, and their impact on academic outcomes like grades, motivation, and overall school performance. By analyzing the findings from these studies, it becomes clear that EI plays a critical role in enhancing students' academic achievements.

One of the earliest and most influential studies in this area was conducted by Parker et al. (2004), who examined the EI levels of first-year university students and tracked their academic performance over time. The study found that students with higher emotional intelligence scores were more likely to achieve higher grades and were less likely to drop out of school. Specifically, the researchers identified a strong correlation between EI components, such as stress management and adaptability, and academic success. This study laid the foundation for understanding how emotional regulation can help students cope with the pressures of academic life, leading to better performance.

Another significant study by Perera and DiGiacomo (2013) reinforced these findings by conducting a meta-analysis of existing research on EI and academic achievement. Their meta-analysis, synthesizing data from over 100 studies spanning different educational contexts, found that emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of academic success across various age groups and educational settings. The researchers found that students with higher levels of EI not only performed better academically but also exhibited greater motivation, engagement, and persistence in their studies. This meta-analysis highlighted the importance of emotional intelligence as a non-cognitive factor contributing to academic success, alongside traditional measures like IQ.

In addition to individual studies, research has explored how specific components of EI, such as emotional regulation, directly impact academic outcomes. A study conducted by MacCann et al. (2020) found that students who are better able to regulate their emotions are more likely to succeed academically. The study showed that students with high emotional regulation skills were more adept at managing stress and maintaining focus during exams, leading to improved test scores. Emotional regulation also helped students avoid procrastination and manage their time more effectively, further contributing to their academic success [15].

Similarly, Brackett et al. (2012) examined the role of emotional intelligence in promoting positive social interactions and its indirect effect on academic performance. Their study found that students with higher EI were better at forming and maintaining positive relationships with teachers and peers, which in turn created a more supportive and motivating learning environment. These positive social dynamics were linked to better academic outcomes, as emotionally intelligent students were more likely to seek help when needed and participate actively in group learning activities.

Moreover, the role of EI in academic success has been studied across different educational levels and contexts. Research by Qualter et al. (2009) focused on secondary school students and found that EI was positively correlated with both academic performance and students' attitudes towards learning. Students with high EI were more likely to enjoy school, exhibit curiosity, and engage in deep learning strategies, which ultimately translated into higher academic achievements. This study demonstrated that the benefits of emotional intelligence extend beyond cognitive abilities, influencing students' motivation and approach to learning.

Lastly, research has explored the impact of EI training programs on students' academic success. A study by Nelis et al. (2009) tested the effects of an emotional intelligence intervention program on university students and found that those who received EI training showed significant improvements in both their emotional intelligence levels and academic performance compared to a control group. This study provided evidence that EI can be developed and that targeted interventions can lead to measurable improvements in academic outcomes.

In conclusion, empirical research strongly supports the link between Emotional Intelligence and academic success. Research consistently indicates that students with higher EI levels outperform their peers academically, exhibiting superior emotional regulation, motivation, and social skills. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating EI development into educational curricula to foster both academic success and emotional well-being in students.

4. Developing Emotional Intelligence in Students and Teachers

4.1. Incorporating EI into the Curriculum

Incorporating Emotional Intelligence (EI) into the curriculum is an essential step toward fostering emotional and social skills that are just as important as cognitive abilities for students' overall success. By integrating EI into academic programs, schools can create a more holistic approach to education that nurtures not only intellectual growth but also emotional well-being, interpersonal skills, and resilience. To effectively incorporate EI into the curriculum, educators must focus on both explicit teaching of emotional competencies and embedding EI principles within everyday classroom activities.

Explicit EI instruction entails the direct teaching of key emotional competencies, including self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and social problem-solving. These skills can be introduced through standalone courses or integrated into existing subjects like social studies, language arts, or health education. For example, schools can introduce lessons that help students identify and label their emotions, understand the impact of their emotions on behavior, and practice strategies for managing emotions in challenging situations. Programs like Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) have already demonstrated significant success in enhancing students' emotional intelligence through structured curricula focused on these core emotional competencies.

One effective approach to teaching EI is through role-playing and scenario-based activities that allow students to practice emotional regulation and empathy in real-life situations. These activities provide a safe space for students to experience different emotions and learn how to respond to them constructively. For instance, students can engage in role-play scenarios that simulate common peer conflicts or stress-inducing situations, practicing how to remain calm, resolve disputes, and consider others' perspectives. This hands-on experience helps students internalize EI concepts and apply them in their daily interactions.

In addition to direct instruction, EI can be woven into the fabric of the classroom environment. Teachers can model emotionally intelligent behavior, creating a classroom culture that values empathy, respect, and open communication. For instance, teachers can encourage students to express their feelings openly and validate their emotions

without judgment. By doing so, they help students become more emotionally aware and foster a supportive, emotionally safe learning environment. Teachers can also incorporate emotional check-ins, mindfulness exercises, or reflection periods into the daily routine to help students develop greater self-awareness and emotional regulation skills.

Another important aspect of incorporating EI into the curriculum is promoting collaborative learning. Group activities, peer discussions, and team projects encourage students to practice social skills, empathy, and emotional awareness in real-time. By working together, students learn how to navigate different personalities, manage conflicts, and support one another in achieving shared goals [16]. This approach not only enhances academic learning but also cultivates students' emotional intelligence by providing hands-on experience in relationship management and teamwork.

Assessment and feedback are also key components in integrating EI into the curriculum. Teachers can assess students' emotional intelligence through both formal and informal methods, such as self-assessment surveys, reflective journals, or peer evaluations. Feedback on emotional intelligence can be provided alongside academic feedback, helping students recognize their emotional growth and areas for improvement. For example, a teacher might provide constructive feedback on how a student handled a group project, offering insights on their communication, collaboration, or conflict-resolution skills.

Teacher training is crucial for successfully incorporating EI into the curriculum. Teachers need to be equipped with the knowledge and tools to teach emotional intelligence effectively. Professional development programs that focus on EI can provide teachers with strategies for integrating EI into their lessons and modeling emotionally intelligent behaviors. Additionally, teachers should be trained in recognizing the emotional needs of students and supporting their emotional development, ensuring that the curriculum reflects both academic and emotional growth.

In conclusion, incorporating Emotional Intelligence into the curriculum is a vital step toward fostering students' social and emotional development alongside their academic success. By explicitly teaching EI skills, embedding them into classroom culture, promoting collaborative learning, and providing continuous feedback, schools can create a learning environment that equips students with the emotional tools they need to thrive in both their academic and personal lives [17].

4.2. Strategies for Teachers to Enhance Their Own EI

For teachers, enhancing their Emotional Intelligence (EI) is crucial not only for personal well-being but also for creating a positive and supportive classroom environment. Emotionally intelligent teachers are better equipped to manage stress, build meaningful relationships with students, and foster a more empathetic and responsive learning atmosphere. Developing EI involves continuous self-reflection, emotional regulation, and empathy-building practices that allow teachers to navigate the emotional complexities of the classroom effectively. Below are several strategies teachers can use to enhance their own emotional intelligence.

One of the foundational strategies for teachers to improve their EI is self-awareness. Teachers need to regularly reflect on their emotions and identify how those emotions influence their interactions with students and colleagues. A practical approach to building self-awareness is maintaining a reflection journal, where teachers can note emotional responses to specific classroom situations, such as frustration during a challenging lesson or joy after a student's success. By identifying emotional triggers, teachers become more conscious of their feelings and can adjust their behaviors accordingly, which helps in managing emotions effectively in real-time.

Another important strategy is developing emotional regulation skills. Teachers frequently encounter stressful situations, including managing disruptive students,

balancing heavy workloads, and resolving conflicts with parents or colleagues. To manage these challenges, teachers can practice mindfulness and stress-reduction techniques, such as deep breathing exercises or short meditation sessions during breaks. These techniques help teachers remain calm under pressure, allowing them to respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. Consistent use of emotional regulation strategies enables teachers to maintain a positive and supportive demeanor, even in stressful moments, which benefits both their well-being and the classroom environment [18].

Empathy is another key component of emotional intelligence, and teachers can enhance their empathy by actively seeking to understand their students' perspectives. This can be achieved through active listening—truly paying attention to students' verbal and non-verbal cues during conversations. Teachers can also engage in perspective-taking exercises, where they reflect on the challenges their students might be facing, whether academically or emotionally. By developing a deeper understanding of students' emotions, teachers are better able to provide support, show compassion, and address students' individual needs.

Furthermore, teachers can improve their EI by strengthening their communication skills. Clear, open, and emotionally aware communication is essential for fostering trust and rapport with students. Teachers can work on expressing themselves more clearly and respectfully, especially when providing feedback or addressing conflicts in the classroom. Using positive communication techniques, such as "I" statements, can help teachers express their feelings without blaming or escalating situations. For example, saying "I feel concerned when assignments are late because it impacts your learning" is more constructive than saying "You never hand in your assignments on time."

Soliciting feedback is a valuable strategy for teachers aiming to refine their emotional intelligence. Just as teachers provide feedback to students, they can seek feedback from colleagues, administrators, or even students themselves about their emotional interactions in the classroom. Constructive feedback helps teachers recognize blind spots in their emotional behavior and gives them specific areas to work on. For instance, feedback may reveal that a teacher needs to work on being more patient during stressful situations or more approachable when students need help. This process of self-improvement through feedback fosters personal and professional growth.

Professional development also plays a significant role in enhancing teachers' EI. Many schools offer workshops or training sessions focused on emotional intelligence, stress management, and social-emotional learning (SEL) practices. Attending these programs equips teachers with evidence-based strategies for managing their emotions and promoting emotional well-being in the classroom. Additionally, teachers can engage in peer support networks or learning communities where they share experiences, discuss challenges, and learn from one another's emotional coping strategies.

Finally, teachers must prioritize self-care as an essential component of their emotional intelligence development. Teaching can be an emotionally demanding profession, and without adequate self-care, teachers may experience burnout, which negatively affects their emotional well-being and the classroom atmosphere. Setting boundaries, engaging in hobbies outside of work, and seeking social support from friends and family are all critical aspects of maintaining emotional health. When teachers take care of their own emotional needs, they are better positioned to support their students' emotional and academic growth.

In conclusion, enhancing emotional intelligence requires teachers to actively engage in self-reflection, emotional regulation, empathy-building, and effective communication. Through mindfulness, professional development, and a commitment to self-care, teachers can improve their emotional intelligence, leading to better classroom management, stronger teacher-student relationships, and a more positive learning environment for all.

4.3. Methods for Fostering EI in Students

Fostering Emotional Intelligence (EI) in students is critical to their holistic development, enabling them to better understand their own emotions, manage interpersonal relationships, and cope with the challenges of both academic and personal life. Emotional intelligence is not an innate trait but a skill that can be developed through intentional methods and practices within the classroom. By incorporating a variety of strategies, teachers can help students enhance their emotional awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, which are key components of EI.

One of the most effective methods for fostering EI in students is through explicit social and emotional learning (SEL) programs. SEL programs provide structured lessons designed to teach students emotional competencies such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These programs often include activities that allow students to practice identifying their emotions, understanding how emotions affect behavior, and applying strategies to manage their emotions effectively. For instance, SEL lessons may include discussions on handling frustration, managing anxiety before exams, or resolving conflicts peacefully, all of which help students build emotional resilience and interpersonal skills.

Role-playing and simulations are another powerful method to help students develop empathy and social awareness, both of which are central to EI. In role-playing exercises, students take on different perspectives in a variety of scenarios, such as peer conflicts, ethical dilemmas, or stress-inducing situations. This allows them to step into others' shoes and experience emotions from different points of view, fostering empathy and emotional understanding. Teachers can create scenarios relevant to students' lives, encouraging them to practice not only emotional awareness but also constructive communication and conflict resolution.

Mindfulness practices are highly effective in fostering EI in students, especially in enhancing their emotional regulation skills. Mindfulness activities such as deep breathing exercises, meditation, and reflective journaling encourage students to pause and reflect on their emotional states, promoting greater self-awareness. These practices help students develop the ability to stay calm under pressure, regulate their emotions, and respond to stressful situations with greater composure. Incorporating short mindfulness exercises into the school day—such as a few minutes of breathing exercises before an exam or reflective writing at the end of a lesson—can significantly enhance students' emotional regulation abilities.

Collaborative group activities also provide opportunities for students to develop emotional intelligence by working together in team settings. Through group work, students must navigate interpersonal dynamics, resolve conflicts, and support each other in achieving common goals. In these settings, students are exposed to different perspectives and emotions, which encourages them to develop empathy and social skills. For example, assigning students to work in diverse groups on a long-term project can challenge them to communicate effectively, manage conflicts constructively, and respect each other's contributions. These experiences teach students how to navigate the social complexities of group work, an important skill for both academic and future workplace success.

Teachers can also foster emotional intelligence in students by promoting open communication and emotional expression in the classroom. Encouraging students to talk about their emotions, whether through class discussions, sharing circles, or individual reflection, helps them build emotional awareness and vocabulary. For instance, after a challenging group project or a stressful event like a school test, teachers can facilitate a class reflection where students discuss how they felt and how they managed their emotions. This practice not only normalizes emotional expression but also helps students recognize the importance of self-awareness and emotional regulation in achieving personal and academic success [19,20].

Another crucial strategy involves positive teacher-student interactions, in which teachers exemplify emotionally intelligent behavior. By displaying empathy, active listening, and calm responses in difficult situations, teachers set an example for students to emulate. For instance, when addressing a student's behavioral issue, a teacher who remains calm, listens attentively, and validates the student's feelings demonstrates emotional regulation and empathy in action. These interactions help students understand the impact of EI in real-world scenarios and encourage them to adopt similar behaviors.

Finally, feedback and reflection are essential components in helping students grow their emotional intelligence. Teachers can provide constructive feedback on students' emotional and social interactions, highlighting areas where they showed emotional awareness or empathy, as well as areas where they could improve their emotional regulation or conflict resolution skills. Self-assessment and peer feedback activities can also encourage students to reflect on their emotional growth, helping them take ownership of their development in emotional intelligence.

In conclusion, fostering emotional intelligence in students requires a combination of structured SEL programs, practical role-playing activities, mindfulness practices, and opportunities for collaborative work. By creating an emotionally supportive classroom environment where students are encouraged to express their emotions and develop empathy for others, teachers can significantly enhance students' emotional intelligence, setting them up for success both in school and beyond.

4.4. Long-term Benefits of EI in Educational and Professional Contexts

Emotional intelligence (EI) yields enduring benefits that transcend the classroom, profoundly shaping students' academic paths and future careers. By developing emotional intelligence during their formative years, students are better equipped to navigate the complexities of academic life, interpersonal relationships, and career challenges. The skills associated with EI—self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and effective communication—are highly valued in both educational settings and the modern workplace, offering long-term advantages for personal and professional growth.

In the educational context, students with high emotional intelligence tend to perform better academically due to their ability to manage stress, maintain motivation, and engage in positive peer relationships. Emotional regulation allows students to cope with academic pressure, such as exam anxiety or deadlines, more effectively. They can remain calm under stress and recover from setbacks quickly, which contributes to sustained academic achievement. Moreover, students who are emotionally intelligent often excel in collaborative learning environments, as they can empathize with peers, resolve conflicts, and contribute to group projects productively. This emotional maturity fosters a supportive learning community where students can thrive.

Beyond academic achievement, EI fosters stronger social integration in educational settings. Emotionally intelligent students tend to form stronger relationships with their peers and teachers, which enhances their overall school experience. They are more likely to engage in positive social behaviors, such as helping others, showing compassion, and collaborating effectively. These relationships create a network of emotional support that is critical for mental well-being, especially during stressful academic periods. Students who develop strong emotional intelligence skills often become leaders within their peer groups, demonstrating the ability to motivate and guide others.

In the professional context, the long-term benefits of EI are even more pronounced. Employers consistently rank emotional intelligence as one of the most sought-after skills in today's workforce, as it directly impacts job performance, leadership potential, and workplace harmony. Emotionally intelligent employees are better at managing workplace stress, navigating office politics, and maintaining professional relationships.

They are able to communicate more effectively, resolve conflicts amicably, and foster a positive work environment, which increases overall productivity.

A major advantage of EI in the workplace lies in its critical role in leadership and management. Leaders with high EI are more effective in motivating their teams, understanding their employees' needs, and creating an inclusive and emotionally supportive work culture. These leaders excel at providing constructive feedback, managing team dynamics, and guiding employees through challenges. Research has shown that leaders with strong emotional intelligence foster higher employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention rates. As businesses increasingly prioritize emotional intelligence in leadership roles, individuals who have cultivated these skills from a young age are more likely to advance into managerial positions.

Additionally, emotional intelligence contributes to career resilience. In today's rapidly changing job market, the ability to adapt to new situations and manage uncertainty is critical. Employees with high emotional intelligence are better equipped to handle the emotional toll of career changes, whether it be shifting industries, navigating layoffs, or embracing new roles. Their ability to stay calm under pressure, recover from setbacks, and maintain a positive outlook helps them persist and succeed in the face of challenges. Furthermore, EI enables individuals to continuously build strong professional networks, which can provide support and opportunities during career transitions.

In professions that require high levels of emotional labor, such as healthcare, education, customer service, and counseling, emotional intelligence is indispensable. These roles often require employees to manage their own emotions while responding to the emotional needs of others. For example, a healthcare professional with high EI can provide compassionate care while also maintaining emotional boundaries to prevent burnout. Similarly, educators with strong emotional intelligence are better able to connect with their students, create a positive learning environment, and manage the emotional demands of teaching. In these fields, EI is not just an asset but a necessity for long-term career success and emotional well-being.

Furthermore, EI is integral to teamwork and collaboration, both of which are indispensable across nearly all professional fields. Teams composed of emotionally intelligent members are more likely to function cohesively, resolve conflicts quickly, and achieve higher levels of innovation and productivity. This is because team members with high EI can recognize and manage not only their own emotions but also those of their colleagues, leading to a more harmonious and efficient working environment. As teamwork and collaboration become increasingly important in modern workplaces, individuals with strong EI are better positioned to succeed in team-based projects and roles.

In conclusion, the long-term benefits of emotional intelligence in both educational and professional contexts are substantial. In education, EI enhances academic performance, fosters positive social relationships, and prepares students for the emotional demands of adulthood. In professional life, EI contributes to career success by improving leadership abilities, workplace relationships, and adaptability in the face of challenges. As emotional intelligence continues to be highly valued in both academic and career settings, developing these skills early provides individuals with a lifelong advantage.

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