

## Nurturing Students with Emotional Literacy

**Dr. Amanika**

Assistant Professor  
N.K.B.M.G. (P.G.) College,  
Chandausi.

**Ms. Garima Tyagi**

Assistant Professor  
N.K.B.M.G.(P.G.) College,  
Chandausi.

### Abstract

*Emotional Literacy is a preventive tool to solve many social ills as violence, mental illness, drug abuse, dysfunctional relationships, and global societal conflicts and thus contribute to health, to positive relationships, to success, and to quality of life. It is a key to enrich the education with joy and enthusiasm for student as well as teachers. Development of Emotional Literacy skills through the growth of self awareness and self esteem will empower students to maximize their learning and thereby in time raise achievement. [Morris (2002); Hargreaves (2000); Goleman (1996; 1998)]. As a result it helps to envision goals and challenges, open the mind to thoughts and to problem solving, protect health by fostering resilience, create attachments to significant others, lay the groundwork for individual self-regulation, and guide the behaviour of groups, social systems, and nations. So, emotional literacy can lead to an idea of chances to obtain qualitative outcomes due to the understanding of self-awareness, emotional management, empathy, motivation and social skills. Keeping this idea in mind investigators developed a technique to foster emotional literacy in a single group of 41 students of B.A. first year in N.A.G. (P.G.) College, Amroha.*

*One Group Pretest Posttest design of pre-experimental designs was applied to test the null hypothesis "There is no significant effect of developed fostering technique on emotional literacy" A self-made questionnaire of 28 items was administered as pre-test & post-test to collect the requisite data. Mean, SD & t-test was applied as statistical techniques to analyze the collected data.*

**Keywords:** Emotional Literacy, Education, Teaching, Learning

### Introduction

Emotional Literacy is the ability to recognize, understand and appropriately express the emotions like as verbal literacy is the basic building-block for reading and writing, emotional literacy is the basis for perceiving and communicating emotions. Becoming emotionally literate is learning the alphabet, grammar and vocabulary of our emotional lives. Emotional Literacy (EL) is still a growing bud in the field of Indian Education and is based on the theory of Emotional Intelligence - the ability to process emotional information. This theory is usually considered to have been developed by Salovey & Mayer in 1990. Emotional Intelligence as being made up of 4 distinct branches - perception, thought, understanding & management. These could be seen as foundation to the 5 domains for Emotional Literacy laid out by

Goleman (1996). These five core aspects: self-awareness, managing feelings, empathy, motivation, and social skills are considered basic to the development of Emotional Literacy. Emotional Literacy is a way of 'being' not just of 'doing'. It is a pedagogical approach concerning teaching style and learning environment which can develop with pupils as a community approach to inclusion. The teacher's role is then to provide a safe but rich and challenging learning environment where pupils are free to grow socially and emotionally, while academically nurtured. When a child feels emotionally safe and secure in his/her environment, will undertake the challenge and risk needed to learn. In new learning challenges we need spirit to overcome disappointment or acknowledge our mistakes. Many children are simply not ready to do that and need our support to explore challenge safe from ridicule. Successful deep learning can only take place where recognition and praise is given not only for what is correct but for effort and for solutions found through collaboration. This type of support, where collaboration is encouraged, learning, follows the principles of social constructivism allowing children to blossom into independent learners through developing self esteem, self control and social skills.

A poll by USA Today showed that, when asked what they most wanted to change in their children's schools, a full 75% of all parents asked for emotional literacy - though not by name. Parents' most frequent request (36%) was the desire for more school counselors - a need alleviated by Emotional Literacy education. The second greatest request (33%) was the desire for emotional diagnosis of our kids before it was 'too late.' The third most prolific desire was to insure our kids are taught not to hate (18%). The idea of Emotional Literacy is therefore nothing new but it demonstrates a growing awareness and the importance of understanding the relevance of this as an approach to learning and teaching. Emotional Literacy is a developed awareness and understanding of one's own and others emotions. This information guides our thinking and is expressed in our communication and behaviour. Furthermore, these skills initially developed in the home environment & can be nurtured within the classroom environment to encourage communication, allow expression of feeling, develop understanding of others & build self control. Emotions are an integral part of human nature. Emotional Literacy is a profound and beautiful language available to everyone. It can be implemented rapidly, safely and with lasting effect. Learning how to become emotionally literate is one of the best investments that students can make themselves, their children and the future.

### **Relation between emotional literacy and quality education**

Students are not able to put their emotions in lockers or bags and carry them around all day, to every classroom, in every hallway, on the staircases, and on the road. When school does not recognize this, it becomes a very heavy burden on the shoulders of students and gradually on teachers and schools. Consequently we get curriculum gap, generation gap, knowledge gap and many more active problems of class. Thus it becomes much important to train the students to understand what they are feeling and how to properly label it, and how to regulate their strong feelings when necessary to achieve the aim of quality education.

Can Emotional Literacy be taught? Yes it may be taught through many social emotional learning programs as Social Decision Making/Social Problem Solving, I Can Problem Solve, Resolving Conflicts Creatively, Open Circle, Passage Works, School-Connect, Tribes, Lions-Quest, PATHS, and Second Step. Marc Brackett's RULER program is an excellent example of how children are brought along developmentally to learn and master an increasing range and depth of feelings. But it is not a quick and easy process, it need to be addressed every day, to be integrated with academic curricula. While it is true that we are born with a capacity to understand and express feelings, it is also true that these capacities can be developed. One way to think about it is in terms of crayons. You can walk around in life with 12 crayons, but you are much better off with a box of 48. So it is with feelings. You can walk around being able to distinguish between sad, mad, and glad. But you are much better off being able to detect and express nuances, like frustration, inspiration, elation, dejection, puzzlement, joy, uncertainty, and enthusiasm - all variations of the basic colors of sad, mad, and glad.

Emotional Literacy is a preventive tool to solve many social ills as violence, mental illness, drug abuse, dysfunctional relationships, and global societal conflicts and thus contribute to health, to positive relationships, to success, and to quality of life. It is a key to enrich the education with joy and enthusiasm for student as well as teachers. Development of Emotional Literacy skills through the growth of self awareness and self esteem will empower students to maximize their learning and thereby in time raise achievement. [Morris (2002); Hargreaves (2000); Goleman (1996; 1998)]. As a result it helps to envision goals and challenges, open the mind to thoughts and to problem solving, protect health by fostering resilience, create attachments to significant others, lay the groundwork for individual self-regulation, and guide the behaviour of groups, social systems, and nations. Educational settings are of specific importance for shaping human self-regulation and development, and students' and teachers' positive emotions can be assumed to be central to attaining these educational goals. So, emotional literacy can lead to an idea of chances to obtain qualitative outcomes due to the understanding of self-awareness, emotional management, empathy, motivation and social skills.

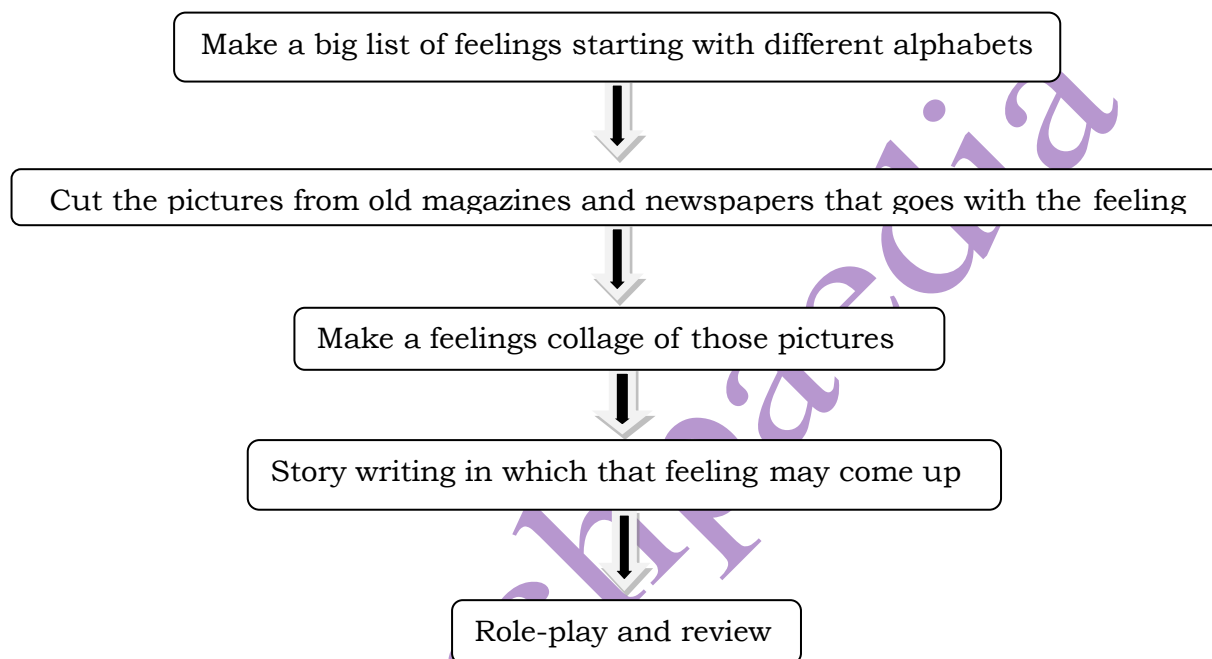
### **Objectives**

- To create awareness about emotional literacy among students, colleagues and administrators of the college.
- To bring all personnel of education on universal platform to foster emotional literacy.
- To develop fostering technique for emotional literacy.
- To implement the developed fostering technique on emotional literacy of students.
- To measure the effect of fostering technique on emotional literacy of students.

## Hypothesis

- There is no significant effect of developed fostering technique on emotional literacy.

## Technique to foster emotional literacy



## Methodology

One Group Pretest Posttest design of pre-experimental designs was applied to present research work. A single group of 41 students of B.A. first year in N.A.G. (P.G.) College, Amroha, was selected as sample and they were involved in above mentioned procedure to achieve emotional literacy through identification of emotions, picture pasting, collage making, story writing and role playing by the mean of team work & brainstorming method. They were also given various project works on same topic as collection of stories in a file. Various teaching aids such as flash cards, flannel graph, power point presentations etc were also used by investigators to teach them.

The study was conducted only for one month & for 1 hours/day with in the campus without disturbing the normal schedule of class. A self-made questionnaire of 28 items was administered as pre-test & post-test to collect the requisite data. Mean, SD & t-test was applied as statistical techniques to analyze the collected data.

## Data analysis and Statistical Findings

A statistically significant difference was found between the Means of pre-test & post-test. Statistical summary of data analysis is as given in following table.

Tests	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	MD M1~M2	±r	SE D	Calculate d 't'-value	Table value of 't' for d. f.=68
Pre-Test	41	11.31	5.94	8.56	0.51	0.94	9.10	2.02 (at .05 level of significance)
Post-Test	41	19.87	6.37					2.71 (at .01 level of significance)

As the calculated value of t is much enough larger than the table value of t at both levels of significance, the null hypotheses is rejected at these levels. In other words, developed fostering technique has a measurable effect on the emotional literacy of children as the mean of posttest is much larger than the pretest. Students were also showed positive attitude towards this teaching technique. Finally it may be concluded that if we apply ourselves to the teachings of emotions, we teacher can provide a better emotionally literate generation of students.

**Challenges faced in the implementation**

Although positive innovations should always be promoted in teaching-learning process, yet in reality it's very challenging to implement any innovation because of our old and traditional educational system. The challenges faced in fostering emotional literacy are as given below.

- **Lack of co-operation from college personnel-** It was really a key hard-hitting task to gain support from colleagues, principal and other college personnel for the smooth implementation of your innovations. Reasons were different such as jealousy, neutral response, feeling of competition and rigidity in nature etc but all were challenging.
- **Time management-** Disturbing routine time table of class was also created a big hindrance in the successful completion of project. Fostering technique was embedded with routine teaching schedule to overcome this problem.
- **Irregularity in students' presence-** It is a common problem in present scenario. Students don't want to come to learn. What is the solution? A typical question to answer and everyone has a different answer for this query. We think that motivation plays crucial role but to motivate is again challenging.
- **To retain faith in the success of innovation-** It totally depends on the personal attribute of researchers. Patience, self confidence, faith in oneself, workaholic attitude and keeping love for students are the central traits for fulfillment.

**Conclusion**

Emotional Literacy is a way of 'being' not just of 'doing'. It is a pedagogical approach concerning teaching style and learning environment which can be developed with pupils as a community approach to inclusion. Salovey & Mayer (1990) originally defined it as 'social intelligence' enables people to differentiate

between emotions and the resulting actions. The teacher's role is provide a safe but rich and challenging learning environment where children are free to grow socially and emotionally, while academically nurtured. Emotional literacy is particularly important for children and teens because their brains are not fully developed and they do not have the impulse control that adults have. An understanding of their feelings helps them to make better choices and have more controlled reactions. Research shows that systematic instruction in social-emotional and character development of about a half hour per week, well implemented, contributes greatly to classroom management and improved test score performance." Emotional Literacy helps students learn about themselves, their emotions, their brain, and offers application tools to work with what arises for them moment by moment. It enables them to more deeply understand what is happening when they experience their emotions which can cause them to be distracted, negatively affect their learning abilities and attention, as well as adding to states of stress, depression, anxiety, and ill health. Consequently it offers an antidote to the above as it can offer easy teachable skills and tools that are fun to learn. They are also lifelong skills that can help us all learn to stay focused, be in optimal learning states, and process our emotional states in a healthy constructive manner. But we don't have time in the curriculum to do this. To be a part of today's educational world, we need to be competent from day one and that's what emotional literacy prepares you for. With its specialized areas, it transforms one from a graduate into a professional.

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