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Editorial: The importance of academic training in emotional intelligence for teachers

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Editorial on the Research Topic

The importance of academic training in emotional intelligence for teachers

Considering that teaching concerns more than just pedagogical and content knowledge, and that is an emotional practice, teachers must develop emotional competencies. Mayer and Salovey's model understands emotional intelligence (EI) as a competence that can be learned and developed, and that consists of the adaptive use of emotional information (Mayer et al., 2016). Thus, this Research Topic focuses on the relevance of teachers' academic training should include EI as an essential competence for all teachers. The aim was to provide empirical evidence that examines the importance of teachers' EI, as a crucial emotional competence, highlighting recent studies that can contribute to a new model of teacher education (in academic and in-service education).

Valente and Lourenço identify a gap in previous studies testing the role of teachers' EI in the classroom, namely, none have focused on EI as an essential variable for classroom conflict management. The authors state that it is essential to understand the teachers' personal variables related to conflict management in the classroom, namely EI. That way, an experimental validation study, conducted in Portugal, was conducted with teachers from the 3rd cycle of basic education to secondary education. Using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation tests, and the structural equation models, the authors found that teacher who tends to have a higher EI perception, present more cohesive levels of commitment to resolving conflicts with students in the classroom. That is, teachers' apply more integrating and compromising strategies and less strategy of avoiding, dominating, and obliging for conflict management in the pedagogical relationship. Given that conflict increases in the pedagogical relationship, this study's results demonstrated the importance of teachers' EI for conflict management. Therefore, this study contributed to the knowledge of how teachers' EI relates to classroom conflict management. The authors conclude that teachers, who tend to have a higher perception of EI in the presence of

classroom conflict, use conflict management strategies that benefit the teaching and learning process, managing conflict in the educational relationship in a constructive way. The findings from this study contribute to the importance of teachers' EI. That way, teacher training programs should give priority to emotional education (in pre-service and in-service teachers' training), for developing EI abilities due to the significance they present in the classroom conflict.

The study developed by [Bonilla et al.](#) presents the elaboration of a conceptual model guided by the development of tools and resources for teachers, to improve the management of conflicts that arise in the classroom. Trying to fill gaps that previous models or programs present, justifies the need to develop a new conceptual model—the Integrated Circular Model of Conflict (ICMC)—, which focuses on three constructs: emotional regulation; conflict mediation; and coping strategies. The ICMC is developed in three phases that include conflict analysis, theoretical-practical review, and the on-site application of the teachers' procedure in conflict situations that arise in the classroom.

Invoking some recent studies, the authors show the positive influence of implementing programs aimed at the development of emotional skills to improve the psychosociological climate in schools and the prevention of aggressive manifestations among students. They also emphasize that the use of conflict mediation in an educational context is perceived by students, teachers, and school administrators as very positive, evidencing its impact on conflict resolution and the prevention of severe and violent situations. However, many educational institutions' adopting this tool as a resource for building a culture of institutional peace are highlighted. The relationship between coping strategies and the management of significant emotional situations for people is also evidenced, using variables such as age, type of conflict, high or low EI, and resilience, among others. The study aimed to show how these elements can be complemented to design a model that creates comprehensive solutions for conflict management in an educational context.

Thus, the development of a model or program that addresses conflicts and includes mediation as a central element cannot be dissociated from the emotional part (emotional regulation), and from the importance that emotions play in the preference for coping strategies that people select. The results demonstrate that people with more developed EI naturally tend to respond to their moods, generally select more adaptive coping strategies, focus on conflict regulation, with a high degree of commitment to collaborative work and, are less likely to get involved in conflict situations, which is in line with this topic.

A descriptive-exploratory study developed by [Cristóvão et al.](#) seeks to understand and interpret a phenomenon based

on the meaning attributed to the teachers' perceptions about the implementation of the socio-emotional and creative component of the Promoting Change in Learning—Gulbenkian XXI School Learning Communities project (PMA-CEAG XXI project). This study explores the representations of all seven teachers who were involved in the first 2 years of the project. The aim was to understand which aspects teachers valued the most and, among them, which dimensions added value to the day-to-day lives of teachers and students, as well as to identify what improvements are needed and to relate them to the training received and the work carried out in the classroom. Using qualitative research, adopting the software webQDA to interpret, systemize, and express, the author found that the existence of four representative dimensions of teachers' responses: the impact on themselves; the impact on students; the impact on teaching and learning practice; and the impact on the school community. The results show very positive impacts on the professional and personal development of teachers. Teachers reported improvements in student behavior, the relationships between them, and in the classroom environment, and emphasized the need to receive more training in emotional education in their academic and in-service education. The authors conclude that impacting teachers impacts students as well, while also improving the way the teaching and learning process takes place. The importance of academic training in EI (in particular) and the development of social skills (in general) associated with the multiple aspects of creativity have proved to add value to the daily practice of these teachers, who are in favor of additional training for themselves and their peers.

Finally, [Navarro-Mateu et al.](#) study aimed to adapt and validate the SACIE-R scale to Spanish in a sample of university students and teachers, and observe the attitudes toward inclusion of in-service teachers and teacher training students while at the same time analyzing the effects of gender, training, or the level of contact have those attitudes. This study represents considerable progress in offering psychometric evidence that justifies the use of an instrument to measure attitudes toward teacher inclusion in the Spanish context, the SACIE-R, while offering guidelines that should be considered for the design of public and private policies that result in improved teacher training, which in turn improve inclusion in schools. The authors conclude that the prior teacher training and updated training become vital to the better preparation of teachers to work with children with educational needs, increasing their self-confidence and helping them to develop a more positive attitude toward inclusive practices.

Despite the research being conducted in different countries and the adoption of different methodologies and methods, it can be concluded that a new model of pre-service teacher education is needed that includes EI, as necessary training for teachers. Therefore, teacher training programs should

give priority to the inclusion of emotional education in the pre-service teacher training, for developing EI abilities due to the significance they present in teachers' activity. Furthermore, it is important to carry out training courses that allow in-service teachers to recycle knowledge and develop their EI.

Author contributions

SV drafted the editorial. AAL edited the editorial and SV prepared final from edits. Both authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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