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## **Innovation for Transforming Democracy: Emotionally Intelligent Citizenry**

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PRESENTED AT THE AACTE 72<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MEETING  
ATLANTA, GA  
FEBRUARY 28<sup>TH</sup> – MARCH 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2020

# **Innovation for Transforming Democracy: Emotionally Intelligent Citizenry**

## **ABSTRACT**

In today's milieu of school shootings, unprecedented rates of attempted suicide, drug addictions, escalating drop-out rates, teen age pregnancy, and behavior disorders, we propose that future teachers be trained in the delivery and maintenance of social-emotional learning. This presentation urges teacher educators to prepare future teachers for this task of inculcating emotional intelligence in every child.

## **SECTION I: CONTENT**

### **A. Statement of the Issue:**

Some professionals believe that emotional intelligence (EQ) matters more than cognitive intelligence (IQ). Emotions drive learning, decision making, relationships, and mental health. Evidence-based approaches to social and emotional learning (SEL) lead to higher academic performance, greater teacher effectiveness, and enhanced school climate (Brackett, Mayer, & Warner, 2004).

There is growing momentum across the globe in favor of social-emotional learning (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2016). Unfortunately, however, training in SEL/emotional intelligence is not yet a part of teacher licensing requirements in the USA. Schools of education are not required to prepare teachers in the domain of emotional intelligence.

### **B. Literature Review:**

Reports by Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence on RULER, their approach to emotional intelligence indicate that children who are taught emotional intelligence have stronger connections to teachers, better conflict management skills, and greater academic achievement than children who do not receive the training (Nathanson, Rivers, Flynn, & Brackett, 2016). A meta-analysis of 213 studies on a wide range of social emotional learning programs has shown increase in academic performance, increase in helping behaviors and decrease in aggression as well as decrease in emotional distress among students (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011).

When schools promote social, and emotional learning along with academics, students stay in school till graduation, learn to manage the feelings of anger, disappointment, or shame that might otherwise push them to hurt one another. They become pro-social and self-confident (Brackett et al., 2009). The current literature on emotional intelligence supports inclusion of social/emotional learning in schools.

### **C. Contribution:**

This presentation heightens awareness about the growing global concern for instruction of emotional intelligence or social-emotional learning (SEL) in schools. It urges teacher educators to prepare teachers to be emotionally intelligent and be able to promote social-emotional learning in their classrooms. We share an **innovative perspective** in teacher preparation. In addition to addressing the cognitive domain of our children, there is need to address the emotional development of our children as well. Our presentation responds to the question: **How can innovation in programming lead to building human capacities and impacting educational systems.** Our teachers must become emotionally intelligent and make their schools and classrooms emotionally intelligent.

### **D. Relevance:**

Our presentation has implications for policy. There is abundant empirical evidence indicating that training in emotional intelligence benefits teachers, students, and administrators alike. However, at present, no college of education requires its candidates to complete a course and/or training in emotional intelligence. No state department of education has training in emotional intelligence as a certification requirement. We urge that our presentation be considered to bring changes in policy as well as practice.

### **E. Implication for Action:**

By disseminating our work, we are heightening awareness that emotional intelligence can be taught and learned. Emotional Intelligence can be deployed to address a number of contemporary social and educational problems prevalent in our democracy. Our presentation can be considered for transforming changes in teacher certification requirements as well as in teacher preparation programs.

## **SECTION II: OUTCOMES & METHODS**

### **A. Learner/Participant Outcomes:**

At the end of this session, participants were:

- (1) Able to discuss the significance of emotional intelligence for academic achievement and social behavior.
- (2) Able to reflect on the need to prepare future teachers for inculcating emotional intelligence in every child.
- (3) Invited to be a part of community of educators interested in the engagement of emotional intelligence to address some of the current educational and social problems

## B. Methods:

- ✓ Using handouts and PowerPoint slides, we shared with attendees all that we have learned about emotional intelligence.
- ✓ We used principles of collaborative learning.
- ✓ We engaged audience in reflective dialog about preparing future teachers in emotional intelligence.
- ✓ We invited their input and reaction to our proposed, innovative idea (s).
- ✓ We invited them to share their experiences with a course/workshop in emotional intelligence.
- ✓ We shared with them voices of our teacher candidates
- ✓ Given below is the summary content of our presentation.

Cognitive intelligence (IQ) indicates an individual's ability to learn, retain knowledge, and apply this knowledge to real life situations. It indicates how a person understands **information**. Emotional intelligence (EQ) on the other hand indicates how an individual understands **emotions**. It refers to the ability to perceive, control and evaluate our emotions, as well as the emotions of those around us.

There are three different models of emotional intelligence. These are: (1) Ability Model; (2) Trait Model; and (3) Mixed Model. According to **Ability Model**, emotional intelligence is a brain-based ability. It includes perceiving emotions, reasoning with emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

According to **Trait Model** of emotional intelligence, developed by Petrides & Furnham (2000), emotional intelligence is a personality trait. It includes behavior dispositions and self-perceived abilities to identify, assess, and manage emotions of self and others.

**Mixed Model** of emotional intelligence proposed by Goleman (1995) includes: (a) Self-awareness-know your emotions and values; (b) Self-Regulation-manage your disruptive emotions, and impulses; (c) Social skills-manage other people's emotions; (d) Empathy-recognize and consider emotions of others; and (e) Motivation- motivate self to achieve. These are all learned capabilities.

High quality schools ensure that all students master reading, math, writing, science, history, foreign languages, and arts. In addition to graduating academically proficient students who are culturally literate and committed to lifelong learning, schools must also enhance students' emotional intelligence so that they are fully prepared for work and life (Lopes, Brackett, Nezlek, Schütz, & Salovey, 2004). Each and every one of us is born with bits of emotional intelligence that can be developed and improved. Emotional intelligence can be taught and learned (Goleman, 2012).

Research on the effects of social/emotional training indicates that those who receive the training demonstrate less anxiety, less depression, less aggression, less involvement with drugs, greater relationship skills, greater social competence, and higher academic achievement. Four of the US

states, Illinois, Kansas, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania have already adopted free-standing social/emotional learning (SEL) standards for K-12 students that extend from preschool into the early elementary grades (Dusenbury & Weissberg, 2016).

Towards the end of our presentation, **we shared voices of our teacher candidates** about the significance of SEL training in their teacher preparation. Majority of our candidates ascertain that they should be trained to deliver and maintain social-emotional learning. It will benefit not only their future students but to themselves as well. As teacher educators, we can help raise the emotional intelligence of future generations and thus have a better-rounded, and more compassionate citizenry and society. At the same time, by helping develop emotional intelligence, we can **disrupt existing inequities and educate all for change.**

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