

Relationship between Teacher Educators' Emotional Intelligence and their Teaching Practices

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Abstract

The preparation of prospective teachers (PTs) significantly depends on teacher educators. Teacher educators' responsibility is to teach student-centered teaching practices to PTs and model those practices in their classrooms. Teachers having higher emotional intelligence (EI) use student-centered teaching practices in their classrooms. Using a descriptive approach, this study focused on two aspects (i) documenting the level of EI of teacher educators and their practices in the Pakistani context, and (ii) finding out the relationship between teacher educators' EI and their teaching practices. It was hypothesized that teacher educators' emotional intelligence has no relationship with student-centered practices employed by teacher educators. Teacher educators teaching in B. Ed (Hons.) Elementary programs of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were the population of the study. Two survey questionnaires were administered to collect quantitative data. Quantitative results indicated that teacher educators possessed high EI and employed student-centered teaching practices to prepare PTs. The quantitative results also showed a significant relationship between EI and the teaching practices of teacher educators. The findings imply offering EI-focused professional development in teacher education programs.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Student-Centered Teaching Practices, Prospective Teachers, Teacher Educators

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Introduction

In the National Education Policy of Pakistan (Ministry of Education, 2009), two of the significant responsibilities of teachers emphasized and deemed important are enhancing students' motivation to learn and developing critical thinking skills. Studies (e.g., Fahim & Eslamdoost, 2014; Green, 2015; Marin & Halpern, 2011; Stein, 2018) have shown that student-centered teaching approaches enhance students' motivation and develop critical thinking skills. To cater to the student population across the country, there is a need to have a teacher who uses student-centered approaches effectively in each classroom. The Government of Pakistan took several measures to improve teacher preparation programs, such as introducing National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan, the four-year Bachelor of Education Program, etc.

It was hoped that improvement in teacher preparation is a must with such a drastic revamping. With some improvement noted, the prospective teachers (PTs) failed to implement student-centered teaching practices in the classrooms. Consequently, like many teacher education (TE) programs around the globe, Pakistani TE programs were criticized for not preparing PTs who employed student-centered innovative strategies and techniques in their classrooms (Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006; UNESCO, 2006) that eventually improve students' achievement scores. We, too, consider student-centered teaching practices that develop critical and independent thinking and enhance students' motivation to learn, among many other abilities. Teacher educators are significant contributing factors (besides curriculum, medium of instruction, attributes of individuals who enter TE programs, etc.) in preparing PTs to meet the demand of the 21st century.

Korthagen, Loughran, and Russell (2006) argued that "Learning about teaching is enhanced" (p. 1036) when the teacher educators model the teaching and learning approaches advocated in the program in their practices. However, it is expected that many teacher educators do not use student-centered teaching practices while teaching PTs in their classes (Segall, 2002). Therefore, as a result, PTs learn student-centered approaches and their philosophical underpinnings without experiencing such practices and theories in action in their classroom as students. Research suggests emotional intelligence (EI) as one of the teacher educators' attributes contributing to the preparation of PTs with the ability to use student-centered teaching strategies effectively in the classroom. Hammad and Naseem (2019) found that teacher educators who are emotionally intelligent use student-centered teaching practices. Making

this assumption the basis of our argument, the relationship between teacher educators' EI and their teaching practices were investigated in this paper. In addition, the level of teacher educators' EI was also determined, and the student-centered teaching practices used by teacher educators in Rawalpindi-Islamabad were also explored.

Research Questions & Hypothesis

1. What is the level of EI among the teacher educators teaching in the B. Ed.(Hons) Elementary Programs of Rawalpindi and Islamabad?
2. What are teacher educators' teaching practices in B. Ed. (Hons.) Elementary Programs of Rawalpindi and Islamabad?
3. How does EI correlate with teacher educators' teaching practices?

H₀: There is no relationship between EI and Teaching Practices of teacher educators of B. Ed. (Hons.) Elementary Program in Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Literature Review

In the past couple of decades, the theory of Emotional Intelligence by Goleman (1995) grounded its roots in education. Goleman's framework has been widely used to study EI in different areas such as economics (e.g., Livesey, 2017), nursing (Kooker, Shoultz, & Codier, 2007), industry (Fowlie & Wood, 2009), etc. These studies have found Goleman's framework relevant to educational, industrial, and different organizational settings.

EI is considered as one of the attributes contributing to effective teaching. This means that emotionally strong teachers develop a relationship with their students while delivering content, show better student achievement (Darling- Hammond as cited in Rust, 2014) and develop critical thinking (Stein, 2018). Internationally, emotional and social learning are part of the school curriculum (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2021).

Recognizing one's feelings and empathy for others greatly influences teachers' personal and professional lives (Crockcroft & Israel, 2005; Goleman, 1998). EI also helps motivate and effectively overcome setbacks in working toward teaching and learning goals. There are three main models of EL – Goleman's, Bar's On, and Mayer and Salovey's (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012). In this study, Goleman's EI model was used, referring

to the six parameters included in personal and social domains in Goleman's framework.

EI as a variable has been recently studied with variables such as teacher performance (Asrar-ul-Haq, Anwar, & Hassan, 2017), classroom management (Jeloudar, Yunus, Roslan, & Nor, 2011; Tok, Tok, & Dolapcioglu, 2013), academic achievement (Rust, 2014), and educational leadership and teaching strategies (Chen & Guo, 2020). Most of these researchers argue that EI influences teaching. However, a study that explicitly explores the relationship between EI and TPs was not conducted.

The findings of this study contribute to understanding the importance of having emotionally intelligent teacher educators who are professionally developed to employ student-centered teaching practices in their classes. This study's results can enhance the quality of the TE program in Pakistan and improve pre-service teachers by using student-centered teaching practices. The preparation of future teachers is of great importance, which is the responsibility of TE programs. Teacher educators can use this study's results to understand their students' readiness, interest, and avoidance behavior toward their performance. It is argued that modeling student-centered teaching practices by teacher educators will provide an opportunity for PTs to learn these teaching practices – thus preparing them for planning and achieving their targeted goals as teachers.

Theoretical Framework

The study is based on Goleman's EI framework (1998, 2001) and Danielson's teaching practices framework (1996). It is argued that "self" and "social awareness" ("emotional self-awareness," "self-confidence," and "empathy" [Goleman, 1998, p.46-47]) help teacher educators to recognize their potentials. This recognition regulates and manages teacher educators' interaction with their students, colleagues, parents, administration, etc. This regulation refers to self and relationship management (Goleman, 1998, 2001). Danielson's (1996) framework for teaching practices offers a better understanding of teachers' responsibilities and appropriate classroom teaching practices. This framework for teaching identifies essential features of teachers' responsibilities demonstrated to promote student learning and improvement. This framework of teaching practices has twenty-two components, divided into four domains of instructional practices –are planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instructions, and professional responsibilities (for details, please see Danielson, 1996). The sixteen student-centered practices (Menlo et al., 1990) fall under the four domains of Danielson's framework. For example, teachers who plan their

lessons keeping in mind students' different abilities are proactively thinking about their classroom environment to support all students, facilitating students according to their abilities; and fulfilling their professional responsibilities towards all students. It is essential to mention that the authors do not suggest a linear relationship between the two variables.

Methodology

Using survey design, this study examined whether EI is correlated to teaching practices or not. The level of teacher educators' EI and teaching practices were also found in this study. In the first phase of the study, the data was collected using a survey method with the help of a five -Likert scale of EI. Due to the non-parametric nature of the data, Spearman correlation was used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Before administering, both scales were pilot tested. The Cronbach's alpha reliability for EI five Likert Scale was 0.85, and the reliability for Teaching Practices five Likert Scale is 0.9 (for details, see Hammad & Naseem, 2019). Field experts' opinions were taken to validate the instruments, and changes were made. For example, "I set measurable goals for myself and others" was split into two statements. Similarly, minor changes in the EI questionnaire were made. For example, "Express own feelings" (Mehmood, Qasim, & Azam, 2013, p.305) was rephrased as a complete sentence; *I express my own feelings to others.*

Population/ Sample of the Study

All teacher educators, teaching in the B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary Programs of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were selected for data collection through purposive sampling. The total number of teacher educators was eighty, but the response rate was fifty-one, which was sixty-four percent of the whole population of teacher educators of B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary Programs. The sixty-four percent response rate ensured the 95 % confidence interval.

Instruments

Emotional intelligence questionnaire (EI Que)

The study adapted EI Questionnaire from Mehmood, Qasim, and Azam (2013). The questionnaire consisted of six parameters on which EI was measured. These parameters covered personal and social domains of EI given by Goleman's Framework (2001). The EI Questionnaire consisted

of thirty-four items in a five-point Likert Scale (5= Always [AL], 4= Sometimes [ST], 3= Undecided [UD], 2= Rarely [R], 1= Never [N]) to measure the six parameters of EI. Questions 1-34 provide scores for six factors of EI: “Emotional Self-awareness,” “self-confidence,” “emotional self-control,” “achievement,” “developing others,” and “conflict management” (Hammad & Naseem, pp. 36-37). Emotional self-awareness comprises questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. Self-confidence comprises questions 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. Emotional self-control comprises questions 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17. Achievement includes 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24. Questions 25, 26, 27, 28, and 29 consist of developing others. Questions 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34 contribute only to conflict management.

Teaching practices questionnaire (TP Que)

Using a five-point Likert Scale, TP Que was self-developed to measure teacher educators' most frequently used student-centered teaching practices. TP Que was based on the practices adapted from the research conducted by Menlo, Marich, Collet, Evers, Fernandez, and Ferris (1990) in a comparative study. These practices were converted on five Likert Scales that studied teacher educators' level of intensity of teaching practices in the classroom (see Table 1 for details).

Results and Discussion

The analysis revealed that all teacher educators were at a higher level of EI and were employing student-centered teaching practices in their classrooms - contrary to the findings of Edannur (2010) and Singh (2015), who found that teacher educators have an average level of EI.

Level of teacher educators' EI and use of student-centered teaching practices

The EI and teaching practices levels were calculated following the exact descriptive and numerical equivalents used by Santiago (2010). Santiago used the grading system of the school, from which she collected data. All three B.Ed. institutions had different grading policies. Therefore, we used Santiago's descriptive values. Table 1 presents the descriptive measures of teacher educators' teaching practices of the B. Ed (Hons.) Elementary Program.

Table 1
Descriptive measure of EI and Teacher educators' teaching practices of B.Ed. (Hons.) Elementary Program

| Descriptive Interpretation | Emotional Intelligence | Frequency | Teaching Practices | Frequency |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Very High | 4.5 – 5.0 | -- | 4.5- 5.0 | -- |
| High | 3.5 – 4.49 | 47 | 3.5- 4.49 | 51 |
| Mod | 2.5 – 3.49 | 4 | 2.5- 3.49 | -- |
| Low | 1.5 – 2.49 | -- | 1.5- 2.49 | -- |
| Very Low | 0.5 – 1.49 | -- | 0.5- 1.49 | -- |
| | Total | 51 | Total | 51 |
| | Mean Score | 3.946 | Mean Score | 4.28 |
| Descriptive Interpretation | | High Emotional Intelligent | | High Student-Centered |

Based on the responses of teacher educators (Table 1), it was found that teacher educators had a high level of EI, and they were employing high student-centered teaching practices in their classrooms, which supports our initial assumption. Overall, Teacher Educators' responses got a high level of EI as interpreted by the score mean of 3.946. Table 2 displays the number of responses of Teacher Educators of the B.Ed. (Hons) Elementary Program for each item on the scale.

Table 2
Descriptive measures and interpretation of the level of teacher educators' EI

| Sr.# | Items | AL-5 | ST-4 | UD-3 | R-2 | N-1 | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|------|--|------|------|------|-----|-----|------------|----------------|
| 1. | I express my own feelings to others. | 14 | 24 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 3.88 | High |
| 2. | I recognize the situations that trigger my own emotions. | 20 | 26 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4.29 | High |
| 3. | I know how my own feelings impact my performance. | 23 | 25 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.39 | High |
| 4. | I realize immediately when I lose my temper. | 17 | 27 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 4.14 | High |
| 5. | When I am being 'emotional' I am aware of this. | 17 | 30 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4.24 | High |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|----|----|----|----|---|------|------|
| 6. | Awareness of my own emotions is very important to me at all times. | 23 | 20 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4.25 | High |
| 7. | I feel confident to work without any direction. | 6 | 26 | 7 | 12 | 0 | 3.45 | Mod |
| 8. | I believe myself to be the most capable of a job. | 6 | 33 | 7 | 5 | 0 | 3.75 | High |
| 9. | I present myself in an impressive manner. | 11 | 32 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 4.04 | High |
| 10. | I do not hesitate in a new situation. | 8 | 26 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 3.61 | High |
| 11. | I take professional risks to accomplish the required goals. | 8 | 32 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 3.73 | High |
| 12. | I believe in myself and speak out for my right when others disagree. | 14 | 27 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 4.02 | High |
| 13. | I resist the impulse to act immediately. | 4 | 34 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 3.73 | High |
| 14. | I behave calmly in stressful situations. | 5 | 26 | 7 | 13 | 0 | 3.45 | Mod |
| 15. | I stay composed in trying moments. | 6 | 32 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 3.76 | High |
| 16. | I stay positive in trying moments. | 11 | 31 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 4.00 | High |
| 17. | I calm others in stressful situations. | 18 | 27 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 4.20 | High |
| 18. | I set my own achievement standards and use them to judge my performance. | 17 | 28 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 4.22 | High |
| 19. | I express dissatisfaction with the status quo and seek ways to improve performance. | 12 | 22 | 12 | 5 | 0 | 3.76 | High |
| 20. | I set measurable and challenging goals for myself. | 12 | 33 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 4.12 | High |
| 21. | I set measurable and challenging goals for others. | 6 | 25 | 17 | 3 | 0 | 3.67 | High |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|----|----|----|---|---|------|------|
| 22. | I make decisions and set priorities to get targeted goals. | 13 | 35 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.20 | High |
| 23. | I expect difficulties in achieving a goal in order to overcome them. | 7 | 34 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 3.88 | High |
| 24. | I take calculated risks to reach a goal. | 3 | 33 | 13 | 1 | 1 | 3.71 | High |
| 25. | I express positive expectations about others' potential. | 5 | 42 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4.08 | High |
| 26. | I give directions to get targets to develop others. | 13 | 31 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 4.10 | High |
| 27. | I recognize specific development opportunities in others. | 12 | 34 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 4.14 | High |
| 28. | I give timely constructive feedback in behavioral rather than personal terms. | 12 | 27 | 11 | 1 | 0 | 3.98 | High |
| 29. | I provide long-term mentoring or coaching in the context of a containing relationship. | 11 | 25 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 3.86 | High |
| 30. | I bring disagreement when required in situations. | 9 | 25 | 10 | 7 | 0 | 3.71 | High |
| 31. | I communicate the positions of those involved in the conflict to all concerned. | 7 | 21 | 15 | 8 | 0 | 3.53 | High |
| 32. | I focus on the issues regarding the situation rather than on the person. | 15 | 28 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4.10 | High |
| 33. | I help in reducing the intensity of conflicts. | 6 | 39 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 4.04 | High |
| 34. | I find the common idea to which all parties in conflict can endorse. | 18 | 25 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 4.16 | High |
| Total Mean Score – Emotional Intelligence Level | | | | | | | | High |
| 3. 946 | | | | | | | | |

According to the mean scores, the highest-rated ability by teacher educators' is to know the impact of their feelings (mean = 4.39), which falls in the emotional self-awareness component of EI. Similarly, the lowest-rated ability (mean 3.45) refers to feeling confident to work without any direction and behaving calmly in stressful situations.

Student-centered teaching practices used by teacher educators

Research (e.g., Segall, 2002; Mufidah, 2019) suggests that preservice teachers learn teaching strategies used by teacher educators. Table 3 shows that all the teacher educators used student-centered teaching practices in their classroom

Table 3
Descriptive measures and interpretation of teaching practices of teacher educators on TP Que

| Sr. # | Items | AI-5 | S-4 | UD-3 | R-2 | N-1 | Mean Score | Inter-pretation |
|-------|---|------|-----|------|-----|-----|------------|-----------------|
| 1. | I plan a lesson based on the different abilities of students. | 20 | 28 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4.31 | High |
| 2. | I give plenty of opportunities for individualized student work. | 15 | 29 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 4.08 | High |
| 3. | I acknowledge the good work of individual students. | 24 | 26 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4.45 | High |
| 4. | I develop warm, personal relationships with students. | 23 | 20 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4.18 | High |
| 5. | I give feedback about their efforts to learn. | 22 | 29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4.43 | High |
| 6. | I build positive relationships with students. | 27 | 22 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.49 | High |
| 7. | I am accessible to the students outside the classroom. | 25 | 20 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4.35 | High |
| 8. | I am seeking feedback from students. | 19 | 28 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4.27 | High |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|------|------|
| 9. | I communicate clear rules and expectations from students' behavior. | 25 | 23 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4.43 | High |
| 10. | I give prompt attention when issues of students' behavior arise. | 23 | 26 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 4.41 | High |
| 11. | I plan lessons with concerns for sequence and timing. | 21 | 25 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 4.25 | High |
| 12. | I use a variety of approaches to gain students' interest and participation. | 17 | 32 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4.27 | High |
| 13. | I inform students of clear learning objectives. | 18 | 27 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 4.20 | High |
| 14. | I make learning experiences relative to students' life and concerns. | 18 | 26 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 4.18 | High |
| 15. | I return students' work on time. | 14 | 24 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 3.88 | High |
| 16. | I give special attention to developing students' skills. | 20 | 26 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4.32 | High |
| Total Mean Score – Teaching Practices Level | | | | | | | | High |
| 4.28 | | | | | | | | |

The analysis also revealed that the highest and lowest-rated practices were to build relationships with students and return students' work (means – 4.49 & 3.88 respectively). Akbar, Akhtar, Chaudhry, and Abiodullah (2013) also found that teacher educators favor student-centered teaching approaches. However, it is unknown whether teacher educators explicitly discuss the pros and cons of student-centered practices they use with pre-service teachers.

Correlation between EI and teaching practices of teacher educators

One of the study's objectives was to investigate the influence of teacher educators' EI on their TPs. Spearman correlation was used to determine

the relationship between EI, the independent variable, and TPs, the study's dependent variable.

Table 4
Correlation matrix of independent and dependent variables

| Variables | N | Spearman Correlation (r) | Significance Level |
|-----------------------------|----|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Ind: Emotional Intelligence | 51 | 0.411 ** | 0.003 |
| Dep: Teaching Practices | 51 | | |

The significant positive relationship of 0.411 ** ($p < 0.01$) between the two variables, shown in Table 4, rejects the null hypothesis. The relationship is a positive forty-one percent. This means that the higher the level of EI of teacher educators, it is more likely it for them to employ student-centered TPs, and the lower the level of EI of teacher educators, the less they tend to use student-centered teaching practices. Therefore, these results can be interpreted as that forty-one percent of the total respondents' teaching practices were correlated with their emotional intelligence. The weak correlation value can be credited to the smaller sample size. The authors think the correlation value would be different if this study were conducted on large sample size.

Conclusion

The study concludes a positive and significant relationship between EI and teaching practices. This means that teachers with high EI are more likely to use student-centered TPs in their classrooms. It is also concluded that teacher educators of B. Ed (Hons.) Elementary programs in Rawalpindi and Islamabad are highly emotionally intelligent and employ student-centered teaching practices to prepare PTs.

This study further concludes that most teacher educators focus on building relationships with their students. Though learning to develop positive relationships with students – one of the most “powerful weapons” (Thompson, 1998, p.6) to communicate expectations and to impact student performance positively (Boynton & Boynton, 2005) is essential for PTs.

Yet, teacher educators need to revisit other teaching practices as well. The researchers now ponder about the reasons behind the inability of pre-service teachers to use student-centered teaching practices, especially when teacher educators are using such practices while teaching them.

Considering that EI significantly influences teaching practices, this study offers implications for TE programs and policy planners. TE programs should make professional development related to EI an essential part of the program. Education planners can organize workshops for teachers and student teachers in which the focus is on modeling student-centered teaching practices rather than only teaching content. Government and other policymakers, the study's findings provide information about how a high level of EI helps the teachers employ and model student-centered teaching practices in their classrooms to facilitate the learning process. It can be made an essential component of teaching standards. Similar research should be conducted in other provinces of the country to validate this study's results and put forth new theories regarding the correlation between EI and student-centered TPs. Research that studies the EI of PTs to compare it with the EI of teacher educators can provide valuable insights about whether emotionally intelligent teacher educators prepare emotionally intelligent future teachers and whether there is any relationship. Professional development opportunities can play a vital role in the awareness of and enhancing these skills among teacher educators. When they are well aware of these essential skills and competencies, they will be more able to teach them to PTs.

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