

Teachers' Emphatic Concern for Their Learners

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Abstract : The focus of this exploratory study is on whether teachers demonstrate empathic concern for their learners in planning, implementing and assessing learning outcomes in their regular classrooms. Empathy must be shown to all learners equally and not only for high-risk learners at the expense of other ability learners. Empathy demonstrated by teachers allows them to build a stronger bond with all their learners. This bond based on trust leads to positive outcomes for learners to be able to excel in their work. Empathic teachers must make every effort to simplify the subject matter for high risk learners so that these learners not only enjoy their learning activities but are also successful like their more able peers. A total of 87.5% of the participants agreed that empathy allows teachers to demonstrate humanistic values in their choice of learning materials for learners of different abilities. It is therefore important for teachers to select content and instructional materials that will contribute to the learners' success in the mainstream of education. It is also imperative for teachers to demonstrate empathic skills and consequently, to be attuned to the emotions and emotional needs of their learners. Schools need to be reformed, not by simply lengthening the school day or by simply adding more content in the curriculum, but by making school more satisfying to learners. This must be consistent with their diverse learning needs and interests so that they gain a sense of power, fulfillment, and importance in their regular classrooms. Hence, teacher - pupil relationships based on empathic concern for the latter's educational needs lays the foundation for quality education to be offered.

Keywords : emotional intelligence, empathy, learners' emotional needs, teachers' empathic skills

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