



Emotional Leadership: Implications for Teachers and Leaders

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Abstract

There are some similarities and differences between 'emotional competence' and 'emotional intelligence', and under school context, the term 'emotional competence' is more suitable to describe teacher emotions and emotional leadership. Emotional regulation, emotional decision making and certain emotional context are three features concerning emotional leadership. To develop emotions in school environment, we should not neglect the necessity of teachers' emotional development, but it is still a long way to integrate teacher emotions into school culture. When emotions in schools have more space to exist and develop, the communication between leaders and teachers will be more effectively and it is easier to develop emotional understanding between them.

Keywords: *Teacher emotions, relationship with leaders, definition and framework, application;*

Introduction: Emotional competence and Emotional intelligence

Saarni (1990, 1997, 2000) is the first one to put forward the conception of 'emotional competence' (EC), in social behaviours that emotions trigger self-efficacy can reflect this kind of competence. Having EC means the individual has a significant skill--achieve his or her expected goal, while coordinating the relationship with others efficiently and apply acquired knowledge to this coordination process. Emotional intelligence (EI) is a similar term to emotional competence. After Mayer and Salovey (1997) brought forward it firstly and with some modifications, we can define emotional intelligence that the ability to sense and express emotions, the ability to develop thought with the help of emotions, the ability to understand and utilize emotions, and the ability to regulate emotions from both themselves and others.

In my opinion, although there is not a conclusion about the relationship between emotional competence and emotional intelligence, they do not have much difference, and both of them try to understand and use emotions properly, and explore the interaction between individuals. Under the school context, I think the term 'emotional competence' is more suitable than 'emotional intelligence', because intelligence belong to the field of ability, means someone can or cannot do things, which may lead to controversy, and the emotional competence that applied to teacher emotions and emotional leadership, not only limited within the definition of Saarni's, also consist of diversified emotional intelligence, teachers' emotional competence is the skill that during teaching process, utilizing emotional strategies to achieve highly school outcomes, this kind of emotion emerges from teachers internal understanding and their personal experiences, at the same time, the external factors help to form emotional competence.

Emotional leadership: a way of conceptualising emotion

If we connect emotion with leadership, it is clear that school leadership is embedded in a certain social context, and its process depends on both the school situation and community culture (Crawford, 2007). Several studies (Lupton, 1998; James, 2000, 2003; Crawford 2007) suggest that the study of school emotional leadership should pay attention to interpersonal relationships, including 'not only with other people but also with the head teachers own short term feelings, and longer term moods within the social setting of a school (Ibid. 2007).' Seidman (1998) and Crawford (2007) brought out three significant qualities connected with leadership: emotional regulation, emotional decision making and the certain emotional context.

Many people have the opinion that school leaders stand in a central and pivotal position in the context of schools (Hall and Southworth, 1997; Coulson, 1986; Nias et al., 1989), but in the emotional leadership, headteachers through a way that is different from powers, a way that with the help of emotions and experiences, hold the central statue in schools. In the theory of emotional leadership, it is illusionary that the expert behaviours means logical and strictly emotionally controlled, instead, headteachers can manage schools successfully from emotional experiences that result from personal professional development.

Emotional development

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Emotions not only influence interpersonal relationships, teaching behaviours, teaching beliefs and academic performance, but can also help with students' cognitive and emotional development. Fortunately, the importance of emotions has been recognized by leaders and parents, so they not only pay attention to academic achievement, but propose a bigger educational aim-- to develop the emotion of both teachers and students (Brackett et al. 2007). However, to achieve the goal, people mostly only emphasize students' emotional development, but neglect the necessity of teacher emotional development. Hawkey (2006) says that many programs only teach how to help students to improve emotional competence, but the basic skills of teachers are not identified or taught, so the results show that teachers do not know how to deal with students' emotions. Furthermore, even teachers who succeeded in the emotion intervention trials confessed that they were less likely to cope with students' emotions in their teaching activities after the intervention, and they considered it is just a waste of time on this kind of successful intervention and they would rather take more time on cognitive teaching (Rosenblatt and Elias, 2008). Teachers do not show interest in emotion development, this may be the result that only emphasize emotions of students and intervention process, in fact, the development of emotions not only benefits students but also make them feel happy and safe, which is more likely to get high academic performance, and for teachers, they can experience an open and communicative culture which leads to a better teaching activity (Cherniss, Extein, Goleman and Weissberg, 2006; Jennings et al. 2009; Norris, 2003). moreover, the progress of students is connected with teacher emotions management (op. cit. 2006; Jennings et al. 2009; Palomera et al. 2008; Rosenblatt et al. 2008), so only when teachers have ability to regulate emotions, it is possible to develop students' emotions and the relationships with leaders and colleagues in the school, this is also the reason many teacher emotions program include contents that teachers should familiar with details of emotion intervention(Jennings et al. 2009).

It is recognized that we can do something on teacher emotions because both its role in school context and its feasible possibilities, but it is still a long way to integrate it into school culture (Barckett et al. 2007; Palomera et al. 2008), for it not only limited in the change of emotional conditions of teachers, students and administrators, but with strong supports from government officials, principals and teachers themselves, in addition, to carry out a professional standard emotional training program, it is necessary for designers to conduct a pilot, collect empirical data and underpin the program with suitable psychological or pedagogical theories.

Conclusion

To restore the status of emotions means when teachers show emotions during the change that does not meet the expectations of social rules, leaders should not belittle them as grievances, complaints, rumors and boycotts, but explore what the informations try to convey about teachers' feelings, and the social background of these emotions. As Fullan pointed out in the analysis of 'naysayers' in schools, "they become more like-minded and more unlike the rest of the organization while missing valuable new clues about the future. By supporting the like-minded, leaders trade off early smoothness for later grief(Fullan, 2001: 75)." When emotions in schools are freed from being stigmatized, the communication between leaders and teachers will be more effectively and it is easier to develop emotional understandings between them.

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