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ELT in Local and Global Lives: from Policy to Classroom Practices

The Role of Feedback in Cultivating Emotional Intelligence in Educational Settings

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ABSTRACT

Recently, the emphasis on the skills included in the construct of emotional intelligence (EI) has fascinated a great deal among psychology and education practitioners. The objective outlines of this paper include investigating how feedback works in educational practice for developing students' emotional intelligence and exploring how every particular type of feedback contributes to the development of self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, and other constructs of EI. Emotional Intelligence being a social construct, is very much qualitative in nature and due to this nature, details which are obtained from the participants' perspective are very insightful. The study confirms the effectiveness of feedback as an essential element in the development of emotional intelligence (EI) in students. Finally, this study contributes to enhance the understanding of the effectiveness of feedback on emotional intelligence education. Used correctly, feedback is more than an academic exercise. It also becomes a powerful tool to enhance students' emotional awareness, self-control, and resilience. The research clearly illustrates that feedback is unidirectional in nature and focus. Students instead are engaged in an additional aspect of emotional regulation that feedback suggests for students, which is reinforcing competencies needed for academic as well as emotional success, the competencies of regulation, and re-evaluation of emotions in achievement and the absence thereof.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Feedback; Educational Settings

INTRODUCTION

More and more, the topic of emotional intelligence (EI) as the fundamental basis of human relationships has gained the attention from researchers in psychology and education. In every individual, emotional intelligence can be defined as the ability to recognize, assess and control the individual's or an individual's emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It includes abilities such as: empathy, motivation, self-discipline and self-awareness, social abilities or soft skills, all of which are becoming more and more necessary in order to succeed in the classroom (Goleman, 1995). It has already been established that students with elevated emotional intelligence will be better students as they will be better at managing relationships, coping with stress and being academically successful (Brackett et al., 2019; Qualter et al., 2020).

Feedback is a critical teaching tool which has the capabilities to increase the feeling of emotional intelligence. Educational feedback has been provided in most cases for the academic aspects of students and such was aimed at assisting them to improve in their cognitive abilities and knowledge

of particular content. Nevertheless, it has been known that feedback as an approach is used to instill emotional intelligence in students as well. Focused and constructive feedback provided at an appropriate time can enable students to create self-awareness, as well as emotional control and empathy through ascribing more attention towards their academic activities and progress, and emotional welfare (Hattie & Clarke, 2019). The role of feedback for the development of emotional intelligence still remains rather underexplored within the context of educational studies.

Feedback has an advantage in the sense of enhancing emotional intelligence of students amid school challenges and keeping one sane but such feedback encumbers the environment. First, the improvement of academic performance and the achievement of new skills is usually the predominant aspect of positive feedback, whereas emotional functioning and social learning are rather largely ignored. Most educators, however, may not be ready to give feedback that induces emotional intelligence because they have not been well trained on the incorporation of emotions in the lesson (Jennings et al., 2017). In addition, if feedback is not emphasized on these competencies, students may have a hard time receiving feedback that helps them develop and instill empathy as appropriate (Weissberg et al., 2022).

The lack of structured frameworks or guidelines to support instructors in providing feedback that promotes emotional intelligence is yet another challenge. Despite feedback can be ignored as a tool for emotional development, the advantages of social-emotional learning (SEL) programs have been thoroughly studied (Durlak et al., 2021). Because of this, a lot of schools fall under of achieving the full potential of feedback as a tool for improving students' emotional and cognitive development.

There are many factors that contribute towards the importance of this kind of research. To begin with, there are tangible benefits to the holistic growth of students with regard to understanding how to handle constructive criticism. Students with fully developed emotional competences have better chances of mastering stress management, building positive relationships and succeeding both academically and socially (Oberle et al., 2016). Employers now value soft skills such as teamwork, compassion and communication which makes emotional intelligence key to success in the long term (Robles, 2021).

This study helps teachers understand how feedback can be delivered without undermining the emotional and cognitive development of the students. More engaging educational environments can be fostered by teachers who can give emotional remarks which will positively affect the way the learners feel and perform. Furthermore, this study can be used to help teachers apply emotional intelligence during their teaching by developing guidelines for teacher training programs.

This research contributes to the increasing emphasis on social-emotional learning (SEL) within educational practice and policy with a particular focus on policy perspective. This study provides policy-oriented strategies to integrate SEL into regular classroom-oriented activities which are outside the curriculum by showing how feedback can be used in enhancing emotional as intelligence (Weissberg et al., 2022). This may lead to more total approaches of student growth where both their emotional needs and mental needs are addressed holistically.

The main goals of this study are to find out how feedback helps students in educational settings develop their emotional intelligence and to look into the specific processes by which various forms of feedback such as formative, summative, verbal, and written affect important emotional intelligence traits like self-awareness, self-control, empathy, and social skills. This study also aims to investigate the difficulties teachers encounter when giving feedback that develops emotional intelligence and to offer solutions for these difficulties. Additionally, the study attempts to assess the way emotionally charged feedback affects students' interpersonal, emotional, and academic achievement. Lastly, this research will offer helpful suggestions for incorporating the improvement of emotional intelligence into feedback methods in educational settings.

The understanding of emotional intelligence (EI) and its applicability in educational settings has greatly benefited from a number of research projects. Important traits including self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills were first included in Goleman's (1995) concept of emotional intelligence. These competencies are now widely acknowledged as being essential for both academic and personal success. Mayer & Salovey's (1997) framework built on this foundation by highlighting the cognitive aspects of emotional intelligence (EI) and emphasizing emotional awareness, understanding, and regulation. These theories highlight how crucial emotional intelligence is to helping students develop the skills needed to handle social situations and control their emotions in challenging academic settings. The study on feedback by Hattie & Clarke (2019) emphasizes how constructive criticism affects both cognitive and emotional development, supporting the notion that feedback is an essential tool for developing students' emotional competencies.

The practical implications of these theories are highlighted in more recent studies. In order to promote students' social and emotional development in addition to their academic achievement, Brackett et al. (2019) make the case for integrating emotional intelligence into teaching methods. Social-emotional learning (SEL) programs have been shown by Durlak et al. (2021) to significantly improve students' relationships, academic performance, and emotional well-being. These findings support the idea that organized strategies can promote the development of emotional intelligence (EI). According to Jennings et al. (2017), emotional intelligence (EI) training is crucial for teachers since it prepares them to support children holistically. Robles (2021) and Oberle et al. (2016) underscore the increasing significance of emotional intelligence (EI) for continuous achievement in academic and professional settings. Lastly, data presented by Qualter et al. (2020) and Weissberg et al. (2022) supports the effectiveness of EI interventions in schools, demonstrating that feedback can serve as a powerful tool for fostering emotional intelligence, promoting students' overall success.

In conclusion, the importance of feedback in promoting emotional intelligence is a crucial and underexplored aspect of educational development that is covered in this research. This study looks at how feedback affects students' emotional abilities in an effort to give teachers and lawmakers helpful suggestions. The results added to the expanding literature of research on social-emotional learning and provide useful strategies for integrating the development of emotional intelligence into regular classroom feedback procedures.

METHOD

In exploring the role of feedback in nurturing such skills within educational contexts, this study focuses on developing emotional intelligence (EI). Since emotional intelligence is a complex social phenomenon, it can best be explored by using qualitative research and it offers rich information in the form of participants experiences and their views (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Based on interviews with them on the development of emotional intelligence, through feedback, study seeks to understand the challenges and strategies in this dimension educated. The main mode of data collection consists of semi-structured interviews, a frequent technique in educational research to reveal individual viewpoints and interpretations that participants give to their experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

In this study, purposive sampling was employed so that the participants came from a varied group (teachers and students). The sample consisted of 12 teachers from different schools and universities and 7 students from various educational disciplines. Data Analysis Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used as a means to identify and make meaning of patterns within the data. The process revealed key themes, including the emotional impact of feedback on students, the role of feedback in developing specific emotional intelligence competencies, and the challenges teachers face in providing emotionally supportive feedback. Thematic analysis was chosen for its ability to uncover nuanced insights into how feedback influences emotional intelligence development (Nowell et al., 2017). Demographic data of participants in this study is shown in the table below (Table 1).

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NT	Table 1. Participants demographic data					
No.	Initials	Gender	Position	Age		
1	DS	М	School teacher	29		
2	BT	М	School teacher	30		
3	MR	М	School teacher	35		
4	MRA	М	School teacher	32		
5	IM	F	School teacher	28		
6	HM	F	School teacher	29		
7	IK	М	Lecturer	32		
8	AR	Μ	Lecturer	34		
9	LSA	М	Lecturer	36		
10	MA	F	Lecturer	30		
11	NY	F	Lecturer	30		
12	SH	F	Lecturer	36		
13	MN	F	University student	20		
14	ZS	F	University student	20		

15	DRB	F	University student	19
16	RA	F	University student	18
17	AS	F	University student	18
18	MS	F	University student	18
19	FPK	F	University student	19

RESULT

The Role of Feedback in Developing Emotional Intelligence

Like DS, most teachers stress the importance of providing students with thorough and constructive criticism in order to help them become more self-aware. According to DS, students who get honest and helpful criticism not only recognize the areas in their academic work that require development but also start to recognize the emotional responses they have to both success and failure. In this sense, feedback serves as a mirror for students, assisting them in identifying the emotional responses they have to different academic circumstances. Research by Hattie and Clarke (2019) underscores the power of feedback to enhance both cognitive and emotional development in students, indicating that constructive criticism fosters self-awareness, which is an essential element of emotional intelligence.

MN, a student, added that receiving criticism made her more conscious of her feelings. "*I* started to realize how I reacted to the grades I received, whether they were good or bad," MN support after receiving comments from her lecturer. "*I became more reflective as a result, and it improved my comprehension of my feelings*." This justification demonstrates how feedback helps students become more self-aware in addition to improving their academic performance. Jennings et al. (2017) found that emotionally agreed feedback supports students' social and emotional development, particularly self-awareness, a crucial component of emotional intelligence, which aligns with MN's experiences.

IK, a lecturer, also supports this argument by saying that students who get constructive criticism are able to control their emotions. "*In high-pressure academic situations, feedback that is not only detailed but also supportive helps students navigate that pressure more effectively and manage their emotions*," IK ssupport. This highlights how constructive criticism can lower stress and improve emotional control. Studies by Brackett et al. (2019) show that feedback integrated into emotional intelligence training not only enhances self-awareness but also strengthens self-regulation, enabling students to control their emotional responses under academic pressure.

Another student, ZS, remarked that receiving comments gives them more self-confidence while dealing with academic pressure. "*In the past, exam stress overcame me. However, after getting some helpful criticism from my lecturer, I feel like I can handle my stress better*," ZS stated. This argument shows how, in addition to improve students' academic achievement, feedback also helps them become more self-aware. Research by Oberle et al. (2016) supports the finding that feedback helps students

manage academic pressure and improve their emotional intelligence, particularly in terms of emotional resilience and self-confidence.

We found that students who get helpful criticism are more receptive and exhibit enhanced emotional control. Students that receive feedback on a regular basis show more self-awareness and confidence in addition to being more engaged in teaching and learning environments. This is consistent with Durlak et al.'s (2021) findings, which highlight that social-emotional learning (SEL) programs, particularly those incorporating feedback, lead to better emotional management, increased academic engagement, and improved self-awareness.

Instruments of Feedback Impacting Components of Emotional Intelligence

Formative feedback promotes better self-regulation (Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick, 2006). According to an interview with BT, formative feedback, which is ongoing and growth-oriented, is particularly successful in promoting student self-regulation. BT support: "*The feedback I provide regularly helps students continuously adjust their behaviour and emotions when facing academic challenges*." This demonstrates that by getting continuous feedback, students learn to control their own behaviour and emotions, resulting in improved self-regulation (Butler and Winne, 1995).

BT's opinion is also supported by AR: "I see that students who receive continuous feedback are able to change their approach to academic problems more effectively compared to those who only receive feedback at the end of the period." This viewpoint emphasizes the claim that formative feedback has a substantial impact on the development of students' emotional self-regulation. This influence allows students to better manage their emotions when faced with difficult academic situations.

Summative feedback has an important effect on emotional resilience (Brookhart, 2017). According to SH, despite its final nature, summative feedback assists students in concluding their academic efforts with a thorough comprehension of the results obtained. She states: "When students receive summative feedback, they learn to accept outcomes, whether positive or negative, which in turn helps develop their emotional resilience." This demonstrates that by addressing the end implications students can learn to accept and manage with the different results they achieve. According to DRB, "Although summative feedback is often associated with grades, it also helps students to receive and process various types of academic outcomes." DRB emphasizes the value of summative feedback in helping students develop emotional resilience. This method teaches students not only how to respond to final results, but also how to be more resilient in the face of failure and problems (Taras, 2005). Students who received an overall assessment demonstrated greater comprehension of academic achievements as well as higher emotional resilience (Hattie and Timperley, 2007). As a result, our findings emphasized the importance of summative feedback in promoting students' emotional resilience.

Verbal feedback emerges as an important mechanism in the development of emotion. According to BT, verbal feedback, particularly when offered directly, helps to promote empathy among students (Winstone and Nash, 2016). BT commented: "*By providing direct feedback, I can not only assess students' academic performance but also their emotional state.*" BT emphasizes that verbal feedback improves students understanding of others' emotions and social behaviours (Cohen and Sherman, 2014). RA agrees with this perspective by stating: "*The verbal feedback given face-to-face allows students to feel the attention and care from the teacher, which is very helpful in developing their understanding.*" This underlines the importance of verbal feedback in helping students improve their ability to perceive and understand the emotions of others, which is a key component of emotional intelligence.

Finally, written feedback promotes students' emotional reflection. SH explained that written feedback, which is typically more complex and reflective, allows students to process their feelings at their own time off (Boud and Molloy, 2013). SH continued: "*Written feedback gives students the opportunity to reflect more deeply on their academic performance and their emotional responses to it.*" This demonstrates that written feedback allows students to reflect and gain a better knowledge of their feelings. RA continued: "*With written feedback, students can go back and reread the teacher's comments when they are emotionally ready.*" This highlights the importance of written comments in facilitating deeper emotional reflection.

Challenges Faced by Teachers in Providing Feedback to Foster Emotional Intelligence

One of the challenges often faced is the limited time that teachers have to provide personalized feedback to students' emotions. Teachers express their difficulties in balancing academic feedback with emotional support, especially with a large number of students (Carless, 2006). A teacher, MR, stated, "Scheduling time to provide individual feedback is very challenging due to the large number of students in one class. We have to ensure that each student receives adequate attention, both academically and emotionally, but the available time is very limited." This statement indicates that time constraints pose a significant barrier for teachers in providing effective feedback and optimally supporting students' emotional development. "One of the biggest challenges is finding time to really understand the emotional state of each student. Sometimes, we're forced to give more general feedback because we don't have enough time to evaluate and support each student specifically." This MRA statement reinforces the previous opinion, indicating that time constraints can lead to feedback that is less specific and not focused on the individual emotional needs of students (Hargreaves, 2001).

Another challenge is the variation in emotional responses from students. Teachers express that some students are more receptive to feedback than others, and modifying feedback to individual emotional needs is very complex (Shute, 2008). IM stated, "*Each student responds to feedback in different ways. Some accept it well, but there are also those who show emotional reactions that are*

difficult to control." "*How we provide feedback appropriately to each of them is an ongoing challenge.*" This IM statement indicates that teachers must have high emotional intelligence and flexibility in their feedback strategies to address the diverse emotional reactions of students. HM also conveyed a similar opinion, "Some students are very sensitive and easily feel pressured by criticism." Managing their emotional responses requires patience and a deep understanding. This is not easy, especially when they have a low level of emotional resilience (Ellis, 2014). From HM's statement, it can be seen that adjusting feedback according to the emotional needs of students requires a very careful and wise approach. In addition, teachers also face difficulties in balancing between providing constructive criticism and offering emotional support (Noddings, 2005). Finding the right balance between encouraging academic improvement and maintaining students' emotional well-being is a challenge often faced, especially when dealing with students who have low emotional resilience.

MR expressed, "Providing constructive criticism is important, but we also need to ensure that students do not feel too pressured." "Balancing academic determination and emotional support is an art that requires experience and sensitivity." This statement indicates that teachers feel the need to continuously evaluate and adjust the way they provide feedback in order to support students' emotional growth without making them feel pressured (Boud and Molloy, 2013).

In conclusion, the main challenges faced by teachers in providing feedback to improve students' emotional intelligence include time constraints, variations in emotional responses, and balancing academic evaluation with emotional support. The continuous efforts of teachers to adjust their approaches and manage these various challenges are an indication of the importance of emotional intelligence in education.

Impact of Emotionally-Oriented Feedback on Academic Performance, Emotional Well-Being, and Relationships

From the interviews with several lecturers and students, it was revealed that providing feedback that takes emotions into account has a significant impact on improving students' academic performance which aligns with Fredrickson and Moore (2021). According to L.S.A., a lecturer, emotionally supportive feedback contributes to increased motivation and student engagement. This approach allows students to feel valued and understood, thereby increasing their motivation to improve academic performance. F.P.K., a student, also confirmed this, stating that feedback that takes emotional aspects into account encourages her to study harder and achieve better results (Zhou et al.,2022). According to her, the feeling of being valued and supported by teachers motivates him to give her best.

Based on an interview with M.A., a lecturer, it was found that emotion-oriented feedback also has a positive impact on students' emotional well-being (Choi and Kang, 2020). According to M.A., students who receive such feedback tend to have stronger emotional resilience and higher levels of self-confidence. This enables students to be more resilient in facing stress and more assured in their abilities.

M.S., a student, also expressed similar opinion, stating that emotional feedback made her feel valued and be able to be herself (Sung and Park, 2022). With teachers who understood her feelings, she felt more confident and became more capable of facing challenges at campus.

N.Y., a lecturer, emphasizes that emotion-oriented feedback not only enhances academic performance and emotional well-being but also strengthens the relationship between teachers and students. According to N.Y., students who receive emotional feedback show improvements in trust and communication (Peterson and Redfield, 2023). This creates a more positive learning environment. M.S. also feels the benefits of a close relationship with her teachers. With emotional feedback, she feels more comfortable discussing learning difficulties. This creates a more dynamic and supportive learning environment.

Based on the results of interviews, it can be concluded that emotion-oriented feedback has a positive impact on academic performance, emotional well-being, and teacher-student relationships. This approach not only enhances student motivation and engagement in learning but also strengthens emotional resilience, self-confidence, and communication between teachers and students. Therefore, it is important for educators to consider the emotional aspects when providing feedback to students in order to improve the overall quality of education (Garcia and Moreno, 2022).

Practical Recommendations for Integrating Emotional Intelligence into Feedback Practices

The results of the interviews show that the majority of teachers feel the need for a specialized training program to help them understand emotional intelligence. N.Y. revealed that many teachers feel constrained in providing feedback that supports students' emotional aspects. N.Y. stated, "*We often focus on academic feedback, but we must not forget that the emotional aspect is also important for students' development*." Research by Brackett and Cipriano (2020) supports this, emphasizing that emotionally intelligent feedback improves both student engagement and academic performance, underscoring the need for professional development programs that equip teachers with emotional intelligence skills.

D.S. also highlights the importance of teacher training focused on emotional intelligence. According to him, "*Many of my colleagues find it difficult to handle students' emotional responses after receiving feedback. Structured training would help us become more effective in this regard.*" This aligns with findings by Bailey et al. (2021), who found that teachers who receive emotional intelligence training are better equipped to provide emotionally supportive feedback, resulting in improved classroom relationships and academic outcomes.

In addition to training, teachers also recommend the use of a more structured feedback system. L.S.A. indicates that the current feedback system is too one-sided and only focuses on academic achievements. "Schools should implement a more inclusive feedback system that also considers

emotional development. This way, feedback will not only assist students academically but also emotionally," he supports. Research by Hargreaves (2022) suggests that incorporating emotional development into feedback enhances students' emotional regulation, which in turn improves their academic performance and interpersonal skills.

A.R. also supports this view by stating that a structured feedback system can encourage students to reflect more deeply on their experiences, including their emotional reactions, which is crucial for their overall development. Lavy and Naama-Ghanayim (2020) also point out that reflective practices integrated into feedback systems are essential for fostering both academic and emotional growth in students.

Teachers also emphasize the importance of a personalized approach to providing feedback. M.A. stated that each student has a unique emotional response to feedback, and a standard approach is not always effective. "*Personalized feedback tailored to individual emotional needs can significantly enhance academic and emotional outcomes*," she explained. Jennings and Greenberg (2020) also emphasize that personalized feedback, especially when addressing emotional needs, is critical for fostering both emotional resilience and academic success. P.H. also agrees with this opinion, "*By personalizing feedback, we can meet the unique emotional and academic needs of each student, thereby creating a more supportive learning environment.*" Research by Maier, U & Klotz, C. (2022) further supports this, showing that a tailored feedback approach leads to greater student satisfaction and improved emotional and academic outcomes.

DISCUSSION

The data obtained from the present study emphasizes the importance of feedback in enhancing emotional intelligence EI in students. Students' sense of self regarding their academics is only limited to their constructive feedback where students are made to recognize what they did well and what needs improvement and their feelings towards success and failure. The feedback is in terms of self-awareness and self-regulation, which, being a part of emotional intelligence, helps students to recognize the impact of emotions on academics and behaviour. Those findings are consistent with the work by Hattie and Clarke (2019), who claimed that feedback is an important tool in bringing about cognitive and emotional development. Accepting criticism from professors, students like MN and ZS are willing to accept adequate feedback in such situations showing emotional intelligence capabilities such as resilience and confidence have increased. It emerges that the feedback cycle has an impact not only on academic performance of the students but also on their emotional competencies making it imperative for the students both at school and in other disciplines.

In addition, the discussion considers how feedback in various forms, be it formative, summative, verbal or written, also plays a distinct role in enhancing emotional intelligence. For instance,

formative feedback is helpful in self-regulation of students and thus they are able to modify both behaviours and emotions throughout the given task which in this case would be school work.

Verbal feedback helps develop empathy relations, as it involves real interaction between the teacher and the student, whereas written feedback provides for more profound emotional processing as well as time for the students to get through their emotions. These more varied approaches demonstrate how fundamental and multi-dimensional feedback is towards the development of self-awareness, self-regulation and self- resilience, among other emotional capacities which support students in the future. Still, the exercise is not in the least without difficulties as teachers must give on one hand constructive criticism or evaluative feedback and on the other bear in mind emotions and ensure that such communication is working towards the picture of every single student.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that feedback is important in the cultivation of emotional intelligence (EI) among learners within the education sector. Where the argument has been that feedback is a unidirectional aspect and must therefore remain one dimensional, the study easily dismisses that myth by proving that feedback is not merely a tool. And more importantly, it promotes the students' reflection on what they feel when they achieve success or experience failure and therefore helps develop emotional competencies useful for academic and personal achievements.

Formative, summative, descriptive and written feedback supports the development of different emotional components, while each type of feedback serves one purpose. Descriptive feedback enhances emotional regulation, emotional integrity (self-enhancement) is reinforced by oral feedback while more dimensions of emotion are cultivated after written feedback is provided. These observations confirm the wider picture of feedback as being more than a very pleasant but sometimes critical component of the agreement of the student to the standards of emotional intelligence. At the same time, it acknowledges the problems of teachers, especially in a situation where there is too much of balance in providing constructive feedback and providing emotional support and argues for the introduction of less emotionally loaded feedback. All these in turn contribute to the effective student performance in academic contexts and other contexts, which is the message that further highlights the need to proactively work towards the development of students' emotional intelligence through feedback systems, for long term success.

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