

TEACHING WITH HEART AND MIND: THE POWER OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION

by:

Ainelle E. Jordan

Teacher I, E.C. Bernabe National High School

Beyond textbooks and tests, the true lessons of the classroom are written in emotions. Teachers who understand this truth are not only shaping smarter students but also nurturing more compassionate human beings.

Every day, teachers step into classrooms carrying more than their lesson plans. They bring their moods, their energy, and their emotions, all of which set the tone for learning. A smile can spark motivation, while a careless word can dim a child's confidence. In a world where education is often measured in scores and statistics, emotional intelligence, the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions, has quietly become one of the most essential tools a teacher can possess.

Teachers who develop emotional intelligence do more than just enhance their own performance, according to research. They transform the classroom experience. According to Safina et al. (2020), a teacher's ability to manage emotions is often the deciding factor in whether communication with students succeeds or fails. It is not only about handling stress but also about creating an environment where empathy, patience, and understanding thrive.

This journey begins long before teachers stand in front of a class. Teacher training programs are increasingly recognizing the need to prepare future educators to nurture emotional growth alongside academic skills. Dubovyk et al. (2020) emphasize that activities such as educational games, literature analysis, and guided exercises can build both awareness and empathy. These activities teach future teachers how to help children

recognize their own emotions and respond to the emotions of others. When such skills are integrated into teaching, the classroom becomes a safe space where both intellect and feelings are valued.

Emotional intelligence also strengthens leadership in education. The most inspiring teachers are not those who command authority but those who lead through understanding and example. A study by Zurita-Ortega et al. (2020) revealed that transformational leadership, characterized by motivation and empathy, is closely tied to strong emotional intelligence. These teachers uplift both students and colleagues, helping them navigate challenges with compassion. Their leadership goes beyond instruction. It creates a culture of trust and respect that spreads throughout the school community.

At the same time, emotional intelligence serves as a form of protection for teachers themselves. The demands of teaching can be overwhelming, and burnout is a familiar challenge for many educators. Kant and Shanker (2021) found a strong negative relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout, showing that teachers who are more emotionally aware and resilient are less likely to suffer from exhaustion. By managing stress effectively, reflecting on their own emotions, and staying connected to the purpose of teaching, educators can sustain their passion for the profession.

The benefits do not end with the teachers. Perhaps the most powerful impact of emotional intelligence is its ripple effect on students. Wang (2022) found that emotionally intelligent teachers are not only more engaged but also more effective in raising student achievement. These teachers bring energy, self-belief, and positivity into the classroom, and their students respond in kind. They not only learn lessons in math, science, or literature but also learn how to cope with challenges, show empathy, and believe in themselves. These are life skills that last far longer than any grade on a report card.

At its core, education has always been about more than memorizing facts and passing tests. It is about preparing young people to live with purpose and meaning in the

world. Emotional intelligence bridges the gap between knowledge and humanity. When teachers teach with both heart and mind, they create classrooms where learning is not only about solving equations or writing essays but also about developing the values and skills that make students better human beings.

Ultimately, the message is straightforward but profound. Emotional intelligence is not just a professional skill for teachers. It is a gift they pass on to every student they meet. And when it thrives, education itself transforms from instruction into inspiration. To teach with heart is to teach forever.

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