4.1 Introduction

The concept of emotional intelligence was introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990) to describe "the ability individuals have to monitor their own feelings and those of others, discriminating between various types of emotion and using this information to channel thoughts and actions". The term was later popularised by Goleman through the publication of his book Emotional Intelligence (1995), which describes emotional intelligence as a set of skills or characteristics that are fundamental to coping successfully in life: self-control, enthusiasm, perseverance and the ability to self-motivate. Later, Mayer and Salovey (1997) extended the definition to include the ability to perceive emotions, to compare emotions and feelings, to understand information derived from these emotions and to be able to handle them. Baron (1997, 2000) in his theoretical model defines emotional intelligence as a sum of emotional and social competences that determine how a person relates to himself and others in order to cope with environmental pressures and demands.

According to Goleman (1995) and Mayer and Salovey (1997), emotional intelligence includes five domains:

- getting to know one's own emotions

- handling one's emotions

- motivating oneself

- recognising the emotions of others

- using social skills when interacting with others

With regard to recognising one's emotions, Goleman (1995) refers to the state of self-awareness that makes a person able to recognise emotions when they arise. According to the author, this ability is one of the foundations of emotional intelligence because the ability to identify and monitor one's emotions increases the individual's level of self-awareness and ability to control and monitor one's life. This awareness enables the individual to make conscious choices about major, as well as minor, life events.

According to Shapiro (1998), a child's ability to put his or her emotions into words is fundamental; learning to identify and communicate emotions is an important part of communication and is a basic determinant for the acquisition of emotional control. The concept of knowing oneself stems from having self-awareness; this is expressed in an individual's ability to look introspectively at one's thoughts, feelings and actions. By positively tuning the level of knowledge of one's emotions when one's conscious and unconscious thoughts are subject to exploration, a person acquires emotional competence of the self.

With regard to handling one's emotions, Goleman (1995) defines this skill as significant for increasing the level of self-awareness; it is seen as the ability to tolerate positive and negative events in our lives in a balanced manner; it is a fundamental characteristic for stability and well-being.

Self-motivation can be seen as the push the individual gives himself/herself to achieve a certain goal. Zirkel (2000) states that, in attempting to understand motivation in the individual, scholars pay more attention to the results towards which a behaviour is directed than to the behaviour itself. According to Richburg and Fletcher (2002), motivating oneself is one of the fundamental skills for achieving an outcome. For Lane (2000), motivation reflects the ability to create a positive push to increase the possibility of achieving a personal goal. Goleman associates motivation with a flow that can be represented as a state of forgetfulness of the self where emotions create an optimal experience in achieving the goal (Csikszenmilalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). During this state of flow, emotions are positive and feelings of harmony and joy are present. This level of emotion leads to success because the individual does not focus on the action, but rather on the pleasure of the act.

Recognising emotions in others is one of the most important social skills that enhances empathy and social competence.

According to Gardner (1983), the fundamental capacity of personal intelligence includes 'the ability to notice and make distinctions between individuals on the basis of mood, temperament and motivation'. He links interpersonal intelligence to the child's ability to discriminate and detect the mood of other individuals.

Regarding the use of social skills in interaction with others, Richburg and Fletcher (2002) state that this ability reflects the level of self-awareness; exposure to social situations increases the likelihood of having satisfying relationships.

Goleman (1995) in his book 'Emotional Intelligence' analyses Block's study (1995) on what he calls 'ego resilience', a construct analogous to emotional intelligence; in his studies, Block compared two pure theoretical types: high IQ individuals and high emotional intelligence individuals and showed that high IQ individuals are skilled in the mental realm but inept in the personal realm. The profiles differ slightly depending on whether they are male or female.

The man with a high IQ has a wide range of interests and intellectual abilities, is ambitious and productive, trusting and stubborn, and is not troubled by self-referential concerns; he tends to be critical and condescending, demanding and inhibited, uncomfortable in the sphere of sexuality and sensual experiences, detached and unemotional, cold and indifferent emotionally. On the other hand, men with great emotional intelligence are socially balanced, expansive and cheerful, not subject to fears or brooding of an anxious nature, they have a great capacity to devote themselves to other people or to a cause, they take responsibility and have ethical conceptions and outlooks; in their relationships with others they show themselves to be understanding, caring and protective. Their emotional life is rich but appropriate; these people feel at ease with themselves, with others and in the social universe in which they live.

With regard to women, Goleman reports that, in Block's study, those with high IQs have intellectual confidence, are fluent in expressing their thoughts, have many intellectual and aesthetic interests; they also tend to be introspective, prone to anxiety, second-guessing and guilt, and are reticent in expressing their anger openly (even if they do so indirectly). Emotionally intelligent women, on the other hand, tend to be self-confident, express their feelings directly and have positive feelings about themselves. They are extrovert and gregarious, express their feelings in a balanced way and adapt well to stress. This balance allows them to make new acquaintances easily; they feel comfortable enough with themselves to be cheerful, spontaneous and open to new experiences. Unlike pure type women with high IQs, they rarely feel anxious or guilty and rarely sink into brooding.

Hatch and Gardner (1989) identify four distinct abilities as components of interpersonal intelligence:

Ability to organise groups: this is the essential skill of the leader; it involves the ability to coordinate the efforts of a network of individuals.

Ability to negotiate solutions: this is the mediator's talent, capable of preventing conflicts or resolving those already in progress.

Ability to establish personal bonds: this is the skill of empathy and of knowing how to connect with others. It facilitates the initiation of an interaction, the recognition of feelings and concerns in others and stimulates the appropriate response.

Ability in the analysis of the social situation: this is the ability to recognise and understand the feelings, motivations and concerns of others. This knowledge of how others feel can facilitate intimacy and relationships.

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