

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIO-EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN THE TRAINING OF EDUCATORS IN TODAY'S SOCIETY

Desarrollo de habilidades socioemocionales en la formación de educadores en la sociedad actual

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Suggested citation: Calderón Calderón, Antonio (2024). Development of socio-emotional skills in the training of educators in today's society. *Sophia, Colección de Filosofía de la Educación*, (37), pp. 269-292.

Abstract

Socio-emotional skills comprise a set of habits, thoughts, and emotions that facilitate interpersonal relationships through the appropriate expression of emotions and consideration of their impact on others. Backed by neurology, these skills are crucial for learning and for educators' contributions to new generations. This essay aims to reflect on the socio-emotional skills of future education professionals, exploring their influence on teaching and their contribution to society. Given the pandemic situation, it is proposed to present the role of socio-emotional education in the university curricular activities of teacher trainers in Chile, using the critical-interpretative method and hermeneutic phenomenology. The discussion is based on experience, dialogue with groups of students and teachers, identifying key points for the inclusion of emotional skills in teacher training. The process involved the active participation of the teacher, who took on the initial role in the intervention by providing instructions and guidelines for developing socio-emotional skills related to ethics and education in various contexts. This was carried out virtually at a higher education institution in Chile. The conclusion emphasizes the urgency and need to integrate socio-emotional education into the curriculum for university education professionals. The alignment between Goleman, Bisquerra, and Morin, theorists who have delved into the subject, is highlighted, although it is observed the persistence of orthodox educational models that exclude emotions, focusing excessively on intellectual capacities and overlooking the need for comprehensive emotional training to face contemporary societal challenges.

Keywords

Emotional competencies, learning, education, professional development, curricular integration, educational practices.

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Resumen

Las habilidades socioemocionales es el conjunto de hábitos, pensamientos y emociones que facilitan las relaciones interpersonales mediante la expresión adecuada de las emociones y la consideración de su impacto en los demás. Respaladas por la neurología, estas habilidades son cruciales para el aprendizaje y la contribución de los docentes a las nuevas generaciones. El ensayo tiene como objetivo reflexionar sobre las habilidades socioemocionales de los futuros profesionales de la educación, explorando su influencia en la enseñanza y su contribución a la sociedad. Dada la situación de la pandemia, se propone presentar el papel de la educación socioemocional en las actividades curriculares universitarias de formadores de docentes en Chile, utilizando el método crítico-interpretativo y la fenomenología hermenéutica. La discusión se basa en la experiencia, el diálogo con grupos de alumnos y profesores, identificando puntos clave para la inclusión de habilidades emocionales en la formación docente. El proceso involucró la participación activa del docente, quien asumió el rol inicial en la intervención mediante la entrega de instrucciones y guías para el desarrollo de las habilidades socioemocionales sobre ética y educación en sus diversos contextos, realizada de manera virtual en un centro de educación superior de Chile. La conclusión subraya la urgencia y necesidad de integrar la educación socioemocional en el currículo de formación de profesionales de la educación universitaria. Se destaca la coincidencia entre Goleman, Bisquerra y Morin, teóricos que han profundizado la temática, aunque se señala la persistencia de modelos educativos ortodoxos que excluyen las emociones, enfocándose excesivamente en las capacidades intelectuales y pasando por alto la necesidad de una formación emocional integral para afrontar los desafíos contemporáneos de la sociedad.

270



Palabras clave

Competencias emocionales, aprendizaje, educación, formación profesional, integración curricular, prácticas educativas.

Introduction

Historically, education has witnessed various transformations and approaches focused on the acquisition of knowledge. However, the growing recognition of the importance of socio-emotional skills has led to rethink the educational paradigm. The phrase “know yourself,” attributed to Socrates in Ancient Greece, resurfaces today with a new perspective: it is about socio-emotional skills as a path to self-awareness and transformation.

This shift in focus presents as a response to the emotional and social complexities that students face today. Hence, the topic addressed in this document fits the perception of the development of socio-emotional skills in teacher training, exploring its importance in the current educational context. The main objective is to deepen the concept of socio-emotional ability, explore its characteristics from a socio-formative perspective and recognize the importance of implementing strategies for its development in educational practices.

Historically, it is known that the problem of education is that it has maintained a constant separation between cognitive, emotional and social aspects, restricting its focus mainly to the search and acquisition of

knowledge. This fissure poses challenges for the overall development of students and seeks the urgency of integrating socio-emotional skills into education. Therefore, the central idea to defend is that socio-emotional skills are fundamental for the integral progress of students and the creation of an educational environment conducive to the development of positive relationships.

The importance of addressing socio-emotional skills in the training of future education professionals is broadened by recognizing the complexity of contemporary challenges in the educational environment. By training these professionals with specific tools to understand and manage the emotional dimensions of students, educators are essentially being prepared to be agents of change and facilitators of an enriching educational environment.

First, by providing tools to address risky behaviors, it directly contributes to the creation of a safe environment. The ability of educators to identify and manage challenging situations related to student behavior and emotions is essential to ensure a conducive learning environment. This not only benefits the physical safety of students, it also creates an emotionally safe space where they can express themselves and learn more effectively.

Second, the focus on students' emotional development is very important to their overall well-being. Future education professionals, by understanding the emotional complexities of their students, can play a vital role in supporting mental and emotional health. This not only translates into better academic performance, but also contributes to the development of coping and resilience skills in students, preparing them to face the challenges of life.

Additionally, the inclusion of socio-emotional skills in educator training aligns with the evolution of education towards more holistic and student-centered approaches. Educators should have the tools needed to understand the diversity of students' emotional needs and adapt their pedagogical approaches accordingly. This not only improves the quality of teaching, but also fosters a deeper connection between educators and students, contributing to positive and trusting relationships.

The most remarkable thing about the issue today lies in the transition from the post-COVID-19 pandemic and, more broadly, in an ever-changing world. Socio-emotional skills are essential to prepare students not only in the academic arena, but also to face challenges and adapt to a continually evolving environment. The COVID-19 pandemic invites us to consider the importance of these skills in education, as students have

experienced significant changes in their daily lives, from social distancing to transitioning to online learning environments.

Therefore, educators face the crucial task of helping students recover emotionally from the impacts generated by the pandemic. Uncertainty, isolation and anxiety have affected many students' mental health and socio-emotional skills have become critical to cultivating resilience and supporting their emotional well-being. Teaching socio-emotional skills is presented as a key tool to address learning gaps that may have arisen during the period of disruptions in education. By focusing on issues such as empathy, self-regulation and decision-making, educators can contribute to creating an inclusive and responsive learning environment, allowing students to engage more effectively in the educational process.

It is in this post-pandemic context that resilience and adaptability are essential. Socio-emotional skills prepare students for life beyond the classroom. The ability to manage stress, work as a team, solve problems and maintain healthy relationships has become even more crucial in a world facing social, economic and environmental challenges. In addition, the topicality of the issue is reflected in the growing demand for socio-emotional skills by employers and society. Companies look for professionals with strong interpersonal and emotional skills, recognizing that these skills are as important as technical knowledge.

Thus, the integration of socio-emotional skills in education not only prepares students for academic success, but also for their meaningful participation in society, in the workplace and in their daily lives. This issue is important given the rapidly changing world and unprecedented challenges ahead. Attention to these skills is crucial not only in the post-pandemic context, but also to prepare students for a future that demands adaptability, resilience, and strong emotional competencies.

In the methodological aspect, this work arises from a review of theories on socio-emotional development. The main theories that explain how socio-emotional skills develop and their impact on students' learning and behavior are analyzed. Pedagogical elements are considered, i.e. the various pedagogical approaches that have proven to be effective in teaching and developing socio-emotional skills in different educational contexts. On the other hand, practical strategies for the implementation and development of these skills in the classroom are explored, including curricular programs, extracurricular activities and teacher training. The process involved the active participation of the teacher, who assumed the initial role in the intervention through the delivery of instructions and guides for developing socio-emotional skills in a curricular activity on



ethics and its applications in various contexts, carried out virtually in a higher education center in Chile

This study is structured in four sections. The first has to do with the key of socio-emotional skills; in this part, socio-emotional skills will be introduced, defining them and highlighting their importance in the integral development of students. In a second moment there are the characteristics of socio-emotional skills, here we analyze the specific traits of socio-emotional skills, including empathy, self-awareness, self-regulation, relationship skills and responsible decision-making. Thirdly, considering the impact on the educational field, a list of activities to develop socio-emotional skills applied to higher education students in Chile is presented. Finally, we consider the correlation between mental health and socio-emotional skills in teachers and how these help to improve their application in educational contexts.



The Key to Socio-Emotional Skills

Socio-emotional skills represent the intricate amalgam of core competencies that span from understanding and effectively expressing emotions to promoting empathy, social skills and sound decision-making (Ospina *et al.*, 2022, p. 55). This comprehensive approach not only impacts individual emotional well-being, but also establishes itself as a cornerstone for establishing healthy interpersonal relationships and the ability to successfully cope with the challenges of life.

Despite the clarity and relevance of these skills in the integral development of individuals, there is an educational paradigm rooted in orthodox methods that, instead of promoting socio-emotional development, clings to disciplinary principles, fear and rigor. This approach, reflecting an anachronistic methodology focused on the mere transmission of knowledge (Carbonell, 2015; Delors, 1996), poses a significant challenge for the effective integration of socio-emotional skills in the contemporary educational environment. Hence, to channel these elements in the best way:

- *Discrepancy between theory and practice:* Although theory supports the importance of socio-emotional skills, implementation in educational practice faces obstacles. Resistance to changing traditional methods, lack of adequate training, and pressure to cover an extensive academic curriculum are factors that perpetuate this mismatch. This discrepancy needs to be urgently addressed to ensure that education truly reflects students' current needs.

- *The role of educators as agents of change:* educators, in this context, must be the protagonists and fundamental agents of change. The need for continuous training that encompasses the socio-emotional dimensions becomes inescapable. Teachers, by taking an active role in promoting and teaching socio-emotional skills, can play a transformative role in the education system, transcending conventional models into a paradigm that celebrates the diversity of skills and talents of each student.
- *The challenge of a Copernican twist:* the entrenched educational paradigm is, in many ways, inertial. Performing a Copernican turn of this inertia requires a profound reassessment of educational goals, recognizing that the development of socio-emotional skills is not only complementary, but essential for success and adaptability in today's society.

274



It is necessary to explore educational strategies and models that effectively integrate socio-emotional skills as an urgent need. Chernyshenko *et al.* (2018) mention that for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), socio-emotional skills are important elements for the development of adaptive competences in the context of each human history. This leads to overcoming the challenges inherent in educational transformation towards a more holistic and student-centered approach, essential to cultivating generations prepared to face the complex challenges of the 21st century.

In the current educational context, future education professionals are confronted with a series of dynamic and multifaceted challenges in the classroom. These challenges go beyond the mere transmission of knowledge and require a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding the teaching-learning process. Thus, heterogeneity in classrooms, both in terms of academic skills and socio-emotional contexts, presents a significant challenge. Future educators must be able to adapt their methods to meet the individual needs of students.

Thus, proper discernment involves recognizing the importance of socio-emotional skills. Educators of the future must be able to cultivate an emotionally safe environment, which promotes the well-being of students and their ability to manage emotions, as Garassini and Aldana indicate (2022).

Socio-emotional skills contain a very important influence on the experiences and benefits in the spheres of human life. Given this, the question arises: "Why focus on these skills?" Currently, we use the concept

“socio-emotional skills” to refer to the skills developed in the educational context, connecting with the theories of Howard Gardner (2004) on multiple intelligences. Gardner identified intrapersonal intelligence, related to self-knowledge, and interpersonal intelligence, linked to the ability to understand others. Talking about socio-emotional skills becomes fundamental to understanding and empowering integral development, establishing connections between Gardner’s theory and current perspectives on these key skills.

Gardner (2004) suggests exploring interpersonal intelligence more deeply, highlighting its relationship to the ability to differentiate between subjects in the environment and manifest different moods. Daniel Goleman (1995), based on the works of Gardner, introduced the concept of “emotional intelligence”, which refers to the process of feeling, understanding, controlling and changing moods whether these are personal or social. Maturana (1997) adds that emotion defines action, being dynamic body dispositions that specify behavior, while Morin (1999) emphasizes that understanding oneself and the other requires empathy and generosity. These perspectives support how essential socio-emotional skills are to the education of our times.

Characteristics of socio-emotional skills from a socio-formative perspective

According to Bisquerra (2008), socio-emotional skills form a set of habits, thoughts and emotions that facilitate satisfactory interpersonal relationships through the proper expression of emotions and consideration of their impact on others. These skills, as Goleman (1995) points out, are essential for effective and responsible citizenship, contributing to interpersonal well-being.

People who are skilled in emotional intelligence are perceived as “popular” and “charming,” as their emotional abilities generate well-being in those who interact with them. This focus on socio-emotional skills is critical to problem-solving ability and the pursuit of decisive human goals, including the path to happiness, according to Bisquerra (2008).

According to Carbonell (2015), practical application of socio-emotional skills, when impacting individuals, also contributes to reducing negative emotions, such as irritation, distrust or desolation, which can lead to risky behaviors or conflicting relationships. This author highlights the interdependence of these skills and their connection with other intel-

ligences, such as creative and emotional ones, underscoring their importance for good mental health.

Learning how to manage these emotions is essential to consolidate good mental health and thus foster student success. According to Gardner (1995), people supported by socio-emotional skills feel more engaged and competent, making them more likely to contribute constructively to society.

At present, socio-emotional skills are being incorporated into the curriculum design of educational institutions, recognizing that the ultimate purpose of education is to enable subjects to live full and harmonious lives with others and the environment (Moreno *et al.*, 2020, p. 13). This approach reflects a shift toward comprehensive education that recognizes the importance of cultivating skills beyond mere knowledge acquisition.

However, according to the classification proposed by Bisquerra (2008), these skills are five and are developed below.

276



Emotional awareness

Socio-emotional skills, especially emotional awareness, are critical to human development. Céspedes (2010) highlights emotional education as central and essential to have clarity and certainty in freedom, respecting it in an unrestricted way. In this context, emotional awareness implies the ability to be fully aware of both our own emotions and those of others.

“Think high” and “feel deep” are interrelated dimensions of this ability. High thinking refers to the cognitive sphere and the ability to understand and build meaning from what is learned. On the other hand, Milicic (2010) emphasizes that feeling deep implies an emotional contact with what is experienced, showing empathy and resonance with the emotions of others. This process involves recognizing our own emotions, assigning names to these emotions and, fundamentally, understanding and perceiving the emotions of others, considering the situational and expressive, verbal and non-verbal signals (Maturana, 1997).

Emotional management

Emotional ordination, according to Maturana (1997), is crucial to living in harmony and dignity, dissolving emotional contradictions. It is about the ability to manipulate and order emotions properly, establishing a connection between the cognitive part and behaviors. Céspedes (2010) highlights the importance of self-esteem in this dimension, indicating that it is related to the ability to achieve changes with a high look at oneself and others. Milicic and López (2009) add that positive self-esteem is

linked to feeling loved, valued, accompanied and important for others and for oneself.

Emotional ordering requires flexibility, a moderate modulation look at emotional processes. To achieve this ability, it is essential to be aware of our emotions, identify those that wish to intervene and have the clear will to perform it. It also involves time, training, and trials with potential errors, as well as a significant dose of emotional self-efficacy. Hence, emotional regulation is essential to adapt to both the interpersonal and intrapersonal environment. This skill involves understanding and valuing the feelings, developing critical thinking and carefully selecting information, and, in addition, organizing and regulating both our own emotions and those of others in the various interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts.

Harmony and emotional autonomy

In the field of harmony and emotional autonomy, the trust that the individual places in his own capacities is addressed. Milicic and López (2009) emphasize that this confidence is observed in the ability to act quickly, safely and resisting failures, demonstrating a remarkable tolerance for frustrations. In this context, emotional autonomy is defined as the ability to generate one's own emotions and face negative ones.

Céspedes (2010) contributes that this phenomenon has essentially biological roots, but its genesis is indivisibly intertwined with psychological factors and social experience. Harmony and emotional autonomy, according to Céspedes (2010), are manifested through fundamental feelings such as existential joy, motivation and serenity. These feelings trigger a phenomenon of mental openness, empowerment for positive changes and a kind of life training. In addition, they act as a kind of “drafts”, eliminating negative emotions and allowing to deal more effectively with the difficulties of life. More specifically, emotional self-determination involves knowing how to fully understand feeling, thinking and decision-making independently, reflecting self-confidence and taking responsibility for the consequences of actions (Milicic and López, 2009).

Céspedes (2010) says that emotional harmony presents as the visible result of an ontogenetic script that is built on a biological platform, but is shaped by social experience. In this process, the individual develops an emotional autonomy based on his own referential authority. This autonomy is characterized by the ability to manage one's own emotions, providing security in decision-making and personal competencies. This

concept encompasses a variety of characteristics linked to personal self-management, i.e. to self-perception of knowing oneself, being conscious, accepting oneself, having confidence in oneself, being a generator of personal motivations, taking all this as an authentic action before life, therefore, also to be more self-critical about social norms and the ability to seek help and resources. According to Bisquerra (2008), emotional freedom emerges as a crucial element for subjective well-being.

Emotional autonomy, therefore, not only involves the formulation of a personal theory about emotions, but also requires demonstrating emotional self-efficacy aligned with moral values. This ability grants the ability to consciously decide the emotions that are experienced, especially in challenging situations or in the face of negative emotions. Its applicability extends to various areas of life, highlighting its relevance in potentially risky situations such as the influence towards substance use, violence, *bullying*, among others. In such contexts, emotional autonomy facilitates resistance to group pressure. The task, as Carbonell (2015) points out, lies in educating all the intelligences of the students, impregnating each educational process with values and virtues, turning both the educational center and the community into a project of strong ethical commitment. In this context, educational innovation focuses on avoiding isolation and promoting the articulation of diverse capacities.

278



Social competence

Social competence, considered a cornerstone of emotional education (Bisquerra, 2008), refers to the ability to foster healthy relationships, involving respect for others, effective communication and conflict resolution. These competencies, developed throughout the different stages of life, are applied in interpersonal situations and are intrinsically linked to the ability to interact at various times and environments.

According to Maturana (1997), human beings exist in a relational domain that constitutes their psychic space, this being the operational area in which all their biological life and physiology acquires meaning as a way of living human. In this context, social competence becomes a set of skills aimed at emitting effective behaviors in interpersonal situations with the aim of obtaining rewarding responses from others.

The relevance of social competence lies in its contribution to effective interaction in various moments of life. The ability to establish positive relationships, communicate effectively and resolve conflicts is presented as a crucial element for human well-being. This competence is integrated

in a coherent way with the need to educate all the intelligences of the individual, to infuse values and virtues in each teaching and learning process, turning the educational center and the community into a solid ethical project (Carbonell, 2015). In this way, harmony and emotional autonomy, such as social competence, are essential dimensions of emotional education, contributing to the well-being and integral development of the individual in his interaction with the environment (Ander-Egg, 2006).

Among the most important emotional skills of social competence may be the following:

- *Acquisition of socio-emotional skills through learning*: what is important is the learning for the development of socio-emotional skills that Piaget proposes in his theory of cognitive development through the following: observing, imitating and obtaining important information (Feldman, 2015, p. 160).
- *Verbal and non-verbal behaviors*: highlights the value of communicating with and without the use of the word. The focus is on social interactions with specific and discrete verbal and non-verbal behaviors, which are proposed by Mehrabian (2009).
- *Initiatives, creativity and effective responses*: Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (2000) explores the connection between creativity, enjoyment and effective performance in activities.
- *Social and cultural reinforcement*: here the role of the social and cultural environment for the management of skills and behaviors in the Vygotsky model is emphasized (Ledesma Ayora, 2014). In other words, they expand social reinforcement through positive responses from the social and cultural environment.
- *Reciprocity in social relations*: here the importance of affective relations and reciprocity in emotional development is highlighted by John Bowlby (2009) and his theory of attachment.
- *Influence of environmental factors on social behavior*: Pope Francis (2015) calls to take care of the common house that is the Earth and states that development is achieved by all caring for environments, i.e. having good social behavior for a good ecology. Thus, seeking reciprocity towards nature and that this is an effective and appropriate correspondence, i.e. these social skills are linked to interpersonal intelligence, focused on maintaining positive relationships with others.

It is essential to have a mastery of these skills, especially in effective communication, respecting others and sharing emotions, highlighting

the relevance of symmetrical reciprocity. In addition, they include pro-social attitudes that foster cooperation in groups, such as empathy, dialog leading to the prevention of social conflicts and the ability to identify problems to make constructive decisions for the benefit of all.

The development of these competencies is essential for achieving positive mental health. Therefore, the World Health Organization defines it as “a state of well-being in which the individual is aware of his or her own abilities, can face the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community” (OMS, 2013). These socio-emotional competencies not only improve academic performance, but also prevent risky behaviors, as an important element in citizenship education, that aligned with citizen competencies will seek a well-being in life. What Aristotle would say (2005, p. 58): the search for happiness, because this is always chosen by itself and never by anything else.

280



Life Skills and Wellness

This dimension refers to the ability to acquire skills and behaviors to effectively face life projects, whether these are personal, family, or professional. Thus, it seeks daily individual and social well-being, setting realistic goals, taking responsibility for its own decisions and seeking support when necessary (Bisquerra, 2008).

These skills, considered as subcompetencies, range from the recognition of one's own emotional state to the ability to discern the emotions of others, allowing empathy. It seeks to reflect and accept that the personal emotions of our inner body may not coincide with the outward manifestation, requiring self-control strategies to face negative emotions. Awareness helps to establish reciprocity in relationships, generating greater emotional self-efficacy and acceptance of one's own emotional experience (Bisquerra, 2008).

This skill is essential to address today's societal challenges, such as violence, harassment, addictions and discrimination. The comprehensive training of students, together with the construction of an ethical life project, contributes to achieve meaningful learning both personally and socially and environmentally. In this context, socio-emotional skills play a crucial role in the development of students as a resource to achieve well-being.

Although education is in crisis and students face various social, economic and emotional problems, the implementation of appropriate

strategies by the teacher can provide students with tools to face the uncertainty of life. The development of socio-emotional skills involves a gradual, not instantaneous, process that requires continuous stimulation until the expected level of development is reached. Its importance lies in the influence of emotions and social relationships in the learning process. Positive emotions contribute to meaningful learning and the design of the ethical life project, while negative emotions can interfere and be a key factor in school failure (Milicic, 2010).

In this context, the role of the teacher is crucial. Although education professionals are not oblivious to the problems of their students, the constant training of the teacher is fundamental to integrate strategies that help the student's formative development, allowing him to develop, relate, express his feelings with a positive sense about his life. Achieving this goal will positively impact mental health, personal well-being, empathy, solidarity, prevention of risky behaviors and, above all, increase motivation towards learning by students.



Strategies that promote the development of socio-emotional skills

To promote the development of socio-emotional skills it is necessary to understand a curricular integration, in which the design of curricula incorporates specific activities for developing socio-emotional skills in all subjects. It should also be promoted in educational practices, inclusion, diversity, empathy and understanding among students. On the other hand, teacher training must have continuity, i.e. must offer training and professional development programs so that educators acquire the necessary tools and with them can address the socio-emotional skills in the classroom.

Another important aspect is to implement methodologies that involve practical experiences and real-life situations to cultivate skills such as decision-making and problem solving. According to González López (2020), the strategies guide teachers to understand the teaching process and the development of socio-emotional skills contributing to the integral life of students and the personal and social well-being of the school community and its environment.

To carry out this activity, a qualitative research design was adopted, aimed at exploring deeply the perceptions of teacher trainers. Under the perspective of Stake (1995 in Balcázar *et al.*, 2013), qualitative research is oriented towards understanding, focusing on the exploration of facts and

the subjective role played by the researcher from the beginning, with the aim of achieving a dense description and an experiential understanding of multiple realities.

The process was carried out with the participation of the teacher, who assumed the initial role in the intervention through the delivery of instructions and guides for the development of socio-emotional skills on ethics and education in their various contexts (virtually or remotely). This initiative was carried out in a higher education center in Chile, with the purpose that students or future education professionals acquire, recognize and identify socio-emotional skills to apply in future interactions with their own students.

To do this, the following guide is organized:

Table 1
Table of activities for socio-emotional skills

Guide 1	Description	Dynamics	Conversation Questions
Generate motivation and stimulate attention	The teacher seeks to capture the attention and motivate students, proposing ideas and questions related to socio-emotional skills.	Stimulation of attention and motivation through socio-emotional skills. <i>Objective:</i> Identify and understand socio-emotional skills in the students' personal context, generating attention and motivation towards learning.	N/A
<i>Activity 1:</i> Breaking the shell-recognizing our emotions	Students share a current emotion and explain its cause, creating an environment of trust.		What emotions influence your daily life? How do those emotions stand out in your ability to be attentive in class? What could be the emotions of your peers that affect the learning environment?
<i>Activity 2:</i> Role-sharing-empathy in action	The students, divided into teams, perform scenes involving emotions in problematic situations and then discuss their feelings.	Suggested topics: - Fight between childhood friends. - New nervous partner. - Forgetful and ashamed companion.	What was your feeling and how did you feel about playing your role on stage? What kind of actions would you take to help someone who is experiencing those emotions? Do you think and feel that empathy can improve the relationship between classmates?



Guide 1	Description	Dynamics	Conversation Questions
<i>Activity 3:</i> The quest to solve problems-overcoming obstacles	Students face a challenge that requires team resolution, such as a puzzle or a block building activity.		What was the first feeling of facing this challenge? Did you manage to work as a team to find a solution? What are the socio-emotional skills that you consider most important to achieving this obstacle?
<i>Activity 4:</i> Personal analysis-linking with our strengths	Students write and share a personal strength related to the socio-emotional environment in a climate of respect.		Why do you feel it is important to recognize our personal strengths? What new elements do these strengths give us to help us overcome challenges in the classroom and in life? According to you, is it possible that we can support each other in developing and using our strengths?
<p>Conclusion of activities: It clarifies the importance of socio-emotional skills during the learning process and the ability to work together to support personal and academic growth. It seeks to reinforce the motivation of students to continue developing these skills both inside and outside the classroom.</p>			

Table 2
Table of advantages and disadvantages over the activities carried out

Appearance	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Participation</i>	The activities encourage the active participation of students in conversations and role plays, improving their involvement in the learning process.	Some students may show resistance or lack of interest in participating in activities focused on socio-emotional skills, as they may not be used to this type of approach and deal with personal and intimate issues.
<i>Emotional development</i>	They help students identify and understand their own emotions and those of others, which contributes to the development of socio-emotional skills such as empathy and problem solving.	For these activities to be effective, a safe and supportive classroom environment is needed. If the environment is not conducive, activities may fail to achieve their goals. That is the problem of online classes.
<i>Supportive environment</i>	Personal reflection and the exchange of strengths promote an environment of mutual support, making students feel valued and understood.	The preparation and execution of these activities require additional time on the part of the teacher, both for planning and for the realization in the classroom and subsequent discussions. Especially when they are remote.

Appearance	Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Adaptability</i>	Activities can be easily adapted to different groups and contexts, making them versatile and applicable in various educational settings.	Assessing the development of socio-emotional skills can be challenging, as these skills are harder to quantify than traditional academic knowledge, requiring a holistic and qualitative approach to measuring progress.

This proposal has several advantages, such as the promotion of socio-emotional development and student participation. However, it also poses challenges related to planning time, classroom environment (whether in-person or online, resistance or lack of interest in students), and assessment methods. Despite these challenges, with careful planning and a commitment to students' emotional well-being, these activities can be critical to comprehensive learning.

284



Table 3
Table of socio-emotional activities

Activity	Description	Questions	Responses
<i>Activity 1:</i> Breaking the shell-recognizing our emotions	Students share a current emotion and explain its cause, creating an environment of trust.	What or what emotions influence your daily life?	<i>Fear:</i> "Every day the TV shows violence and fear". <i>Stress:</i> "The truth that exhausts living like this, thinking that you have proof and can not even sleep". <i>Joy:</i> Having fun with friends. <i>Sadness:</i> A loved one's illness or problems between peers and family members. <i>Learning-related emotions:</i> Anxiety, motivation, frustration, confidence, and curiosity.
		How do those emotions stand out in your ability to be attentive in class?	<i>Anxiety makes it hard to focus:</i> "When I'm too anxious, I can't focus on what the teacher says." <i>Motivation increases focus:</i> "When I am motivated and attracted to a topic of my interest, I pay more attention and participate very actively in classes" <i>Sadness</i> "when I have problems"
		What could be the emotions of your peers that affect the learning environment?	Test anxiety. Enthusiasm for projects. Boredom with reading texts. Frustration at not understanding a concept: "It's a lot of reading, it is tiring, and I waste time for other things... what are the concepts necessary for?"

Activity	Description	Questions	Responses
<p><i>Activity 2:</i> Role-sharing- empathy in action</p>	<p>Students, di- vided into teams perform scenes involving emo- tions in troubled situations and then discuss their feelings</p>	<p>What was your feeling and how did you feel about playing your role on stage?</p>	<p><i>Anger:</i> "I was angry to play the role of a friend who was fighting with another." <i>Nervousness:</i> "I felt a lot of nerves as I developed as the new student." <i>Shame:</i> "I was ashamed to play the forgetful student in front of the group."</p>
		<p>What kind of actions would you take to help someone who is experiencing those emotions?</p>	<p>Listen actively. Provide emotional support. Validate and accept feelings. Look for practical solutions. Show empathy and accompany them: "I would dialog with them to understand their perspective and offer my support." "I would look for ways to make him feel welcome and help all the other classmates come forward."</p>
		<p>Do you think and feel that empathy can improve the relationship be- tween classmates?</p>	<p>"In a personal conversation, I would show the forgetful student that we all make mistakes and offer help catching up on homework."</p>
			<p>Yes: "I believe that if we strive to accept and understand the feelings of other classmates, we can build strong and supportive relationships." I'm not sure, it depends a lot on the situation. Yes, but it's not always easy to practice being empathetic: "Empathy is very essential to overcome conflicts and improve communication between peers."</p>
<p><i>Activity 3:</i> The quest to solve problems- overcoming obstacles</p>	<p>Students face a challenge that requires team resolution, such as a puzzle or a block building activity.</p>	<p>What was the feeling of facing this challenge?</p>	<p><i>Overwhelming:</i> "At first I felt a little overwhelmed because it seemed complicated." <i>Exciting:</i> "I was excited about solving the problem together as a team." <i>Frustrating:</i> "It was frustrating when we couldn't find the solution."</p>
		<p>Did you manage to work as a team to find a solution?</p>	<p>Yes: "We all got engaged and shared ideas." No: "We had difficulty communicating." Yes, but: "it took time to coordinate." No: "Some colleagues did not actively participate."</p>
		<p>What are the socio-emotional skills you think were important to achieving this obstacle?</p>	<p>Effective communication. Teamwork. Empathy. Patience. Tolerance of frustration. Problem solving. Perseverance: "Communication was key to sharing ideas and listening to the suggestions of others." "Having patience was important when we faced difficulties." "Empathy made it easier for us to understand and understand different points of view."</p>

Activity	Description	Questions	Responses
Activity 4: Personal analysis-linking with our strengths	Students write and share a personal strength related to the socio-emotional environment in a climate of respect.	Why do you feel it is important to recognize our personal strengths?	It helps to have self-confidence. We can leverage all our talents. It promotes a positive attitude towards oneself. It facilitates personal and professional development.
			It fosters self-acceptance and self-esteem: "Valuing our strengths helps us realize what we are capable of achieving." "It helps us focus on our skills and strengths rather than our weaknesses."
		What new elements do these strengths give us to help us overcome challenges in the classroom and in life?	Sense of direction and purpose. They generate motivation and perseverance. They promote resilience to adversity. They help improve the ability to solve problems. They strengthen interpersonal relationships: "Creativity can help us find innovative solutions to problems that occur in the classroom." "Communication capacity can facilitate conflict resolution and cooperation with others."
		Is it possible that we can support each other in developing and using our strengths?	Yes: "Helping and recognizing the strengths of others can create an environment of support and motivation." Yes, working together to identify and utilize each other's strengths strengthens the team and improves overall performance: "We can cooperate on projects where everyone feels they can leverage their capabilities to achieve a common goal." "We have to help with positive feedback and encouragement when we see someone using their strengths."



Finally, the development of these skills in the lives of people and especially future education professional generates an impact on their quality of life and with it the action of good interpersonal relationships, in addition to a personal and social well-being. Therefore, the minimum required is the delivery of tools managing these skills and causing future education professionals to work with schoolchildren and the educational community.

Educational teachers play a fundamental role in educational institutions, recognizing the importance of emotions as drivers for changes in socio-emotional skills. Goleman (1995) emphasizes that emotions are impulses that lead to action and that emotional intelligence involves connecting and understanding others emotionally. This approach involves not only the enrichment of teaching, but also the strengthening of the

teacher's ability to guide students in the effective management of emotions and relationships in the social environment.

The acquisition of values and norms is a continuous process, shaped by personal experiences and the influence of the social environment, be these family members, groups of friends, social media or social networks. Gazmuri (2022) highlights empathy as the most important thing for genuine dialog and the revelation of shared valuations through emotions. However, despite progress in including these elements in the curriculum, teaching strategies are often not implemented systematically. In addition, the emotional health of teachers, marked by stress, psychic fatigue and burnout syndrome, highlights the need for tools to cope with pressure in the classroom and manage relationships, using positive emotions to influence emotional well-being and promote cognitive and behavioral changes. This approach will not only reduce tension and increase motivation and self-esteem, but also improve relationships in the educational environment.



The relevance of socio-emotional skills in the mental health of education professionals

It is very important that education professionals consider the development of socio-emotional skills, therefore, three aspects must be considered: first analyze and detect how they affect their activities; then, seek the prevention of that reality; finally, generate intervention programs to strengthen socio-emotional skills (Jiménez Macías *et al.*, 2023). Precisely one of the main reasons is the management of stress that can arise in the classroom environment. Everyday problems in the classroom can lead to situations of intense stress and, in extreme cases, to severe depressions, evidencing a deterioration of the teaching emotional state. This lack of well-being can, in some cases, force teachers to abandon their work. On the other hand, when teachers are stressed or depressed, their relationships with students and colleagues can be negatively affected. Treatment—*influenced by hardship and lack of empathy*—can lead to conflict and deteriorate the educational environment.

For these reasons, it is essential that teachers receive training in socio-emotional skills to improve their personal and professional well-being, as well as to foster a positive and supportive learning environment.

Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to receive training in socio-emotional skills:

There is a constant fatigue and stress in many professionals of education, this has to do with the little recognition by society, not feeling valued in what they do for their students as part of their profession. On the other hand, many feel that there is a social discrediting of their work and the little contribution to society, as well as the low wages. To this we can finally add another factor that, in recent times, has been gestating in the new generations no longer interested in following the career of Pedagogy. This has to do with a professional fatigue or attrition that is known as *burnout*, in this term of attrition the deterioration is noted. Which is nothing but professional wear and tear, where the process has to do with the loss of commitment and personal tasks performed by the education professional (Rodríguez and Rivas, 2011).

From this reality, there are many professionals in education who abandon teaching and dedicate themselves to other professional activities, different from those they chose, to be able to develop personally. For Bisquerra and Pérez (2012), these job losses occur due to the different problems that arise in their professional work and that are the product of emotional imbalances. In some situations they may resort to the use of medications to overcome conflicts, but this only highlights the importance of having solid emotional control to achieve a balance that promotes well-being.

Freire (2006) indicates that society knows and agrees that teachers or education professionals should be the ones who help in the most autonomous learning processes, characterized by love, creativity and scientific skills. In our view, education professionals should be trained in skills and abilities beyond simply teaching master classes and passing on knowledge. They must seek effective intervention strategies adapted to new scenarios and contemporary contexts. To achieve innovative teaching, it is necessary that they possess well-developed cognitive, communicative and psychological skills in their lives.

The pedagogical act of the educational professional must transcend the transmission of curricular contents, since it implies the manifestation of emotions, since its impact is experienced in the day to day with the students. The learning-teaching process is influenced by the way in which the educator manages his emotions and feelings in relation to himself, his discipline and his conception of the educational act. Emotions, being impulses for action, prepare the organism for different types of responses and each emotion triggers a unique response. Therefore, it is essential to learn how to manage, through self-control, the emotions and responses they generate in various everyday situations and in the classroom environment.

As stated by Touriñán (2022, p. 48), through the common activity provided in the educational field, we make individuals reach acceptance among



feelings and values, which are delivered through education as something necessary to know and apply in teaching. It is about educating so that the relationship is effective and with quality, and that education is understood as a common activity, taken to the full sense of what the concept of education means.

In this sense, some challenges for present life can be mentioned:

- *Adapting to new technologies*: the world is increasingly digitized, education professionals of the future must incorporate new technologies into all their pedagogical work, i.e. innovate new forms of virtual teaching. So this can mean more stress and challenges for some, as they will need a change in their traditional way of teaching and communicating with new generations. Marc Prensky (2011) worked on the concept of “digital natives” and “digital immigrants”, exploring the link between new technologies and the education process in our times.
- *Ability to cope with stress*: education professionals of the future should be able to manage stress and seek to balance their good mental health with work and personal life. Boyatzis (2002) worked on the issue of the progress of emotional intelligence and how it affects emotional resonance, key aspects of managing stress.
- *Generate positive communication*: education professionals of the future must have the ability to communicate positively with new school generations, from diversity and interculturality. For Goleman (1995), applying emotional intelligence within the realm of education has crucial relevance for effective communication. Thus, they must consciously consider cultural and communicational linguistic differences, so that they can adapt them reach all students with positive teaching and communication.
- *The ability to foster empathy*: education professionals must be empathetic and generate in their students the search for their emotional needs, listen and provide emotional support when it is necessary. López (2016, p. 290) —following Mary Gordon— defends emotional and social education, especially through programs that promote empathy in children and young people.



Conclusions

The main objective of this study is to highlight the importance of exploring and cultivating tools that strengthen the ability to understand and regulate emotions, both in the field of educational training of futu-

re teaching professionals and in daily life. Empathy, positive relationship building, assertive decision making, and achieving personal goals are key aspects driven by the development of these skills.

Several significant conclusions can be drawn from this analysis. First, the development of socio-emotional skills is a constant process that must be stimulated and taught from childhood, stressing the importance of intervening in these skills from an early age. Second, autonomy in the development of socio-emotional skills is critical. An ethical project of personal life gives meaning to emotional management and the construction of positive social relationships, promoting self-reflection, self-acceptance and self-care, as well as positive relationships with the environment and others. Third, the role of the education professional is crucial in this process. Continuous teacher training in these areas is imperative, as they are in constant contact with students and must address the problems they face. And finally, in today's society, emotions play a leading role. Cognitive, technical, and emotional intelligence must work hand in hand, and classroom education must evolve to embrace this comprehensive approach. The development of socio-emotional skills positively influences self-esteem and cognitive skills, promoting effective learning and contributing to critical thinking, problem solving and the generation of new options. In this sense, educating in emotions is revealed as a key factor for proper learning and the integral development of individuals.

290



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Date of receipt: July 10, 2023

Date of review: September 10, 2023

Date of approval: November 15, 2023

Date of publication: July 15, 2024