EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES AND TEACHING PRACTICE IN THE
REOPENING OF PERUVIAN SCHOOLS AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The transition from virtuality to face-to-face classes, in the post-Covid-19 pandemic process, required an academic look at how teachers were adapting to the reopening of schools. The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between emotional competencies and teaching practice in this process.

Method: The methodology with quantitative route and correlational scope was used, two instruments were built for both study variables, which were administered to a sample of 141 teachers belonging to Regular Basic Education schools in Lima.

Results and conclusion: The statistical processing allowed to conclude that there is a high positive relationship between emotional competencies and teaching practice during the reopening of Peruvian schools after the Covid-19 pandemic, considering the Rho Spearman coefficient of 0.757. It is in this sense, teachers making use of their abilities and skills should use emotional competencies in their educational community. In addition to making use of all the resources to improve their professional performance.

Research implications: The teaching practice implies professional performance, has as its center the integral formation of the student, providing them with the necessary curricular contents and an education in values.

Originality/value: This questionnaire had 28 items. Both instruments went through expert judgment and reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of .953 and .942, respectively. It was also shown that they are highly reliable for the application.

Keywords: Emotional Competencies, COVID.19, Schools, Pedagogical Practice, Reopening.

COMPETÊNCIAS EMOCIONAIS E PRÁTICA DOCENTE NA REA
BERTURA DAS ESCOLAS PERUANAS APÓS A PANDEMIA DO COVID-19

RESUMO

Propósito: A transição da virtualidade para as aulas presenciais, no processo pós-pandemia da Covid-19, exigiu um olhar acadêmico sobre como os professores estavam se adaptando à reabertura das escolas. O objetivo deste estudo determinar a relação entre as competências emocionais e a prática docente neste processo.

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Método: Foi utilizada a metodologia com rota quantitativa e alcance correlacional, dois instrumentos foram construídos para ambas as variáveis do estudo, os quais foram aplicados a uma amostra de 141 professores pertencentes a escolas de educação básica regular em Lima.

Resultados e conclusão: O processamento estatístico permitiu concluir que existe uma alta relação positiva entre as competências emocionais e a prática docente durante a reabertura das escolas peruanas após a pandemia de Covid-19, considerando o coeficiente Rho Spearman de 0,757. É nesse sentido que os professores fazendo uso de suas habilidades e habilidades devem utilizar as competências emocionais em sua comunidade educativa. Além de dispor de todos os recursos para aprimorar seu desempenho profissional.

Implicações da pesquisa: A prática docente implica atuação profissional, tem como centro a formação integral do aluno, proporcionando-lhe os conteúdos curriculares necessários e uma educação em valores.

Originalidade/valor: Este questionário tinha 28 itens. Ambos os instrumentos passaram por avaliação especializada e confiabilidade com um valor Alfa de Cronbach de 0,953 e 0,942, respectivamente. Também foi demonstrado que são altamente confiáveis para a aplicação.

gained greater confidence, security and learned to support their children (Katz and Rideout, 2021), and they were even able to strengthen digital skills; however, the greatest difficulty would continue to be the emotional conditions in the adaptation process.

As the months progressed and better knowledge was obtained about the evolution of the Covid-19 disease, Asian and European countries reopened their schools (UNESCO, 2022). In addition, the encouraging results in the use of vaccines were also decisive (Kahmbing, 2021). However, time continued to pass and virtual education in Peru lasted until 2021. The Peruvian Ministry of Education (Minedu) announced the return to face-to-face classes that only took place in 2022, allowing capacity for 100% and that the sanitary protocols be relaxed.

For the reopening of schools, the different countries received recommendations from UNESCO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), entities that had to establish agreements for a voluntary and flexible return. Likewise, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) also provided guidelines on how health care, distancing and hygiene should be in schools (Bos, 2020). It was necessary to implement efficient and effective biosafety protocols that had the capacity to respond to possible infections (Baccini et al., 2021). In addition to this, they should contain recommendations regarding the proper use of masks, hand hygiene, and distancing (Soares and Schoen, 2020).

During the pandemic, there were also emotional conditions due to confinement that "generated despair, loss of freedom, boredom, insomnia, poor concentration, anger, anxiety, anguish due to the lack of physical contact" (Ramírez et al., 2020). Depression could not be alien to this context, family losses, economic difficulties and not very encouraging news exacerbated this condition. According to previous studies (Robles et al., 2020) there was a higher prevalence in women showing depressive traits. Likewise, teleworking and the fact that homes became schools presented a complicated scenario in terms of emotions (Bizarria, 2021). In this sense, the return to the classroom could improve these difficulties, both teachers and students could socialize and alleviate the tensions emotionally generated by the disease, because young people, among their adaptive behaviors, have the strength to develop social skills (Gonzales et al., 2021).

In this context, it was normal for parents to feel fear of contagion when sending their children to school, as demonstrated in Colombia (Alvarado et al., 2021). The uncertainty caused by the progress of the Covid-19 disease had generated emotional conditions due to the fear of becoming infected (Ramírez et al., 2021). However, in Peru, the application of vaccines in children and adolescents (Kahmbing, 2021) helped reduce parental fear. Even so, in Peruvian schools it was not considered mandatory for students to have received any dose of the vaccine.

The opening of the classrooms required a new look at education of what the interaction and participation of the different actors of the educational community would be like (Gonzales et al., 2022), it was necessary to prioritize curricular content, promote socialization activities, physical activity and socio-emotional (Ortiz and Correa, 2020), in what would be recognized as the new normal with new scenarios that are very different from what pre-pandemic education was (Prince, 2021). Therefore, face-to-face contact was necessary to alleviate tensions and recover learning (Ortiz and Correa, 2020). It was the teachers who had to make use of emotional competencies as a contingency in the return to the classroom as part of their teaching practice.

Emotional competencies, according to Bisquerra and Mateo (2019), are the set of attitudes, knowledge, and abilities required by every person to adequately regulate the emotional phenomenon. These contribute to personal development and coping capacity in adverse situations such as the pandemic represented. Emotional awareness is highlighted, in which individuals become aware of their emotions. This was necessary among the teachers, who in the context of the health emergency assumed resilient behaviors like the rest of the population that went through high stress tensions in the face of the difficult moments experienced and had to overcome and continue with their usual activities (Castagnola et al.,
There is no doubt that psychosocial problems increased during the pandemic; however, mental health took an interest in providing care to the most vulnerable, including schoolchildren (Ramírez et al., 2020).

In addition, it includes emotional regulation, in such a way that people can handle both negative and positive emotions, dosing spontaneity (Jimeno et al., 2019). In this line, the teachers, despite the fact that in their environment they faced complicated situations, when they returned to class they were a support for the students after the two years of confinement, an attitude that could also be assumed by the students who also have the ability to face adverse situations that affect them psychologically (Schwal, 2022).

Emotional competencies also imply personal autonomy, which refers to the attitude one has towards life, self-esteem, and personal valuation; promoting these aspects in students is fundamental (Acosta and Hernández, 2004). In the context of the health emergency, it was necessary to work on the aforementioned indicators, with teachers being motivational agents, since the confinement severely affected children and young people, as they were exposed to situations of violence, psychological conditions (Barrientos et al., 2020), which produced irritability, insomnia, anguish, etc. (Alvarado et al., 2021). To this, interpersonal intelligence is added, which understands how one can interact with others, through adequate verbal and non-verbal communication (Carmona and López, 2018). As an additional factor, teachers contribute to fostering empathy with students, making the school a welcoming place. Lastly, emotional competencies incorporate life and well-being skills, which depend on the behavior that each person demonstrates. He not only cares about himself, but also transcends by caring about the well-being of others (Bisquerra and Mateo, 2019).

The teaching practice implies professional performance, has as its center the integral formation of the student, providing them with the necessary curricular contents and an education in values (Seje et al., 2021). For a better understanding of the professional performance of teachers, it is necessary to approach it from the following dimensions: 1) preparation for learning, which during the return to classes it was necessary to prioritize learning in the planning of their sessions (Gómez, 2021); 2) teaching for student learning, making use of what has been gained during the pandemic, such as the development of digital skills to innovate. Likewise, it is essential that teachers develop assertive and precise communication, the return to the classroom revealed the difficulties represented by virtual education, the distancing limited obtaining evidence on the progress of the students and achieving the expected achievements (Espinoza and Díez, 2021). However, upon returning to the classroom, it was observed that they lacked developing some skills. Another dimension of teaching performance is 3) the division in school management, teachers could not be oblivious to the decisions made by the authorities of their schools, they were an active part and consulted during the reopening, to develop protocols, institutional documents and commissions required according to the recommendations of the Ministry of Education, because proper management contributes to providing quality education (Flores, 2021); 4) development of professionalism and teaching identity, which indicates that teachers are capable of demonstrating correct professional performance, are permanently in training in order to improve their professional practice.

Considering the above, the purpose was to determine the relationship between emotional competencies and teaching practice in the reopening of Peruvian schools after the Covid-19 pandemic. This study provides the academic community with a look at the complications that teachers went through when they returned to face-to-face education. For Peru, the year 2022 was a time of trial and error, when schools reopened in March. Initially, it was decided to follow the distancing protocols, use of masks and frequent hand washing. However, month by month the conditions changed, and the measures were relaxed. For the month of June (by order of the Ministry of Education) the use of face masks was withdrawn from students, but not from...
teachers. With respect to emotions, it was identified that the levels of violence in schools increased, taking into account the report of the portal of the Specialized System for Attention to Cases of School Violence (SíseVe), administered by the Minedu, with a record of 2,500 cases, the highest number in the last nine years.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The quantitative route and correlational design were used; there was a sample of 141 teachers, to whom two Likert scale surveys were applied. The first instrument measured the socio-emotional competencies that were dimensioned according to Bisquerra's proposal (Castagnola et al., 2021): emotional awareness, emotional regulation, emotional autonomy, social competence, and competencies for life and well-being. The questionnaire contains 22 items, with an ordinal scale and a polynomial level. The second instrument was used for the teaching practice variable, which was dimensioned according to the recommendations of the Framework for Good Teaching Performance regulated by the Ministry of Education of Peru (Ramírez et al., 2020): preparation for learning, teaching for student learning, participation in school management and development of professionalism and teacher identity. This questionnaire had 28 items. Both instruments went through expert judgment and reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha value of .953 and .942, respectively. It was also shown that they are highly reliable for the application. It is important to specify that they were distributed through the Google Drive form.

In the inclusion criteria, it was considered that the participants were practicing teachers for at least the last five years, belong to Regular Basic Education and their schools belong to Metropolitan Lima (Wuryaningrat, 2023). The participation of teachers from other teaching modalities and who had not gone through the transit of virtuality during the compulsory isolation and return to classes was dismissed.

3 RESULTS

Considering the results of descriptive statistics, the behavior of the variables was as follows:

![Figure 1: Emotional competencies](Source: Prepared by the Authors, 2023).

In Figure 1, according to the perception of the participants, the highest level is Expected with 47.5%, followed by Outstanding with 41.8%, while the Low and Acceptable levels were
below. of 11%. These data evidenced an adequate management of teachers with respect to emotional competencies.

Figure 2: Dimensions of emotional competencies
Source: Prepared by the Authors, (2023).

Figure 2 allows us to observe that four dimensions were located at the expected level, obtaining the highest value for emotion regulation with 68.3%; while the dimension skills for life and well-being occupied the highest level in Outstanding with 56%. These data allowed us to infer that, despite the complicated context between the transition from virtual modality to face-to-face normality, teachers demonstrate adequate management of emotions.

Figure 3: Teaching practice
Source: Prepared by the Authors, (2023).

In figure 3, it is possible to observe quite encouraging data regarding teaching practice, because they were located at a prominent level with 63.8%, the expected level 34%, acceptable 2.1% and low 0%. Consequently, the levels in which the teachers were found demonstrated an adequate management of their pedagogical practice.
In Table 1, it was possible to find a high association between both variables, considering the Rho Spearman coefficient of .757. In this sense, there is a positive and high correlation between emotional competencies and pedagogical practice.

4 DISCUSSION

The appearance of the Covid-19 disease changed the educational scenario for two years in Peru. However, due to the recommendations of international institutions such as UNESCO, it was necessary to reopen the schools, because it was more than evident that despite the determined effort of the teachers, it was not possible to develop a quality education that would serve everyone in equal conditions. This was demonstrated by the access limitations due to multiple factors such as digital gaps and the lack of technological devices.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGESTION

It is in this sense, teachers making use of their abilities and skills should use emotional competencies in their educational community. In addition to making use of all the resources to improve their professional performance. In this study, it was possible to conclude that there is a high positive relationship between emotional competencies and teaching practice during the reopening of Peruvian schools after the Covid-19 pandemic. When taking a separate look at the study topics, the data obtained was encouraging because most of the teachers were located at the expected level with respect to emotion regulation; In this sense, it allowed us to infer that they assumed resilient and adaptive positions in the scenario that represented the new post-pandemic normality.

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