
Teachers—The Vital Resource: The Contribution of Emotional Intelligence to Teacher Efficacy and Well-Being

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Abstract

The study of emotional intelligence (EI) shows promise in predicting educational competencies and positive life outcomes. Considering the many demands placed on teachers and the link to occupational stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction, EI may be foundational to developing competencies that lead to improved psychological health and teaching success and, in turn, positive student outcomes. It is argued that core factors describing teacher efficacy can be subsumed under the competencies comprising EI. This overlap in skill sets suggests that EI training may also increase teachers' efficacy in the classroom and decrease their stress and job dissatisfaction.

Résumé

L'étude d'intelligence émotionnelle montre de la promesse dans la prédiction des compétences éducationnelles et les résultats positifs dans la vie quotidienne. Compte tenu des demandes faites aux enseignants et le rapport avec le stress du travail, l'épuisement, et la diminution de la satisfaction dans le travail, il se peut que l'intelligence émotionnelle est intégrale dans le développement des compétences qui mène les réussites dans le domaine de l'enseignement, qui améliore la santé mentale et, par conséquent, les résultats scolaires positifs. On peut soutenir que les facteurs décrivant l'efficacité des enseignants peut être englober dans les compétences de

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l'intelligence émotionnelle. Le chevauchement des compétences suggère que la formation d'intelligence émotionnelle peut augmenter l'efficacité des enseignants dans la salle de classe, et réduire leur stress, ainsi que leur mécontentement dans leur travail.

Keywords

emotional intelligence, teacher efficacy, stress, well-being

Teaching is recognized to be one of the most important and also demanding occupations in contemporary society. Without dispute, teachers play a pivotal role, if not *the* pivotal role, in student learning and achievement (e.g., Corbett & Wilson, 2002; McIntyre & Battle, 1998; Murphy, Delli, & Edwards, 2004; Thomas, 1998). These professionals not only transmit knowledge but also ensure that students acquire learning skills in addition to socially and culturally relevant behaviours. However, teaching is also a job of high “emotional labour” (Brennan, 2006; Hargreaves, 2001), and considerable evidence documents the significant levels of occupational stress experienced by teachers (e.g., Chang, 2009; Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006; Kokkinos, 2007; Maslach, 1999; Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, 2005), which can result in job dissatisfaction and mental health difficulties (Chan, 2006). Thus, the psychological health of teachers is imperative for the “success” of students, the education system, and the larger society. Based on the assumption that subject matter knowledge is present in teacher experts, this article focuses on other critically important aspects of the effective teacher.

A considerable research literature supports the significant influence of effective teachers on desirable classroom and student outcomes (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Murphy et al., 2004; Yoon, 2002). Underlying these findings are two main areas, key to describing the expert teacher: (a) the “professional” skills and characteristics needed for optimal effectiveness in the classroom and with students generally and (b) “personal” skills and characteristics that buffer the adverse components and situations of teaching and contribute to the building of resilience, psychological well-being, and teacher efficacy.

Studies of emotions and stress have identified the underpinnings and suggested methods for supporting psychological and physical health and well-being. Emotional intelligence (EI), broadly defined as encompassing an array of emotional competencies that facilitate the identification, processing, and regulation of emotion (Austin, Saklofske, & Egan, 2005; Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Salovey & Mayer, 1990), holds promise as a means through which potential negative teacher outcomes may be mitigated while supporting personal and professional well-being. Focusing on the relationships between higher EI and both enhanced coping skills and decreased occupational stress levels (Stough, Saklofske, & Parker, 2009) provides an avenue for improving successful stress management and building resilience in teachers.

This review highlights the relevance of EI in the context of human services. Specifically, it addresses how EI aids in the development of emotional cognition and understanding that can positively affect teacher psychological health and, in turn, their behaviours that are linked to student learning outcomes. This article describes the research surrounding teacher efficacy in relation to the construct of EI and illustrates how (a) higher levels of EI can mediate stress escalation and improve its management; (b) it helps to facilitate effective teaching, builds resilience, and contributes to a large portion of the positive factors comprising teacher efficacy; and (c) it can be developed through specific EI-program training. It is suggested that the foundational characteristics and abilities that support positive teacher efficacy are in large part grounded in EI and that EI-enhancing programs may serve to improve positive teaching characteristics and prevent/decrease the use of less effective qualities or strategies by addressing potential challenges to teachers' psychological health and well-being (e.g., Parker, Saklofske, Wood, & Collin, 2009). Identifying the direct or even indirect impact that improving EI may have on teacher efficacy could be key to increasing the positive effect teachers have on their students' learning and well-being. Understanding EI's impact further provides an avenue for continued research in other areas of professional development by extending models that identify the "good teacher" and good teaching practices.

Strengthening Teacher Efficacy: What Is It and Why Is Support so Imperative?

To encourage and support the psychological health and well-being of teachers, it is necessary to recognize the myriad stressors encountered by these professionals, the extent to which support of "personal" resources are necessary, and the characteristics that describe the highly efficacious teacher. In turn, the relationship between EI and teacher efficacy may serve as a foundation for further ensuring the well-being of teachers and supporting their positive impact within the school environment.

A Teacher's Need for Support: Dealing With Stress, Job Dissatisfaction, and Burnout

Identifying the factors that underlie teacher efficacy is crucial in determining teachers' personal and emotional well-being; these characteristics are often linked to their negative counterparts, namely, stress, burnout, and job dissatisfaction (Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, Reyes, & Salovey, 2010; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Individuals within the teaching profession continue to be vulnerable to high levels of occupational stress (e.g., Chang, 2009; Hakanen et al., 2006; Kokkinos, 2007; Maslach, 1999; Pillay et al., 2005), which creates increased emotional demands leading to exhaustion, decreased job satisfaction, mental health problems, and ultimately leaving the profession. In turn, teachers who are compromised in their personal adjustment can negatively affect classroom learning, individual student well-being, and the overall

educational system (Chan, 2006). Given the wide range of intellectual and emotional resources required for teaching, the nature of the profession is such that when the demands of managing student behaviours and learning become overwhelming, lower job satisfaction and ultimately job burnout result (Chang & Davis, 2009; Lens & de Jesus, 1999). The way in which teachers are able to draw on personal resources and use external supports may aid in their ability to cope with such demands.

Exhaustion and burnout can result from teachers' expectations and efforts to manage their own coping and the distressing events in the lives of their students in addition to their academic responsibilities (Hargreaves, 1998). Just as both internal and external factors contribute to teacher efficacy, both individual (e.g., personality, self-concept, resilience) and organizational factors, including work demands, class size, and administrative support, play a role in burnout. Chang (2009) suggests that it is a teacher's repeated experience with unpleasant emotions that leads to burnout through "transactional" factors such as their attributions or judgements of student behaviours, self-concept/efficacy, or perception of support. Specifically, these emotions emerge through teachers' judgement patterns of student behaviours and other teaching duties, which can contribute to negative outcomes. Once such negative emotions are present, a teacher is compromised and less able to uphold his or her ideal level of efficacy.

What Comprises Teacher Efficacy?

Teacher efficacy was initially viewed as a general personality trait allowing for effective interactions (Barfield & Burlingame, 1974), and later involved the teacher's perception of his or her impact on student learning under various conditions (e.g., Ashton, 1985; Guskey & Passaro, 1994; McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978). Teacher efficacy has focused on the "beliefs" of the teacher that includes the notion of self-efficacy. Early descriptions of self-efficacy described in both Rotter's (1966) social learning theory and Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory examined locus of control. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2001) Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (i.e., efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for classroom management, and efficacy for student engagement) revealed the importance of assessing a broader range of teaching tasks when assessing efficacy. Though self-efficacy could influence objective efficacy (Allinder, 1994; Ashton & Webb, 1986), it is insufficient as a construct description lacking in an acknowledgment of factors such as the demands placed on teachers and how those are met.

Helpful and Harmful Factors Affecting Teacher Competencies

Attempts to define teacher efficacy offer a closer look at those factors that differentiate effective teachers from those that are less effective. This, in turn, also identifies avenues for the support of factors that build resilience beyond the earlier work describing broad types of teacher expertise (e.g., content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge; see Shulman 1986).

Influences on teacher efficacy can be divided into those mainly within the teacher's control (internal), which include affect, knowledge, or work ethic, and those that are beyond a teacher's immediate control, such as the child's home environment, the school's neighbourhood, or board policies. Important "internal" factors studied in relation to teacher efficacy include, but are not limited to, the aforementioned beliefs of self-efficacy (e.g., Henson, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). This subsumes personal motivation (e.g., Pintrich, 2003; Pintrich & Schunk, 1996), or the teacher's capacity to instil in students the drive to work towards specific goals. Such self-efficacy beliefs contribute to a teacher's own motivation to work on self-improvement and classroom performance. Furthermore, classroom management skills may contribute to teacher efficacy directly or indirectly (e.g., Emmer & Stough, 2001). Coping skills and stress management are also relevant (e.g., Austin, Shah, & Muncer, 2005; Chang, 2009; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009) and reflect the skills and tools through which a teacher is able to manage demands, deal with stressful events, and maximize his or her personal strengths including personality and temperament factors (e.g., Henson & Chambers, 2003; Patrick, 2011; Schyns & Collani, 2002). Each of these variables can affect teaching styles, student-teacher relationships, and cognitive, behavioural, and emotional self-regulation.

Factors that undoubtedly affect teacher efficacy, but are considered more external and much less under the control of the individual, include teacher support through school administration, availability of resources, and opportunities for collaboration (e.g., Ransford, Greenberg, Domitrovich, Small, & Jacobson, 2009). These will also include the teaching environment (e.g., Chang, 2009) that extends from the state and aesthetics of the classroom and its resources to classroom dynamics, and diversity of the student population (e.g., Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Poplin, et al., 2011). This also includes the student's emotional or financial difficulties outside of the classroom, as well as cultural differences.

It is important to acknowledge the interaction between such internal and external factors, as efficacy is often a measure of the teacher's ability to use internal skills to mediate the external circumstances through relevant contextual variables in support of a positive learning environment. Furthermore, such interaction involves an appreciation that the role of teacher efficacy can be limited by social contexts and certain changing contexts may alter the definition of teacher efficacy (Labone, 2004). The identification of factors that comprise and impact teacher efficacy establish its dependence on the mental health and well-being of the individual and provides an avenue for the role of EI.

Emotional Intelligence: How Is It Related to Teacher Efficacy?

EI Can Help Mitigate the Effects of Stress

The high-level demands placed on classroom teachers pose the potential to compromise personal coping resources and increase stress and risk for burnout (Chan, 2006;

Chang & Davis, 2009). EI has been shown to significantly influence a tolerance for stress (Lopes, Cote, & Salovey, 2006) such that higher EI is linked to lower occupational stress as well as improved psychological and physical health (e.g., Chan, 2006; Slaski & Cartwright, 2002; Stough et al., 2009). More specifically, EI and coping appear to combine to mediate the effects of personality on stress (Austin, Saklofske, & Mastoras, 2010; Saklofske, Austin, Mastoras, Beaton, & Osborne, 2012), highlighting the need for developing emotional abilities in improving personal coping strategies (Downey, Johnston, Hansen, Birney, & Stough, 2010). This notion of EI as a positive coping resource for teachers has also been emphasized by Chan (2008), showing that EI (intrapersonal EI to a greater extent than interpersonal EI; see Bar-On, 1997, for the distinction) is a significant predictor of active coping. Furthermore, the impact of teacher self-efficacy on adaptive coping strategies was not independent of the effects of EI. This interaction effect also aligns with Schwarzer and Hallum's (2008) finding that job stress may act as a mediator between self-efficacy and burnout (emotional exhaustion). Teachers with high self-efficacy (and high EI) appraise and interpret teaching-related job demands as more of a challenge rather than a threat, which can certainly aid in the management of negative affective experiences.

The negative emotional components of occupational stress and burnout, which are reflected in emotional stress and poor personal emotional self-regulation (two central components of low EI), are considered a primary reason for teacher dissatisfaction and ultimately the decision to leave the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). Again, this supports the critical role of EI as an important factor in burnout because negative emotions and stressful experiences are dependent on an individual's perception and appraisal of his or her environment (i.e., a stressor is not a stressor unless it is perceived as such). Individual differences in appraisals of one's surroundings are further reflected in coping styles (Chan, 2008; Endler & Parker, 1994) and self-regulation (Boekaerts, Pintrich, & Zeidner, 2000), which also have a significant impact on the ability to manage stress (Zeidner & Saklofske, 1996). EI embodies coping and regulation abilities and has been linked to lower rates of teacher burnout (e.g., Chan, 2006) and higher levels of well-being (e.g., Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Chang, 2009). Teachers with high EI have shown to respond more effectively to negatively charged situations than those with low levels of EI (Perry & Ball, 2007). The research evidence suggests that EI, reflected in personal coping and self-regulation, is critical in contributing to the prevention of occupational stress and burnout while improving a teacher's management of the classroom.

EI Is Positively Associated With Teacher Efficacy

The link between EI and the components of efficacy in various contexts has been shown in several recent studies. Gardner and Stough (2002) found that individuals in positions of workplace management with higher levels of EI reported a higher likelihood of desiring success, working harder, leading an effective team, and higher satisfaction in working with peers. Furthermore, workplace performance-enhancing skills,

such as successful interactions with colleagues, positive strategies to manage conflict and stress, and overall job performance, are influenced by EI (Ashkanasey & Daus, 2005; Lopes et al., 2006). The relationship between EI and the ability to cope adaptively in a variety of circumstances (including classroom teaching) appears to be well established and both show a strong positive relationship with the management of adverse situations and general stress (e.g., Brackett & Katulak, 2007; Humphrey, Curran, Morris, Farrell, & Woods, 2007; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2009).

Wong, Wong, and Peng (2010) argued that these results could also be valid in the school setting and are congruent with their findings that EI in teachers and middle-level school leaders were positively related to teachers' job satisfaction level. Teachers with higher EI reported a greater attunement to the emotional needs of others, an ability to interact with students in ways that extend individualized learning opportunities, more effective management of their own emotional responses (Perry & Ball, 2005), and overall greater effectiveness (Penrose, Perry, & Ball, 2007). A significant positive relationship between EI and efficacy beliefs was found in Turkish EFL pre-service teachers, indicating those with higher EI were more likely to employ a wide array of productive teaching strategies (KoÇoĞlu, 2011).

Parker et al. (2009) emphasize the role of EI in education programs and their effect on interpersonal and intrapersonal outcomes in the workplace, such as those encountered by health care providers in medical settings (Louie, Coverdale, & Roberts, 2006). These competencies, including interpersonal and communicative abilities and empathy, are important dimensions within most EI models and can be extrapolated to their usefulness within the classroom. The links between these noted characteristics and EI in addition to the emphasis placed on their importance for teacher efficacy support the words of Perry and Ball (2005) that "good teaching does reflect the exercise of emotional intelligence" (p. 11). These findings reinforce the significance of EI factors in interactive professional roles.

EI Encompasses Emotion Factors Associated With Effective Teaching

The description of an effective teacher by both students and professionals has been dominated by emotionally laden characteristics such as caring, understanding, warm, friendly, patient, as well as abilities to relate to children, to motivate students, and to maintain discipline (Weinstein, 1989). Research has also identified that students value teacher characteristics such as having control over the classroom, involvement with students and their circumstances, respect and fairness in the classroom, and showing kindness and helpfulness (Corbett & Wilson, 2002; McIntyre & Battle, 1998; Thomas, 1998). It is suggested that EI encompasses the underlying, foundational characteristics and abilities that support positive teacher efficacy. Various studies have shown that teachers with higher motivation are better at engaging students in the classroom (e.g., Pintrich, 2003) and teachers with better coping skills are more effective at relating to students as well as have more adaptive classroom management skills (e.g., Austin, Shah, et al., 2005; Emmer & Stough, 2001; Libbey, 2004).

One continuing problem area within teacher efficacy research is the lack of attention to the sources of teacher efficacy and how these operate in practice (Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011). The findings reported here hint that the root of these skills may be attributed, at least in part, to one cohesive construct: EI.

EI-Related Factors Contributing to Teacher Efficacy. Many factors that contribute to teacher efficacy and may help explain competent teacher behaviour and positive classroom outcomes overlap with EI. A short list would include emotional regulation ability (ERA), emotional labour, social-emotional competence (SEC), and components of rational-emotive behaviour theory (REBT).

Brackett et al. (2010) describe how ERA predicts lower emotional exhaustion, an ability to develop personal connections with students, and a higher number of positive emotions, including feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction in teaching. Those teachers with higher emotional regulation, in other words, who demonstrate an ability to “up-regulate” their positive emotions and “down-regulate” their negative emotions, are more productive and effective in the classroom (Sutton & Harper, 2009). Similarly, emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983), described as the suppression or expression of emotion for the purpose of meeting a goal within the workplace (e.g., maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere; Brown, 2011; Grandey, 2000), is a particular challenge in teaching (Brennan, 2006). Furthermore, SEC, consisting of self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management, and relationship management (Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004), is implicated in the development and maintenance of a prosocial classroom, which fosters learning and decreases the likelihood of teacher burnout (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Teachers with higher SEC contribute to supportive teacher–student relationships, demonstrate skillful management of student behaviours and classroom dynamics, and are positive role models for the effective implementation of social and emotional curricula (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). REBT (Ellis, 1973) has been applied in teacher education to help reduce negative student behaviours and decrease teacher stress (Nucci, 2002) based on the notion that undesirable teaching behaviours can be reduced by identifying and altering behavioural antecedents (thoughts, beliefs, and feelings; Ellis, 1973) and by addressing both stress-inducing and stress-creating attitudes.

Primary within these four models (ERA, emotional labour, SEC, and REBT) is their relationship to EI, which, in turn, influences teacher efficacy. Both emotional labour and ERA are means of managing emotions based on context and surrounding influences (Brown, 2011). In both cases, the involvement of emotional response management by the individual fits within subfactors of the EI construct (e.g., within “managing emotions” of the ability model; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Though the relationship of SEC to EI has been debated, it can be argued that EI subsumes the thoughts and actions that result from emotional competency described within ERA (see Zins, Payton, Weissberg, & Unte O’Brien, 2007, for a review of construct differences). Moreover, EI processes and actions contribute similarly to positive management in the classroom and are shown to be useful in the explanation of individual differences in teacher SEC (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Similar

to ERA and emotional labour, SEC's components can also be mapped onto the different domains within EI subfactors of both EI ability and trait models (e.g., Mayer et al., 2002; Palmer & Stough, 2001; Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Schutte et al., 1998). Similarly, when examining REBT in the context of EI, the focus on reducing the individual's negative emotions and eliminating negative beliefs in emotionally laden situations can be subsumed under the skills involved in persons who reflect high EI, as described above by Perry and Ball (2007). More specifically, both the ability and trait conceptualizations of EI involve manipulation, control, and management of both pleasant and unpleasant (e.g., stressful) emotions in a myriad of contexts.

How Can EI Facilitate the Enhancement of Teacher Efficacy?

To this point, EI has been shown to mitigate the effects of teacher stress and promote personal well-being, hence the viewpoint that EI is fundamental to the modification and enhancement of these teacher efficacy-relevant variables. This is revealed in differences between individuals with varying levels of emotional management, stress tolerance, and classroom outcomes (Brackett et al., 2010, 2011; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Acquiring Teaching Skills: Programs Aimed at Improving Teacher Efficacy

There is debate as to what makes the "best" teacher, whether good teachers are "made or born," and how much intelligence and various personality factors contribute to effective and psychologically healthy teachers. However, there is at least some support that both core competencies and "qualities" that are commonly identified in effective teachers are at least partially acquired.

Attempts to improve positive teaching characteristics have been made through an array of effective professional development workshops and programs (e.g., Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2010a, 2010b; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). These range from strengthening content knowledge in various subject areas, enhancing pedagogical skills for instructional support, or improving classroom management skills (e.g., Emmer & Stough, 2001; Zuercher, Kessler, & Yoshioka, 2011), to skills training in areas such as personal coping (e.g., Austin, Shah, et al., 2005; Howard & Johnson, 2004). Most of these programs have some component aimed at increasing teachers' personal well-being and tend to focus on self-regulation. Interestingly, many of these components mirror the skills present in individuals with high EI or are taught through EI training. Some examples include Rational Emotive Education (which corresponds to REBT; Maag, 2008; Nucci, 2002), which is used in educational settings to aid teachers in reducing stress, regulating their emotions and behaviour when dealing with disruptive students, and improving their overall effectiveness; The Caring School Community (Solomon, Watson, Delucchi, Schaps, & Battistich, 1988); and Promoting

Alternative Thinking Strategies (Kusche & Greenberg, 1994), all of which target the development of a positive classroom climate and increase of teachers' responsiveness to the psychosocial and emotional needs of students. Additional programs focus on developing pedagogical skills related to specific content knowledge (e.g., mathematics instruction), which also emphasize the importance of increasing teachers' confidence in managing students and other social-emotional factors such as student motivation and engagement (Ross & Bruce, 2007). Evidence also exists that the teacher's own emotional efficacy has an impact on successful program implementation (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

EI Training for the Enhancement of Teacher Efficacy

The extent to which EI can be learned or taught (e.g., Humphrey et al., 2007) is still open for debate. However, as discussed above, certain emotional competencies can be learned or enhanced through training. One means of increasing EI is to implement developmental EI training. These programs have been successful in improving EI skills in various populations including a sample of U.K. managers (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003) and university students at risk for dropout (Parker, Hogan, Eastabrook, Oke, & Wood, 2006). These studies demonstrate that increasing EI can promote resilience in the face of increased stress. Gardner (2006) showed EI training to be effective in increasing self-reported EI, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction and in reducing occupational stress.

General application programs of EI have also been developed. Examples include Mindfulness-Based EI training (Ciarrochi, Blackledge, Bilich, & Bayliss, 2007), a specific theory-based practical approach to improving EI skills (Kornacki & Caruso, 2007), and a variation of the Leadership Executive Assessment and Development program based on Intentional Change Theory and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which includes an EI development course (Boyatzis, 2007; see also Cherniss & Adler, 2000). The theories, techniques, and effectiveness of each of these three programs in addition to the program discussed below (Brackett & Katulak, 2007) have been examined in the research literature (see Ciarrochi & Mayer, 2007).

Other programs specifically related to the classroom and educational context have also been developed. The Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning provides programs for the training of social and emotional skills in teachers and students, including the program, *The Emotionally Intelligent Teacher*. This is a workshop based on the Mayer et al. (2002) model, presented in four sections that includes perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions, and provides teachers with strategies to increase EI skills in personal and professional relationships. It involves activities designed to increase school effectiveness through the development of EI skills aimed at improving interactions within the school community (Brackett & Katulak, 2007). RULER (recognizing, understanding, labelling, expressing, and regulating emotions) is a school-based EI intervention program, involving students, teachers, family members, and school leaders aimed at building skills to improve decision

making, relationship building, and more positive well-being in the school environment (Brackett et al., 2011). Though this program is designed for a wider audience and not limited to teachers, classrooms engaged in this program showed more positive interactions, greater enthusiasm about learning, less bullying instances with students, and less anger and frustration expressed by students (Brackett et al., 2011).

More recently, a psycho-educational program developed by Hansen, Gardner, and Stough (2007) in Australia teaches the management of occupational stress through the development of EI. In its application for teachers, this program has been modified by Hansen (2010; "Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom") and is based on a similar theoretical model that focuses on the development of skills related to emotional self-awareness and expression, and emotions attached to awareness of others, reasoning, self-management, management of others, and self-control. Empirical evaluation of the original Australian program was successful in increasing the participants' EI, reducing their occupational stress, and improving their psychological and physical well-being (Gardner, 2005). A pilot study of this program with Canadian student teachers suggested that EI scores did increase at the conclusion of the program, one month following completion (Poole & Saklofske, 2009). Considering the links between higher levels of EI, lower occupational stress, and better psychological and physical well-being (Chan, 2006; Gardner, 2005; Nikolaou, 2002; Pau & Croucher, 2003; Slaski & Cartwright, 2002, 2003), there is considerable potential in exploring options for increasing EI in teachers.

Conclusion and Future Research Directions

The increasing demands on teachers' intellectual and emotional resources are linked to increased occupational stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (e.g., Chang, 2009; Chang & Davis, 2009; Hakanen et al., 2006; Lens & de Jesus, 1999). The effects of both acute and chronic stress affect not only the physical and psychological health of teachers but also their "sense" of efficacy both personally and professionally, which, in turn, is a powerful predictor of student learning and achievement (Corbett & Wilson, 2002; Murphy et al., 2004; Thomas, 1998). A hallmark of effective teaching is reflected in the ability to manage emotions and to implement effective coping strategies during stressful times. Though professional development programs most often focus on core teaching competencies, the myriad of factors that comprise teacher efficacy have largely been attributed to emotionally laden characteristics (e.g., Corbett & Wilson, 2002; McIntyre & Battle, 1998). EI would appear to provide the foundation for enhancing teacher efficacy.

Most encouraging are the findings that EI can be increased through the use of evidence-based programs. Research has shown that increasing EI leads to more effective stress management (e.g., Gardner, 2006), but this may also increase job satisfaction and overall well-being (Austin, Saklofske, et al., 2005; Chan, 2006; Stough et al., 2009). Furthermore, EI has been both directly and indirectly linked to specific teaching factors such as leadership, conflict management, motivation, and positive communication strategies (e.g., Gardner & Stough, 2002; Perry & Ball, 2005). Programs that increase

EI should therefore provide an avenue through which to augment and enhance teacher efficacy and associated indicators that describe the “effective” teacher. Following from earlier studies of EI programs for teachers (e.g., “Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom”; Hansen, 2010), a study is being initiated by the authors with pre-service teachers during their university training program and first years of teaching.

Brackett et al. (2011) suggest that an emotionally positive learning environment is the foundation for both academic engagement and achievement. This fact further emphasizes that effective teaching demands skills beyond the conveyance of academic knowledge and requires emotion-related competencies. EI would seem to have the potential to improve psychological well-being, decrease stress, and increase teacher efficacy, thus ultimately influencing student and classroom outcomes.

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