

Emotional Intelligence and Teaching Behaviour: Role of Emotional Intelligence in the Social-emotional Climate of the Classes of the Primary School Teachers

Gaurang Tiwari *

Asha Pandey **

Abstract

The teaching-learning phenomenon occurs in the context of a social situation and hence what superficially appears to be a cognitive enterprise acquires a dimension of human relations in its operational stage. The social-emotional climate in a classroom mainly depends upon the teacher's behaviour. It is the teacher who steers and guides the proceedings. The classroom climate is thus conditioned by the type of behaviour is exhibited by the teacher in the classroom. Personal and social competencies associated with emotional intelligence of teacher are found to shape the inter-personal relationship, which in turn, shape the teaching behaviour and ultimately social-emotional climate. For finding out the probable association between the emotional intelligence and teaching behaviour, sampled teachers were observed using Flander's Interaction Analysis Categories (FIACs) and on the basis of the performance on the emotional intelligence test. It was observed that level of emotional intelligence tended to decide the learning environment and socio-emotional climate of a classroom.

Key words: Emotional intelligence, i/d ratio, I/D ratio, pupil initiation ratio, social-emotional climate.

Introduction

The dynamics of teaching is a crucial factor in students' learning. Teachers establish the pattern of general conduct

during a lesson, while on their part students establish certain types of behaviour to coincide with this pattern. Consequently the students participate

* NTS-Doctoral Fellow and Research Scholar

** Professor and Ex-Head and Dean

Faculty of Education (K), Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi-221005

to varying degrees in different classes and react differently to different teachers. This combined instructional pattern and student participation lead to specific classroom environment characterised by specific interaction patterns. The instructional theory of 'social-emotional climate' hypothesises that this environment has a direct effect on both student attitude and achievement. Climate is considered to represent the emotional tone which is concomitant to interpersonal interaction. It is general emotional factor which appears to be present in interactions occurring between individuals in face to face group.

What Constitutes the Social-Emotional Climate in the Classrooms?

It is the interaction pattern, brought about by teacher, which shapes the emotional climate of the classroom. Interaction pattern refers the way teacher interacts with the students and students' reciprocation (in consequent to teacher's activities). An important element of the effective interaction pattern in the classroom is 'connectednesses'. It may be defined as mutuality, sensitivity to and respect for others' views; and permeability, openness to others' views which ultimately lead to the creation of caring teacher-student relationship (Griffin, 1998; Shafii and Shafii, 2001; Santrock, 2003). Characteristics of positive teacher-student relationships are high expectation, networking,

practice, appropriate self-disclosure and using rituals and traditions within the classroom. High expectations might be defined as such belief on the part of the teacher about the learner that the learner can learn. High expectations are an optimistic belief that whoever you teach or whatever you do will result in success or achievement. Teachers need to recognise students' achievements, positively reinforce their accomplishments, and celebrate students' academic and personal success by recognising them publicly. Recognising students' achievement shows students that someone cares about their accomplishments. Networking is another characteristic of positive teacher-student relationships. Networking implies degree of 'connectednesses between the teacher and student which strengthen the positive teacher-student relationships' (Deiro, 2005; Shafii and Shafii, 2001; Roher and Weir, 2004; Wong and Wong, 2001).

Another important element of positive teacher-student relationship is dialogue or communicating with students. When teachers and students spend time together in caring dialogue, a positive connection will result. Communicating with students is important in order to create positive teacher-student relationships. Self-disclosure is an important characteristic in positive teacher-student relationships. Self-disclosure is the act of sharing or disclosing the teacher's own feelings, attitudes and

experiences with students in ways that are helpful to the students and enhance their learning process (Cayanus, 2002; Stern and Repa, 2001; Deiro, 2005; Griffin, 1998).

Teacher has an enormous influence on their students, an influence that should be positive and encouraging. It is the teacher who has more power than the student in teacher-student relationship, because, teacher-student relationship is an example of influential relationship in which the distribution of power between the participants is asymmetrical. With this power comes responsibility, the teacher is expected to give, know, and understand more than the student. The main concern of the teacher is to bring a change in the student's situation, behaviour or attitude (Deiro, 2005; Spitali, 2005). It is incumbent on the teacher to be sensitive toward social *inter alia* emotional needs, since teacher assumes the vital and pivotal position in the classroom and sets into chain such events that decide the nature of climate in the classroom, so, climate of the classroom is around the teachers' capabilities to make himself/herself attuned towards the students' needs (safety needs, need for belonging and love, need for importance, respect, self-esteem, and independence over and above the need for understanding) as per the Maslow's hierarchy of the needs (1979).

Ingredients of the Social-motional Climate of the Classroom on the Basis of the Interaction Analyses Categories Systems

All the tools which measure teaching behaviour employing the interaction analysis category system like Flander Interaction Analysis Category System (FIACs) and other tools developed on the line of FIACs, namely, Verbal Interaction Category System (VICS) developed by Amidon and Hunter, Reciprocal Category System developed by Richard Ober (1971) capture the activities of the teachers which are identified as ingredients of the social-emotional climate are –

- Teacher accepts and clarifies an attitude or the feeling (either positive or negative) of a pupil in a non-threatening and friendly manner.
- Teacher encourages or praises the view point, action, behaviour, ideas and contribution of the students.
- Teacher makes the classroom climate humorous by cutting jokes but not at the expense of the other or hurting the dignity of other student.
- Criticizing or justifying authority it implies the statements (on the part of the teachers) intended to change pupil behaviour from non-acceptable to acceptable pattern and use of extreme self-reference.
- When teacher ignores, discourages

or rejects pupil expression of feelings.

- When teacher criticizes, ignores or discourages pupils' ideas.
- Teacher's showing of positive emotions towards children and their managing of children's behavior.
- Responding in a way which commands or encourages pupil behaviour.

Above mentioned activities, associated with the teacher, give the *modus operandi* of handling the interpersonal relationship which arise in the teaching-learning situation. The researches on teacher effectiveness suggest that when teachers sustain emotionally positive classroom climates and effectively manage children's behaviour, children demonstrate high engagement in learning. Indeed, teacher-child relationships characterised by more warmth and responsiveness, and by less anger and harshness, are linked to children's greater academic achievement and social competence (Gettinger and Stoiber, 1998; Burchinal, Peisner-Feinberg, Pianta, and Howes, 2000; Decker, Dona, and Christenson, 2007; Hamre and Pianta, 2005).

Social-emotional Climate and Teacher's Emotional Intelligence

The teaching-learning phenomenon occurs in the context of a social situation and hence what superficially appears to be a cognitive enterprise acquires a

dimension of human relations in its operational stage. The degree of success or failure of the enterprise would depend upon the extent to which the leader of the group, the teacher, takes into account the emerging social-emotional climate in the classroom and acts accordingly. The social-emotional climate mainly depends upon the teacher-behaviour, since in a classroom situation, it is a teacher who steers and guides the proceedings. The former is, thus, crucially conditioned by the type of teacher behaviour exhibited in the classroom. Handling the interpersonal relationship and consequently bringing about such social-emotional climate in the classroom as will facilitate the teaching-learning activities as intended, are embedded in the personality of the teacher. Array of emotional intelligence abilities enable the teacher to bring about healthy learning environments which are critical to the harmonious development of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain (Goad, 2005; Justice, 2005). Emotional intelligence is a confluence of abilities to: (1) know and value self, (2) build and maintain a variety of strong, productive and healthy relationships, (3) get along and work well with others in achieving positive results; and (4) effectively deals with the pressures and demands of daily life and work (Nelson and Low, 2005).

From above discussion of the social-emotional climate of the classroom favourable to efficient teaching-learning activities, it appears that emotionally

intelligent teacher is best equipped to handle the interpersonal relationships with students. This is the reason why the study entitled 'A Study of Emotional Intelligence and Teaching Behaviour of Primary School Teachers' was executed to compare the teaching pattern of the primary school teachers with regard to their level of emotional intelligence.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study may be specifically stated as under:

- To identify salient features of the classroom behaviour patterns of the primary school teachers observed during the study and having different levels of emotional intelligence: Extremely High Emotional Intelligence (EHE), High Emotional Intelligence (HE), Moderate Emotional Intelligence (ME) and Low Emotional Intelligence (LE).
- To compare the verbal classroom behaviour patterns identified with the norms given by Flanders.

Operational Definition of the Terms Used

- **Teaching behaviour:** Teaching behaviour as it is analysed by FIACs (Flanders Interaction Analysis Category System). FIACs analyses teaching phenomenon in terms of the 10 categories that are broadly subsumed under teacher talk, pupil talk and silence (as cited

in Flanders 1970, p.34)

- **Emotional intelligence:** Emotional intelligence is the ability of an individual to appropriately and successfully respond to a vast variety of stimuli being elicited from the inner self and immediate environment. Emotional intelligence constitutes three psychological dimensions—emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity and emotional competency—which motivate an individual to recognise truthfully interpret honestly and handle tactfully the dynamics of human behaviour.
 - (a) Extremely High Emotional Intelligence (EHE): Teachers who have scored 285 on 'Emotional intelligence test' and above are classified as extremely high emotional intelligent teachers.
 - (b) High Emotional Intelligence (HE): Teachers who have scored in the range of 250-284 on 'Emotional intelligence test' are classified as high emotional intelligent teachers.
 - (c) Moderate Emotional Intelligence (ME) : Teachers who have scored in the range of 200-249 on 'Emotional intelligence test' are classified as moderate emotional intelligent teachers.
 - (d) Low Emotional Intelligence (LE): Teachers who have scored in the range of 150-199 on 'Emotional intelligence test' are classified as low emotional intelligent teachers.

Design and Methodology

The methodology used in this study was the descriptive survey research method. All the primary school teachers of government, government aided and private schools constituted the population of the study. 'Multi-stage systematic sampling technique' was employed for selection of sample. Ninety one primary school teachers were randomly drawn for this study.

Tools Used

1. Flanders interaction analysis category system (1970) was used to observe the classes.
2. The EQ Test (developed by Prof. N. K. Chadha and Dr. Dalip Singh) was adapted in Hindi by the investigator for the measurement of emotional intelligence of primary school teachers.

Data Collection

First of all, the investigator took training in observations. The co-efficient of inter-observer reliability was calculated by the Scott's coefficient which was. 0.85. Each of the teachers was observed for 35 minutes. Observation was accompanied by the administration of the 'Emotional intelligence test'.

Computation of Classroom Interaction Variables

The interaction variables like, I/D ratio, i/d ratio and Pupil Initiation Ratio (PIR) were computed separately for teachers classified into four groups, namely,

teachers having extremely high emotional intelligence (EHE), teachers having high emotional intelligence (HI), teachers having moderate emotional intelligence (ME), and teachers having low emotional intelligence (LE), based on the performance on 'Emotional intelligence test.' For computation of the foregoing interaction variables 10×10 master interaction matrices for each of the four groups were compiled and following formulas were used:

1. **Pupil Initiation Ratio (PIR):** This concept indicates what proportion of pupil talk was judged by the observer to be an act of initiation. The PIR is estimated by multiplying the frequency in category 9 by 100 and dividing by the sum of all pupil talk, i.e. frequencies in category 8 and 9. Category 9 denotes the 'Pupil talk initiation', which refers the situation when student expresses own ideas, initiates a new topic, likes asking thoughtful questions, enjoys freedom to develop opinions and a line of thought and go beyond the existing structure. On the contrary to it, category 8 refers 'Pupil talk response', it means talk by students in response to teacher, here, teacher structures the answer of the students; over and above students enjoy less freedom to express own ideas.
2. **Indirectness (i/d or I/D ratio):** There are two methods of estimating indirectness in a

teaching behaviour encoded by FIAC. The first is denoted by small and is indicated as i/d. It is calculated by adding up category frequencies in columns 1, 2 and 3 i.e. (1+2+3) and dividing the same by category frequencies in columns 6 and 7 i.e., (6+7). The second is denoted by capital 'I' and is indicated I/D. It is calculated by adding up the category frequencies in columns 1, 2, 3 and 4, i.e. (1+2+3+4) and dividing the same by category frequencies in columns 5, 6 and 7, i.e. (5+6+7).

Indirectness implies those teacher's behaviours that expands students' freedom of action in the classroom. In the context of Flander's Interaction Analysis Category System (FIACS), it is represented by teacher statements accepting or using student's ideas or opinion, praising or encouraging students' ideas or behaviours, clarifying and accepting feelings of the pupils.

Directness refers those teacher's behaviours that restrict students' freedom of action in the classroom. These teacher behaviours are represented in FIACS by lecturing, giving directions or commands and criticizing students' ideas or behaviours.

Data Analysis and Discussion

I/D and i/d ratios of teachers having different level of emotional intelligence

Table 1 and Figure 1 depict the indirect-to-direct ratios of the teachers belonging to categories EHE, HE, ME and LE. This depiction indicates the trend of increment in the performance of teachers on these interaction variables accompanying the enhancement in the level of the emotional intelligence. So, it can be deduced that performance of teachers on these interaction variables is likely

Table 1: Display of performance of teachers on different interaction variables with regard to their level of emotional intelligence

<i>Levels</i>	<i>Extremely high Emotional Intelligence (EHE)</i>	<i>High Emotional Intelligence (HE)</i>	<i>Moderate Emotional Intelligence (ME)</i>	<i>Low Emotional Intelligence (LE)</i>	<i>Norms for Indian Class-rooms</i>	<i>Norms for American classrooms</i>
I/D Ratio	0.36	0.29	0.12	0.066	NA	NA
i/d Ratio	1.00	0.69	0.25	0.15	NA	NA
Pupil initiation ratio	20.26	15.15	6.54	5.95	11	34

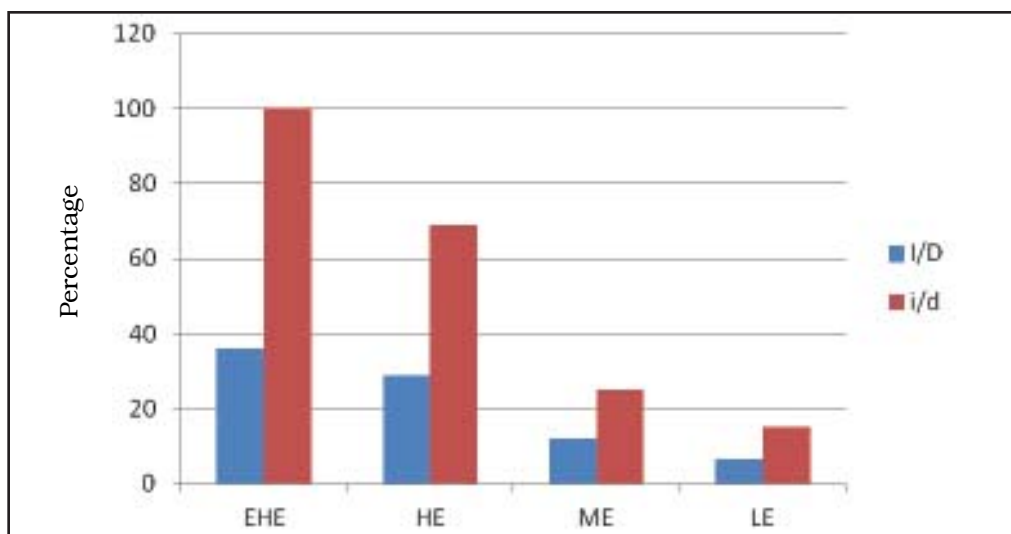


Figure 1: Display of performance of teachers on interaction variables 'I/D and i/d ratios' having different levels of emotional intelligence.

to improve as the level of emotional intelligence increases. Teachers with highest emotional intelligence tend to have highest I/D, I/d and P/R ratios and teachers with lowest emotional intelligence show lowest value of these ratios in their classroom interactions with pupils.

As per FIACs categories 1, 2, 3 and 4 termed as indicators of "indirect teacher influence" and categories 5, 6, and 7 as indicators of "direct teacher influence", categories 1, 2 and 3 (accepting or using student's ideas or opinion, praising or encouraging students' ideas or behaviours, clarifying and accepting feelings of the pupils) are potent components of the "indirect teacher influence" and categories 6 and 7 (giving directions or commands and

criticizing students' ideas or behaviours) are potent components of the "direct teacher influence". Occurrences of categories 1, 2 and 3 tend to stimulate the students' initiation. On the contrary, extreme occurrences of categories 6 and 7 tend to strangle the students' initiation (Flanders, 1970, p.104). Indirect teacher influence implies, though indirectly, the abilities of the teacher to be sensitive and caring to the feelings of the students, to praise and appreciate the perspectives and viewpoints of the students and to build on the ideas expressed by the students. All these abilities, mentioned in the preceding line, are traced to be deep-rooted in the emotional intelligence (Bhattacharya and Sengupta, 2007; Mayer and Salovey, 1990).

Sensitivity to the feelings of the students implies that teacher is capable in perceiving, appraising, understanding and analysing the emotions of the students. This sensitivity enables the teacher to address the social-emotional needs (physiological needs, safety needs; belonging and love needs, need for importance, respect, self-esteem and independence, need for information, need for understanding; need for beauty, need for self-actualisation) of the students. When teacher verbally or non-verbally communicates this sensitivity before students, this is called the empathy of the teachers towards students and this leads to cultivate and foster caring teacher-student relationship. When teacher praises and appreciates the behaviour (verbal or non-verbal) of the students, this might be the consequence of abilities of teachers to appreciate the perspectives and viewpoints of the students and consequently positively impact, persuade and influence students. When teacher tries to build on the students' ideas, it implies on the part of the teacher to develop the thinking horizon of the students, ability to develop and bolster the abilities of the students. All foregoing abilities come under the empathy and social-skills sub-components of the social competency dimension of the emotional intelligence (Griffin, 1998; Low and Nelson, 2005; Bhattacharya and Sengupta, 2007). Therefore, it appears

that emotional intelligence of the teacher is associated with the above discussed interaction variables, teachers who possess considerably good emotional intelligence tend to be good performers on these interaction variables and teachers whose emotional intelligence measured low, are found poor performers on the same interaction variables than that of their counterparts.

Foregoing emotional intelligence abilities enable the teacher to pay attention to their students, to encourage their students, to support the aspiration of their students, and to recognise the students' achievements, these attributes, in turn, bear positive effect on the students' learning. Teachers with high indirect-to-direct ratio are found significantly better than with low indirect-to-direct ratio in their influence upon pupils regarding motivation and classroom organisation and in the development of favourable attitude towards themselves (teachers). When the teacher praises or encourages the pupil, it carries the value judgement of approval. There is warmth and friendliness along with the approval in such teacher statements. When the teacher accepts, clarifies or uses constructively pupils' ideas, they are encouraged to participate further. Teachers with such abilities can often stimulate positive feelings of motivation and control negative feelings of motivation that might otherwise get out

of hand. This type of atmosphere and attitudes does motivate pupils more and more to learn and thus indirect influence (categories 1 to 4) encourages pupil participation. On the contrary, direct influence hinders pupil participation leading to decreasing of motivation among pupils (Patel, 1975 as cited in M.B. Buch, 1975; p.87).

Pupil Initiation Ratio (PIR) in the Classes of Teachers having Different Levels of Emotional Intelligence

As per Table 1, it is depicted that teachers having different levels (extremely high, high, moderate and low) could not excel the norm set by the Flander for this interaction variable *viz* 'PIR'. But teachers belonging to categories either 'EHE' or 'HE' excelled the norm set for Indian classrooms for this interaction variable. Contrary to it, teacher belonging to either of categories 'ME' or 'LE' could not cross the norm set for the Indian classrooms. So far as failure of teachers belonging to either categories of 'EHE' or 'HE' in not crossing the norm set by Flanders is concerned, it might be attributed to the taking lower classes in this study, where maturity of students appear to play a vital role in the initiation, apart from this, another coherent reason might be the context of societies. Performance of the teachers belonging to the categories of 'ME' or 'LE' on this paramount important interaction variable is a matter of concern, because, failure of teacher in eliciting the pupil initiation

might be attributed to the inabilities of the teacher to praise, accept or use the student's ideas with a view to motivate the students (as cited in M. B. Buch, 1975, p.20). Moreover, other causes might be associated with the socio-emotional ethos of the classroom. Teachers' insensitive attitude tends to jeopardize the safety needs of the students. Rejection of the students and unfriendly way of teachers tends to hamper the satisfaction of need for belonging and love and need for importance, respect, self-esteem and independence, in consequent to it, students develop the feeling of insecurity and isolation in the classroom (Maslow, 1979).

Performance of the teachers having extremely high emotional intelligence and high emotional intelligence is virtually commendable. Indeed, dynamic interchange between the mind of the teacher and individual learner is kernel and *sine qua non* of effective pedagogy. If teacher succeeds in bringing about dynamic interchange, it might be attributed to personality of the teacher, in general, and emotional intelligence, in particular. Because, social-emotional ethos is contingent on the sensitivity of the teacher to the students' needs (Maslow's hierarchy of needs, particularly, safety needs; need for belonging and love; need for importance, respect, self-esteem and independence; need for information; need for understanding)—(Maslow, 1979). This sensitivity constitutes the

initial stage of the empathy (a sub-component of the social skills dimension of the emotional intelligence), when teacher communicates his/her sensitivity either verbally or non-verbally, the process of empathy gains its wholeness (Bhattacharya and Sengupta, 2007).

A sensitive and empathic teacher listens to students patiently, praise students' initiation, and tries his/her best to increase the level of students' participation by asking the divergent and open-ended questions (Pandey, 1981; pp 170-71). Therefore, ensuring pupil initiation of above desired level (by extremely high and high emotionally intelligent teacher than that of their counterparts) might be attributed to their abilities to reinforce positively, asking open-ended questions and sensitivity to the emotional needs of the students.

Another factor which might restrict the students' initiation is the motivation of the students. Positive teacher-student relationships bear positive and salutary effects on students' increased motivation to learn. Teacher will be effective motivator if he has ability to build rapport but, it must be preceded by the ability to empathise with the

emotional needs of the students; ability to build rapport comes under the social skill dimension of the emotional intelligence. Extremely high and high emotionally intelligent teachers build rapport with the students easily and tend to be good motivator because of their sensibility and ability to anticipate students' expectation, mind set and behaviour (Epp, 1995; Bhattacharya and Sengupta, 2007).

Conclusion

In a nutshell, on the basis of foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that level of emotional intelligence plays a vital role in creation of social-emotional climate of the classroom. A conducive social-emotional climate which may be characterised as the dynamic interchange between the minds of the teachers and students (a hallmark of effective pedagogy); students' feeling of security and dignity and caring teacher-student relationship are found to have salutary and benign effects on the learning of the students.

The findings of the study recommend that training of emotional intelligence must be incorporated in the curriculum meant for the preparation of prospective teachers, in general and for the primary school teachers in particular.

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