

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence has an influence on leadership effectiveness in the educational context. In educational leadership, emotional intelligence facilitates better interpersonal relationships, creates a positive learning environment, and enhances the ability to overcome challenges and make effective decisions. In addition, emotionally intelligent leaders can inspire and motivate staff and students, facilitate adaptation to change and promote innovation. Emotional intelligence is therefore a crucial element in developing effective and sustainable leadership in education.

Keywords: Role, Emotional Intelligence, Educational Leadership.

Introduction

Leadership in education plays a vital role in determining the success of educational institutions and the achievement of student learning outcomes. Leadership is the ability and actions taken by an individual, usually a principal or other leader of an educational institution, to influence, motivate, and direct teaching staff and students in achieving predetermined educational goals. (Sitopu et al., 2024); (Guna et al., 2024). This leadership relates to all aspects of management and organisation, such as planning, decision-making, policy implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of educational processes and outcomes. An effective leader in education focuses not only on administrative tasks, but also on developing a clear vision and mission, creating a conducive learning environment and building good relationships with the educational community as a whole. (Fawait et al., 2024); (Syakhrani & Aslan, 2024).

Educational leaders are not only responsible for the administrative and operational management of the institution, but must also be able to inspire and motivate teaching staff and students to reach their full potential. In this context, effective leadership skills are crucial.

The importance of leadership in education lies in its ability to influence and improve the quality of education provided. Effective leaders are able to create a positive school culture, promote continuous learning among teaching staff, and improve students' academic and non-academic performance. Good leadership can also help overcome challenges and changes faced by educational institutions, such as curriculum changes, educational policies or technological developments (Dugué et al., 2015). (Dugué et al., 2021).. In addition, strong educational leaders are able to facilitate collaboration between various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents and communities, to achieve common goals. Therefore, effective leadership in education is considered to be one of the key factors in improving the quality and success of the education system. (Shafait et al., 2021)..

Among the various skills required by an educational leader, emotional intelligence has been identified as a crucial component that contributes to the leader's ability to manage teams, resolve conflicts and improve overall institutional performance. Emotional intelligence, which includes the ability to understand and manage one's own and others' emotions, plays an important role in building healthy and productive relationships in the workplace. (Uy et al., 2023).. Daniel Goleman, a leading psychologist, suggested that emotional intelligence can have a greater influence than IQ in determining a person's success in various aspects of life, including leadership. (Pozo-Rico & Sandoval, 2020)..

Although many studies have been conducted on educational leadership and emotional intelligence, there is still a gap in the literature that comprehensively examines the relationship between the two. Some research suggests that leaders with high emotional intelligence are better able to establish a positive organisational climate, maintain staff motivation and handle work pressure effectively. However, these results are still varied and lack systematisation. (Agbaria, 2021).

This research aims to fill this gap by thoroughly reviewing the existing literature on the role of emotional intelligence in educational leadership.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is a research approach that involves collecting, analysing, and interpreting information that already exists in various written sources such as books, scientific journals, articles, research reports, and other relevant documents. The main purpose of this method is to understand existing developments and findings in a particular field of study, identify research gaps, and provide a theoretical foundation for future research. The process involves searching for relevant literature, evaluating the quality and relevance of the sources, and synthesising the information to form a comprehensive and critical perspective on the topic under study. (Helaluddin, 2019); (Sanusi, 2015).

Results and Discussion

Emotional intelligence and educational leadership

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognise, understand, manage, and use emotions effectively in oneself and others. The concept was first popularised by Daniel Goleman, who identified five key components of EI: self-awareness, self-management, motivation, empathy, and social skills. (Chigeda et al., 2022).. Self-awareness involves the ability to recognise and understand personal emotions and their impact on thoughts and actions. Self-management includes the ability to control emotions and impulsive behaviour, and adjust to change and challenges. Motivation refers to the internal drive to reach goals and achieve, even in the face of adversity. (Suleman et al., 2020).

Empathy, as one of the components of EI, is the ability to understand and feel what others feel, which is an important foundation in building healthy and effective relationships. Social skills include the ability to communicate, co-operate and build good relationships with others. Emotional intelligence is considered important in many aspects of life, including work, education, and personal relationships. Individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to be more successful in handling stress, resolving conflict, and motivating themselves and others, which in turn can improve performance and overall well-being. (Ayalew & Ayenew, 2022)..

Research shows that emotional intelligence not only contributes to individual well-being but also plays an important role in professional success. In the workplace, individuals with high emotional intelligence are able to communicate effectively, work with teams, and demonstrate inclusive and supportive leadership. They are more likely to understand their colleagues' perspectives and respond in ways that encourage collaboration and resolve conflicts constructively. In addition, they can inspire and motivate their teams, creating a positive and productive work environment. (Alotaibi et al., 2020).

In an educational context, developing emotional intelligence in students can improve learning ability, reduce problematic behaviour, and improve relationships between students and teachers. Emotional intelligence is also relevant in personal relationships; with the ability to recognise and manage their own emotions as well as understand and appreciate the feelings of others, individuals can build deeper and more supportive relationships. (Dasborough et al., 2022).. Developing emotional intelligence is thus a crucial aspect of self-development, helping individuals to reach their full potential in various areas of life. Understanding and practising emotional intelligence can bring wide-ranging benefits, from personal life to greater career success.

Educational leadership, then, is the process by which individuals or groups influence and direct educational institutions to achieve their goals effectively and

efficiently. Educational leaders are not only tasked with managing the administration of a school or institution, but also play a key role in shaping the institution's vision, inspiring staff and building a conducive learning environment. Educational leadership covers a wide range of aspects from strategic planning, decision-making, to the management of human and financial resources. (Kumari et al., 2022)..

Key characteristics of educational leadership include a clear vision, effective communication skills and integrity. Educational leaders must be able to set inspiring visions and goals and align all components of the institution towards them. Communication skills are key to conveying this vision, inspiring teachers, staff and students, and building solid relationships with all stakeholders (Fianko et al., 2015). (Fianko et al., 2020). High integrity and ethics are also very important in educational leadership, as leaders must be role models in terms of morals and professionalism. In addition, educational leaders must be flexible and adaptive, able to face and manage change, and committed to continuous professional development to improve the quality of education (Udod et al., 2020). (Udod et al., 2020).

Types of leadership include;

Transformational leadership is a type of leadership in which the leader inspires and motivates others to reach their full potential and work towards a common goal. In an educational context, transformational leaders encourage innovation, support teachers' professional development and create an environment that allows students and staff to flourish. They place great focus on the long-term vision and mission of the school and endeavour to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in achieving these goals. Transformational leaders are also known for their ability to build strong relationships and trust with staff, which can improve performance and job satisfaction. (Moon, 2021).

Instructional leadership emphasises the importance of high-quality teaching and learning. Instructional leaders focus on developing effective curriculum, teaching strategies and assessment to improve student learning outcomes. They are often seen working directly with teachers to develop good teaching practices, conduct classroom observations, and provide constructive feedback. (Hajnci & Vučenović, 2020).. In this approach, leaders are highly involved in the educational process and have in-depth knowledge of teaching and learning methods, as well as the ability to guide staff in continuous improvement.

Servant leadership is a type of leadership that places the well-being and needs of others above the leader's personal interests. In an educational context, servant leaders focus on supporting and empowering teachers, staff and students. They strive to create an inclusive and supportive environment, where each individual feels valued and supported to grow and develop. Servant leaders listen to the needs of their educational community and endeavour to meet those needs, showing empathy and building strong relationships based on mutual respect and trust. (Samul, 2020).

Distributed leadership is an approach where leadership responsibilities are separated and shared among team or staff members. Here, the leadership role is not solely owned by one individual but is spread among many people within the organisation. In an educational context, distributional leadership encourages wider participation of teachers and staff in decision-making and day-to-day responsibilities. This can increase the sense of ownership and commitment to the institution's goals. Leaders who adopt this approach believe that by empowering many people to take on leadership roles, they can utilise a wide range of skills and perspectives, which ultimately has a positive impact on school performance and student learning outcomes. (Shanthi & Noojahan, 2021).

Charismatic leadership is a type of leadership where the leader has a strong personality and charisma, which enables them to inspire and motivate others. In education, charismatic leaders often have a clear vision and are able to communicate that vision in a way that motivates and touches the emotions of others. They tend to have strong communication skills and can bring about positive change by energising and encouraging teachers and students. However, the risk of charismatic leadership is relying too much on the leader's personal power, which can create dependency and reduce the independent development of staff and students. (Halimi et al., 2021).

Democratic leadership, also known as participatory leadership, involves team members in the decision-making process. In an educational context, democratic leaders invite teachers, staff, students and even parents to participate in school-related discussions and decisions. This approach can promote a sense of inclusion and improve team morale, as everyone feels their voice is heard and considered. (Alshammari et al., 2020).. Democratic leadership also promotes collaboration and the integration of new ideas, which can foster innovation and improved educational quality.

Thus, in education, different types of leadership can be applied to achieve diverse and complex goals. Transformational leadership can inspire positive change and encourage innovation, while instructional leadership focuses on improving teaching quality and student learning outcomes. Servant leadership prioritises the well-being of the educational community, while distributive leadership encourages participation and shared responsibility. Charismatic leadership brings passion and motivation with personal power, while democratic leadership values participation and collaboration. Each type of leadership has its own strengths and challenges, and effective educational leaders can usually combine several of these approaches to create an optimal learning environment that supports the development of all members of the school community.

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Educational Leadership

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognise, understand and manage one's own emotions as well as those of others. In the context of educational leadership, EI plays an important role in creating a productive and supportive learning

environment. Educational leaders who have high EC are able to maintain their emotional stability, cope better with stress and give appropriate attention to teachers, staff and students. (San-Juan-Ferrer & Hípola, 2020).. This ensures that the entire school community feels valued and supported, which in turn increases their motivation and commitment to the learning process. (Fteiha & Awwad, 2020)..

Educational leaders with high KE tend to be more empathic and can put themselves in others' shoes. They are able to listen well and understand the needs and concerns of their team members. Such leaders not only respond to problems immediately but also take a more thoughtful approach and consider the impact on the emotional well-being of the entire school community. This empathy makes it easier for them to build strong and trusting relationships, which are crucial in creating a harmonious and collaborative working environment. (Lubbadeh, 2020).

Furthermore, KE enables educational leaders to be effective communicators. They are able to convey the vision and goals of the school in a way that is inspiring and easy to understand. These communication skills not only help in giving clear directions but also in resolving conflicts that may occur among staff or students. Leaders with high KE can negotiate fair and adequate solutions without causing resentment or division. The ability to deliver constructive criticism and accept feedback graciously are also important attributes that leaders with high EC fulfil. (Doan et al., 2020).

Leadership strategies rooted in EC create a positive and inclusive organisational culture. Educational leaders with EC not only focus on academic achievement but also prioritise the emotional and mental well-being of the entire school community. They encourage practices that support happiness and life balance, such as wellness programmes for teachers and fun extracurricular activities for students. Thus, the relationship between KE and educational leadership not only improves academic performance but also ensures the holistic development of all individuals involved in the educational process. (Hourani et al., 2021).

In addition to its impact on school atmosphere and dynamics, emotional intelligence (EI) also affects the way educational leaders handle change and face challenges. With high EC, leaders can more easily adapt to changes in curriculum, education policy or the shifting needs of students and school communities. They are able to manage emotional reactions that may arise in response to such changes and lead with calmness and confidence. This helps to reduce anxiety and resistance among staff and students and fosters the sense of optimism needed to navigate the transition. (Miao et al., 2021).

Furthermore, EC is also closely related to making wise and long-term welfare-orientated decisions. Emotionally intelligent educational leaders do not only pursue quick results, but also consider the long-term impact of every decision taken. They are able to balance the academic interests and emotional needs of students and staff.

(Wood, 2020). Thus, decisions are not only based on data or academic results, but also consider the human aspects that are integral to the education process.

As recognised in various studies, educational leaders who have high KE tend to be more effective in building a culture of trust and high morale. They can inspire and motivate their teams through personal example, demonstrating sincerity and integrity in every action. This behaviour creates a domino effect, where teachers and staff tend to emulate such positive patterns, which in turn creates a more harmonious and productive school atmosphere. (Wamsler & Restoy, 2020).

Thus, the relationship between emotional intelligence and educational leadership is significant in creating a successful and positive learning environment. Emotionally intelligent leaders are able to manage their own and others' emotions well, build strong relationships and communicate their vision clearly and inspiringly. They are also more adaptive to change and able to make decisions that consider the long-term well-being of all parties involved. Therefore, developing emotional intelligence among educational leaders should be an important priority to ensure holistic and sustainable progress in education.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence plays an important role in educational leadership. Leaders who have high emotional intelligence are able to manage interpersonal relationships more effectively, both with staff and students. They can understand and respond to the emotional needs of others, create a supportive and positive school environment and promote a working climate conducive to teaching and learning. Emotional intelligence also enables leaders to cope better with stress and challenges and make decisions that consider the well-being of the whole school community.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence in educational leaders is closely related to the successful implementation of change and innovation in the school environment. The ability to communicate empathetically and motivate staff and students is key to reducing resistance to change and ensuring smooth adaptation. In addition, the literature shows that emotionally intelligent leaders tend to have a clear vision and are able to inspire others to achieve common goals. In conclusion, developing emotional intelligence is a crucial element in empowering educational leaders to create productive, inclusive and sustainable learning environments.

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