

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE PEDAGOGICAL RELATIONSHIP

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1. Introduction

Conflict is emotionally conceived, and part of the pedagogical relationship in everyday school life. Besides, conflicts are characterized by strong emotions, with a conflict being related to increased anger, contempt, guilt, and sadness (Rispens and Demerouti, 2016). Thus, conflicts in the pedagogical relationship promote negative emotions in teachers, and decrease their performance (Göksoy and Argon, 2016). Given that emotions are associated with conflict, to be successful in pedagogical conflict, teachers have to start by being successful in managing their own emotions.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to regulate one's own and others' emotions appropriately (Mayer et al., 2016). In turn, conflict management refers to specific behaviors that are implemented to resolve a conflict. Rahim's (2002) Model of Conflict Management indicates five strategies to manage

conflict, which correspond to attitudes towards conflict (avoiding, dominating, obliging, integrating, and compromising).

Studies show the relationship between EI and conflict management. However, there is a lack of studies relating these constructs in the pedagogical relationships. That way, an exploratory validation study was conducted (Valente, 2019). Subsequently, another study was conducted to confirm the relationship between teachers' EI and conflict management (Valente and Lourenço, 2020a). Since much more needs to be learned about how teachers' EI influences conflict management in the pedagogical relationships, this study aimed to investigate how teachers' EI influences conflict resolution in the pedagogical relationship in other education levels.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants and instruments

During the 2019 year, a convenience sample was collected consisting of 772 teachers (5th to 6th grades; 63,7 % women) working in Portuguese public schools.

The following instruments were used: Questionário de Inteligência Emocional do Professor (QIEP: Valente and Lourenço, 2020b). Consists of 45 items, distributed among three subscales (perceive and understand emotions, express and classify emotions, and manage and regulate emotions). The answers were obtained on a 6-point Likert scale, from 1 (*never*) to 6 (*always*); and the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II - Portuguese Version in School Context (ROCI-II-PViSC; Valente et al., 2017). It comprises 28-items, distributed among five subscales (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising), and rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 5 (*totally agree*).

3. Results

The structural equation model shows the relationship between the variables (Figure 1). The overall goodness of fit was robust: $\chi^2 = 6,825$; $p = 0,231$; $\chi^2/df = 1,445$; GFI = 0,995; AGFI = 0,982; CFI = 0,994; RMSEA = 0,027 (LO/0,015 – HI/0,039).

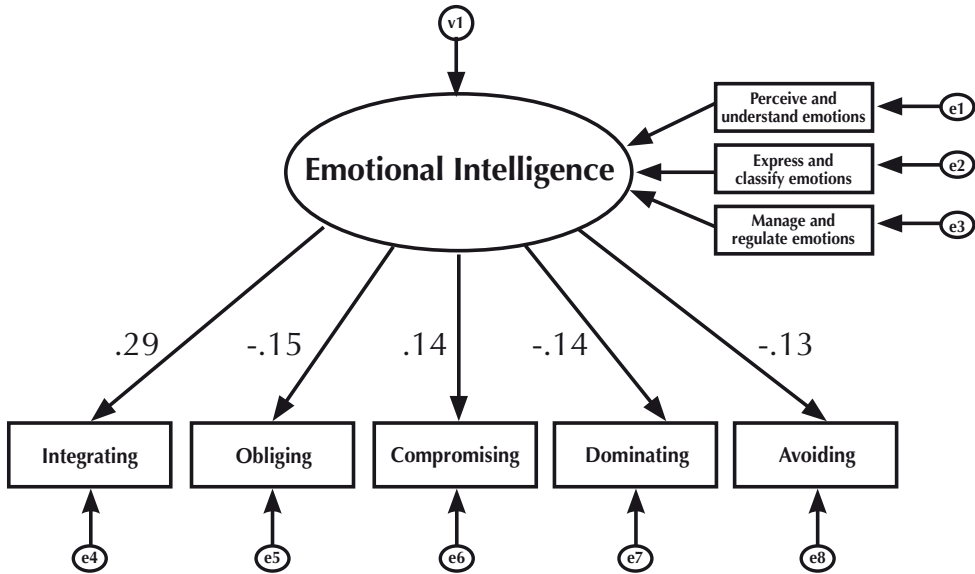


Figure 1. Structural Equation Model

Teachers who tend to have higher levels of EI use more integrating ($\beta = 0,29$; $p < 0,001$) and compromising ($\beta = 0,14$; $p < 0,001$) strategies; and fewer obliging ($\beta = -0,15$; $p < 0,001$), dominating ($\beta = -0,14$; $p < 0,001$), and avoiding ($\beta = -0,13$; $p < 0,001$) strategies to conflict resolution in the pedagogical relationship.

4. Discussion

This study shows that teachers' EI influences conflict resolution in pedagogical relationships. In line with previous studies (Valente, 2019; Valente and Lourenço, 2020a) results confirmed that teachers' EI influences the choice of most correct strategies (integrating and compromising) for conflict resolution in pedagogical relationships. Therefore, to resolve conflict in pedagogical relationships teachers' must be emotionally intelligent to use the most appropriate strategies when dealing with a conflict.

These findings suggest the need for educational politics for the implementation of emotional education programs in academic training in preservice teachers and on the continuing teachers' education as a valuable tool to develop their emotional skills.

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