

Religion as an Emotion

Integrating Emotional- Social Intelligence and Religion in Social Studies

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Introduction

After the recent Phulwama Attack in India, it is impossible to ignore the current situation where all the countries of the world are getting united to fight against “Terrorism.” Few terrorist groups are using religion to promote terrorism in the name of “Jihaad”. It is our responsibility as Social Studies Educator, Researcher, and Teacher to educate our students to become a more responsible citizen. Emotions play a significant role in engaging our students in meaningful activities as there is a complex relationship between power, identity, social interaction and emotions.

The main aim of this paper is to emphasis on the fact that improving Emotional-Social Intelligence level of students would benefit students and society at large, provided religion is also reflected in such intelligence. This relationship is established by proposing “ESI Model”. Religion is also an emotion. Teaching emotional-social intelligence as part of social studies curriculum would provide students with the opportunities to develop competencies associated with Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Emotions Management and Regulation, Change management, Motivation, Relationship Handling, Empathy and Social Skills.

1. Review of Literature

Limited attempts have been made to link emotional-Social intelligence (ESI) with religion. Emotional Intelligence is related with religious behaviour (Paek,2006; Liu 2010; Butt 2014). Various past researches have proved that religion can foster self-control (Geyer & Baumeister 2005; McCullough and Willoughby, 2009; Rounding, 2012). Literature also supports relationship between religion and self-efficacy (Paek 2006; Liu, 2010). Positive religious intrinsic orientation is positively related with positive emotions like happiness, and negatively correlated with negative emotions like anxiety, depression (Maltby, 1999; Maltby and Dya 2003; Lewis, 2005; Navara and James 2005). ESI is also associated with religious coping

style (Pargament 1997). Emotions are of significant importance in forming religious experiences (Emmons, 2005).

2. Methodology

Based on the above mentioned literature and logical translation, the present studies try to establish the relationship between Emotional Social Intelligence and Religious orientation, by proposing an “ESI Model”.

3. Emotional-Social Intelligence: A tool to inculcate Religious Values in Students

3.1. Defining Emotional-Social Intelligence

It is a “cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and relate with them, and cope with daily demands” (Bar-On, 2006). Students with high Emotional Social Intelligence tends to be more behaved, and less anxious as compared to students with low score of Emotional Social Intelligence. Emotional Social Intelligence helps the students to recognize, regulate, and express feelings constructively and such students are less likely to develop anxiety issues, depression, and other mental-health disorders (Daniel Goleman, Emotional Intelligence).

3.2. Emotional-Social Intelligence and Religious Values

Literature supports the fact that religion is a form of emotion and also has an effect on emotional well-being of a person (Silberman 2003; Emmons 2005). Many authors have emphasised on the fact that religious beliefs can also be used to regulate emotions (Emmons 2005; Watts 2007; Vishkin et al. 2014). A religious person tends to display high level of self-awareness and emotional regulations (Allen 1997; Geyer and Baumeister 2005).

4. Integrating Emotional-Social Intelligence with Religion in Social Studies Curriculum

The proposed ESI model explains how various dimensions of Emotional Social Intelligence can contribute to better understanding of religion. Model also explains the strategies to integrate ESI and Religion in Social Studies curriculum. Table 1 explains how Emotional-Social Intelligence with Religion can be integrated in Social Studies Curriculum

E_{SI} Competencies	S trategies to integrate in Social Studies Curriculum	I ntegration with Religion
Self-Awareness	- Ask self-reflective questions - Use communication self-evaluation questionnaire	Usually experience culture and religion/spirituality in a dynamic manner (Visscher, C. (2015))
Social Awareness	- Encouraging students to read lot of newspaper, blogs, magazines - Ask them to identify problems in current system and encourage them to propose a solution	Aware about not only their religion but others' religion as well
Emotions and Self Regulation	Teachers must try to teach the students that they should see an event as an opportunity and not as a threat.	Regulating emotions would ensure that a person would not get sway away with the emotions, especially in the name of religion
Empathy	Students usually develop empathy by observing others especially their teachers. Thus, teachers themselves must empathise with others.	Helps to differentiate right from wrong
Social Skills	- Give them group assignments - Encourage them to make friends with new students	People socialise and gel together when they believe in same faith, worship same god

Figure 1: ESI Model

5. Practical implications

5.1.Potential Benefit to Students

Integrating Emotional-Social Intelligence and Religion in Social Studies Curriculum would give students better opportunity to flourish in academic and personal fronts of life. It would also help them to have cordial personal and professional relationships with people from different religious background. It would also help in ensuring fair treatment to the marginalised groups.

5.2.Potential Benefit to Society

Students would become better citizens if Emotional-Social Intelligence and Religion is integrated in the Social Studies Curriculum. It would help them to behave right in the light of equal treatment to all religions. They would exhibit better ethical decision making skills which would contribute to development of the society as a whole.

6. Future Research

In future empirical studies can be undertaken to understand the relationship between Emotional-Social Intelligence and Religion. Attitude of People related to religion, ethics can

also be analysed in future. Role of socio demographic variables like age, gender, etc. can also be studied with reference to relationship between Emotional- Social Intelligence and Religion.

7. Conclusion

Integrating all the dimensions of Emotional-Social Intelligence in Social Studies Curriculum would help in better understanding of religion by the students.

Keywords: *Emotional Intelligence, Social Intelligence, Social Studies Curriculum, Religion, Religious Values, Social Studies*

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