

Pedagogical strategies implemented by early Childhood Education teachers for emotional education in early Childhood Education classrooms in the city of Talca, Chile¹

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Abstract

Emotional education is gaining ground in early childhood classrooms, but its transmission varies according to the disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge of the educators, who are still incorporating the methodology slowly. The objective is to identify pedagogical strategies used by early childhood educators for emotional education in kindergartens in the city of Talca, Chile. The methodology involves qualitative, descriptive, exploratory, non-experimental, and cross-sectional study with a phenomenological design. Data were collected using online questionnaire via Google Forms with five questions about disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge. The sample included 20 early childhood education teachers in Talca (average age 34 years, average experience 10 years; range: 24-58 years and 0.5-30 years). The results indicate that 75% see emotional education as an educational process; 25% associate it with educating, recognizing, and developing emotions; 60% consider it essential for fostering personal development (40%); 80% use group strategies. It is concluded that early childhood educators view emotional education as a pedagogical process for personal development, prioritizing group strategies.

Keywords: Emotional education; Early Childhood Education; early childhood educators; strategies.

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Estrategias pedagógicas implementadas por educadoras de Educación Infantil para la educación emocional en Educación Infantil en la ciudad de Talca, Chile

Resumen

La educación emocional está ganando terreno en las aulas de educación infantil, pero su transmisión varía según el conocimiento disciplinario y pedagógico de los educadores, quienes aún incorporan la metodología lentamente. El objetivo es identificar las estrategias pedagógicas utilizadas por los educadores de educación infantil para la educación emocional en jardines de infancia en la ciudad de Talca, Chile. El método consiste en Estudio cualitativo, descriptivo, exploratorio, no experimental y transversal con un diseño fenomenológico. El instrumento de recolección de datos fue cuestionario en línea a través de Google Forms con cinco preguntas sobre conocimiento disciplinario y pedagógico. La muestra contó con 20 docentes de educación infantil en Talca (edad promedio 34 años, experiencia promedio 10 años; rango: 24-58 años y 0.5-30 años). Los resultados indican que 75% ve la educación emocional como un proceso educativo; 25% la asocia con educar, reconocer y desarrollar emociones; 60% la considera esencial para fomentar el desarrollo personal (40%); 80% utiliza estrategias grupales. Se concluye que los educadores de la primera infancia consideran la educación emocional como un proceso pedagógico para el desarrollo personal, priorizando las estrategias grupales.

Palabras clave: Educación emocional; Educación Infantil Temprana; educadores de la primera infancia; estrategias.



Estratégias pedagógicas implementadas por educadoras de Educação Infantil para a educação emocional nas aulas de Educação Infantil na cidade de Talca, Chile

Resumo

A educação emocional ganha espaço nas salas de aula da educação infantil, mas sua transmissão varia conforme o conhecimento disciplinar e pedagógico das educadoras, que ainda incorporam a metodologia de forma lenta. O objetivo é identificar estratégias pedagógicas usadas por educadoras da educação infantil, para educação emocional em jardins de infância da cidade de Talca, Chile. O método consiste em estudo qualitativo, descritivo, exploratório, não experimental e transversal, com delineamento fenomenológico. O instrumento de coleta de dados foi um questionário online via Google Forms com cinco questões sobre conhecimento disciplinar e pedagógico. A amostra contou com 20 professoras de Educação Infantil em Talca (média de 34 anos, experiência média de 10 anos; variação: 24-58 anos e 0,5-30 anos). Os resultados indicam que 75% veem a educação emocional como processo educativo; 25% associam-na a educar, reconhecer e desenvolver emoções; 60% a consideram essencial por fomentar desenvolvimento pessoal (40%); 80% utilizam estratégias de grupo. Conclui-se que as educadoras da Educação Infantil enxergam a educação emocional como processo pedagógico para desenvolvimento pessoal, priorizando estratégias de grupo.

Palavras-chave: Educação emocional; Educação Infantil; educadoras da primeira infância; estratégias.



Introduction

Since the 21st century, emotions have become a variable of interest, a category of analysis, and an object of research. Through various studies, they have been configured in distinct fields according to sociocultural needs and the sciences involved in their study, which have established theories to explain them. Among these theories are emotional intelligence, emotional management, and emotional education (Bjerg, 2019).

Thanks to advances in cognitive psychology and neuroscience, emotions are no longer considered solely the result of cognitive processes. Furthermore, by incorporating knowledge from the social sciences and humanities, and considering the wide range of academic approaches, emotions have become a recurrent theme in knowledge production. This has contributed to determining the existence of basic emotions (physiological and expressive reactions) and their relationship with cognitive and emotional processes, as well as the cultural influence on them, which leads to their transformation or disappearance (Bjerg, 2019; Matt, 2021).

For this reason, many authors throughout history have expressed deep concern regarding the lack of interest in the emotional sphere evident in some curricular projects, as many of them focus on intellectual development while completely neglecting emotional development. According to Goleman (1995, p. 1), this is not beneficial, given that “a person with a good emotional education and a normal intelligence quotient (IQ) has a high probability of success, unlike a person with a high IQ but low emotional development.”

Based on these ideas, and focusing on Chilean education—particularly early childhood education—it can be noted that although the Curricular Framework for Early Childhood Education (*Bases Curriculares para la Educación Infantil*) (Chile, 2018) mentions the relevance of instructing and promoting emotional development in children aged 0 to 6 years, this has not been a primary factor in the practice or evaluation of most early childhood educators, possibly



due to limited knowledge of the educational strategies they utilize regarding Emotional Education.

For this reason, the present research will reveal the results obtained from a questionnaire administered to early childhood educators in the city of Talca, Chile, aiming to identify the pedagogical strategies they implemented in the Emotional Education of children belonging to their respective educational levels.

This study is justified because emotional education has gained greater relevance in recent years due to the direct connection between this variable and the teaching-learning process. Consequently, teacher training institutions are incorporating these topics into the curricula of courses responsible for general and specific pedagogical training in the field, as it offers numerous benefits for early childhood education and for educators throughout their professional development.

A study by Muñoz Zamora (2020) indicates that early childhood educators should incorporate approach and trust strategies—which belong to Emotional Education—into their teaching practices, both for children’s development and for their care and the ethics of care in relationships with others.

Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach with a descriptive, exploratory, non-experimental, and cross-sectional design, as it seeks to deepen perspectives and viewpoints, as well as to present the frequency of indicators found in the subjects’ responses, integrating and discussing them jointly to achieve a broader understanding of the studied phenomenon (Hernández Sampieri, Fernández Collado, & Baptista Lucio, 2014).

The study adopts a phenomenological approach (shared experiences, lived experiences), and the data were collected through an instrument developed by the researchers and validated by experts (Hernández Sampieri, Fernández Collado, & Baptista Lucio, 2014) in two rounds (5 experts). Following



validation, the instrument was adapted into a Google Forms survey containing five open-ended questions to facilitate data collection and simplify the participants' responses. Fifty early childhood education schools were contacted to participate in the study, resulting in a sample composed of 20 educators who signed the informed consent form (inclusion criteria). The Google Forms platform generated an Excel spreadsheet where the participants' responses were recorded.

The responses were coded according to the definition of indicators, categories, and frequency percentages for each. The categories were established taking into account the early childhood education curriculum set by the Government of Chile. The analytical technique utilized was the Quantitative Analysis of Subjective Variables (quantitative), an adaptation proposed by Simões (1994) of the Evaluative Assertion Analysis technique by Osgood, Saporta, and Nunnally, included in Bardin (1977); alongside units of meaning and categories (qualitative, phenomenological).

Results

Below, all sections of the data collection instrument will be presented, along with their respective tables, analyses, and interpretations.

Table 1 – Sample.

	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Age	34 years	24 years	58 years
Teaching Experience	10 years	0,5 years	30 years

Source: Own elaboration.



Table 2 – Meaning attributed by interviewed educators to Emotional Education

In your perspective, what does Emotional Education mean?																					
Indicators / Subjects	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	Frequency
Educational Process	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x		x	x	x	75%
Emotional Management	x					x	x				x	x									25%
Emotional Control	x	x								x		x									20%
Recognize and identify emotions		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x				x		70%
Develop emotions			x	x	x		x										x	x	x		35%
Comprehensive Development		x															x				10%
Expression of emotions			x								x			x							15%
Social/Personal Development																		x			5%

Source: Own elaboration.

According to what is shown in Table 2, the majority of educators claim to have knowledge about emotional education, as Bisquerra (2000, p. 1) defines it as “an educational process, continuous and permanent, aimed at promoting emotional development as an indispensable complement to cognitive development, with both constituting essential elements for the development of the integral personality.” Teaching it from early childhood education is fundamental, as it develops skills related to emotions so that, in the future, the child will have the necessary tools to face new challenges and obstacles in their daily life.

Based on the above, the response closest to what was mentioned by Bisquerra (2000) comes from participant No. 2: “an educational process where tools are provided so that people learn to recognize, identify, and channel their emotions, in order to develop in a comprehensive manner.” Similarly, the response from participant No. 16 indicates that, for her, emotional education is

“educating through love,” without providing additional information for analysis. Furthermore, it is observed that she is unaware of the correct definition. Therefore, it can be inferred that training work is necessary to convey knowledge about Emotional Education, as it is essential to address it in the classroom with young children, considering that these are daily situations and that emotionality is present in their daily lives.

Additionally, it is relevant to analyze that, among the specified indicators, the one that obtained the highest response rate was the educational process with 15/20 responses (75%), followed by the recognition and identification of emotions (14), while the indicator with the lowest response rate was social/personal development (1).

Finally, it is worth mentioning that emotional education in the classroom contributes to children’s comprehensive development by addressing their cognitive, social, and emotional needs—the latter usually being relegated to the background in early childhood education (¿Qué [...], 2021). Likewise, as noted by Calderón et al. (2014, p. 4): “Emotional education seeks to provide individuals with the necessary tools to know, express, and manage their own emotions and those of others, so that these do not negatively affect their lives and, on the contrary, promote personal and social well-being.”

According to observations, the pedagogical implications most used (Table 3) in early childhood classrooms are the educational process (25%), the recognition and identification of emotions (25%), and emotional development (25%). The least used are respect for and appreciation of emotions (5%) and teacher inability to manage them (5%). This last aspect is crucial and must be avoided in classrooms, as educators should have acquired the necessary tools to regulate children’s emotions, help them recognize them, and soothe them.



Table 3 – Pedagogical implications of Emotional Education in classroom teaching within Early Childhood Education

In your opinion, what are the pedagogical implications of Emotional Education in classroom teaching within Early Childhood Education?																					
Indicators / Subjects	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	Frequency
Educational Process	x							x							x			x	x		25%
Emotional Management								x	x									x			15%
Emotional Control					x				x	x										x	20%
Recognize and Identify emotions		x					x	x		x						x					25%
Develop emotions	x	x		x	x												x				25%
Comprehensive development	x														x					x	15%
Expression of emotions							x			x								x			15%
Social/personal development				x							x										10%
Respect and Valuation of Emotions		x																			5%
Provide a good emotional learning environment		x					x		x								x				20%
Teacher inability in working with emotions			x																		5%

Source: Own elaboration.

Furthermore, it is fundamental to value the emotions of each child, since, by receiving this emotional support, they will obtain numerous benefits for their learning and development. They will acquire skills to relate to their peers and those around them, learn to communicate and express their thoughts and emotions, which fosters language and autonomy. Learning to recognize their emotions also enables them to self-regulate when they arise; for instance, when feeling sadness, they can cope with it by feeling it, accepting it, and controlling it, without experiencing sadness and fear simultaneously.



Finally, it should be highlighted that the vast majority of the 20 interviewed educators incorporate emotions into their teaching practice, which is crucial because, as Calderón et al. (2014, p. 2) mention in their studies, “the lack of training in emotional education among teaching staff is evident.” For this reason, it is essential that Emotional Education be present in the pedagogical practices carried out by educators and their pedagogical teams. Likewise, it is very important that educational institutions support and understand the importance of both educators and teachers knowing how to deliver emotional education, offering programs, workshops, or training on early childhood emotional development and how to address it in the classroom and with families.

Table 4 – Importance attached by interviewed educators to working on Emotional Education, or relevance assigned to this topic in classroom teaching

In your perspective, how important is it to work on Emotional Education, or how much relevance do you give to this topic in classroom teaching?																						
Indicators / Subjects	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	Frequency	
Very important	x	x	x					x	x	x			x			x		x			45%	
Important				x																x	10%	
Essential					x		x					x		x							20%	
Tremendously						x															5%	
Relevant																			x		5%	
Foundation of Education	x																				5%	
Must be present in the educational process	x	x		x	x		x					x			x	x	x	x	x	x	60%	
Allows personal development		x				x				x	x		x		x		x	x			40%	
Allows social development		x													x						10%	
Allows understanding the surrounding world									x												5%	
Favors quality learning								x	x												10%	

Source: Own elaboration.



The interpretation of Table 4 reveals a trend among educators to consider emotional education as very important in the educational process. This suggests that they incorporate pedagogical practices focused on emotional development into their daily work, meaning they likely plan and implement learning experiences that promote children's emotional well-being. Likewise, they employ various strategies in their daily routine that also contribute to achieving and/or enhancing emotional development. This is particularly reflected in some of the responses provided by research participants, who indicated that emotional education is essential:

“It is extremely important; emotions are the foundation of education. In my teaching practice, I always take them into account when planning and evaluating classes.”

An increasing number of studies support the importance of promoting the development of emotional skills in early childhood, which has granted greater relevance and prominence to emotional education. Therefore, a planned emotional education activity and strategies that promote these skills are intentionally incorporated into the weekly daily routine [...].

These statements not only reflect the importance respondents attach to emotional education and how they promote its development through their lesson plans, but also reveal that some educators have spent time researching the subject. This point is corroborated by another research participant who mentions: *“It is very important, as studies demonstrate the importance of recognizing and validating emotions as a contribution to the rest of life [...].”*

These assertions are closely linked to what Fernández, Cabello, and Gutiérrez (2017, p. 15) expressed when highlighting that:

Currently, the study of emotions has become one of the main research objectives across various scientific fields, and especially in educational research. This growing interest has led to a large number of studies focused on evaluating their effects in diverse contexts.



Continuing with the interpretations of the previous paragraphs, it can be stated that some educators associate the importance of emotional education with personal and social development. This is possibly due to their belief that, by providing emotional education to young children, they also promote the acquisition and/or refinement of skills and abilities related to self-esteem, security, self-confidence, and relationships with peers and significant adults. This hypothesis is corroborated by the following responses from three study participants: “Emotional education is a continuous educational process that seeks to enhance the development of emotional competencies as an essential element of human development, empowering children for life and increasing their personal and social well-being.” “For me, it is a very important task, as it often lays the foundation for self-awareness, emotional self-control, and better expression, largely preventing loss of control and undesirable behaviors.” “Encouraging the expression of emotions helps build trust, strengthen emotional bonds, and facilitate meaningful learning. Without a doubt, it helps them feel more secure.”

This last opinion cited reveals that some educators who participated in this study believe in working with children’s emotions. Furthermore, it is important because it leads to more meaningful and, therefore, higher quality learning, as demonstrated both in the second part of the analysis of Table 4 and in the following response from one of the questionnaire participants: “It is very important; it helps them understand the world around them. At the same time, they understand their own world, and all of this together enriches pedagogical work, where meaningful and high-quality learning is generated through emotions.”

Both the responses indicating the relevance of emotional education in young children to foster the social and personal domain, and those highlighting the importance of teaching children about emotions to make learning more meaningful and of higher quality, are correct, given that, as mentioned by



González and Gomariz (2020), emotional education refers to the development of socio-emotional skills, which are important for personal and social adaptation.

Similarly, regarding meaningful and quality learning, the author Gallardo (2017, p. 6) associates them with:

The affection developed by teachers can serve as a possible anchor for students' affective bond with learning, motivation, and individual development; similarly, emotionally negative experiences lived within the teacher-student relationship would cause demotivation and detachment regarding learning.

The table below is important for understanding the main objective of this study, because the generated question refers to the strategies used to work on emotional education.

Table 5 - Pedagogical strategies used by the interviewed Educators within their teaching practice to enhance the development of emotional competencies in young children.

What pedagogical strategies do you use as a teacher to enhance the development of emotional competencies in Early Childhood Education?																					
Indicators/ Subjects	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	Frequency
Pedagogical Strategies																					
Individual										x									x		10%
Group		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	80%
According to material	x				x	x				x	x					x					30%
Reflection										x											5%
Collaborative learning																			x		5%
Representative play	x																				5%
Emotional Education																					
Mediation/ Negotiation	x			x				x		x	x										25%
Play about emotions			x	x								x							x		20%
Dialogue/ Verbalization			x		x		x			x	x	x						x		x	40%
Personal development		x							x					x	x	x	x		x		35%

(Continued)



(Continued)

What pedagogical strategies do you use as a teacher to enhance the development of emotional competencies in Early Childhood Education?																					
Indicators/ Subjects	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	Frequency
Emotional Education																					
Recognizing/ Identifying emotions						x		x		x					x		x		x		30%
Listening to and validating emotions				x				x										x			15%
Curricular References																					
Communication of feelings	x			x	x		x				x	x						x			35%
Storytelling/Tales		x		x			x	x				x									25%
Observed situations								x													5%
Audiovisuals		x										x									10%
Oral presentation			x																		5%
Artistic expression															x	x	x				15%

Source: Own elaboration.

To deliver Emotional Education in the classroom, it is necessary to have early childhood educators who develop strategies that allow them to adapt their interventions to young children, gradually fostering an emotional climate conducive to their development in the classroom. Therefore, educators must facilitate the learning process and help children become progressively more independent in their participation in educational experiences. Furthermore, they must plan pedagogical strategies and resources pertinent to the group of children they work with, taking into account their diverse needs, characteristics, learning paces, and prior knowledge (Calderón et al., 2014).

Now, among the research on strategies to address children's emotional education in early childhood education, one example is the emotional diagram proposed by Cardemil (2017, p. 101), which contains 7 stages: self-regulation,



attunement with the child's mental state, reflection and validation, facilitation of modulated expression, calming, guided reflection, and reinforcement.

These steps are important if a child experiences an emotional difficulty. The first step, "self-regulation," emphasizes the importance of the educator remaining calm and serene in the face of the child's distress. The second step involves empathy and connection with the child. This means that the educator approaches the child to ask how they are feeling, if they need help, and other relevant questions depending on the situation. Next, the educator must reflect on the child's emotions and validate them, encouraging them to understand what they are feeling. Finally, the educator and the team must facilitate modulated expression, helping the child express their emotions through conversation, crying, hugs, and other means. Afterwards, the child is calmed through various strategies that the educator may choose based on the child's level of understanding—such as breathing exercises, relaxation, an outdoor walk, a hug, among other techniques that can help the child calm down and return to their baseline state, thus achieving self-regulation of their emotions.

Subsequently, in the sixth stage, the educator must guide a reflection to help the child understand what happened, including the attitudes and behaviors involved. This can be done through questions, comments, or a conversation in an atmosphere of trust. Finally, the educator will reinforce any positive behavior demonstrated by the child during the emotional conflict and will verbalize said positive reinforcement so that the child learns to self-regulate in situations that cause discomfort or frustration (Cardemil, 2017).

The interviewed educators highlighted several pedagogical strategies that align with the contents described in the Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education (CCECE), specifically those communicated in the core area of Identity and Autonomy. Some of these strategies encourage children to express their emotions vocally, gesturally, and physically (such as imitating gestures) and to recognize their emotions using an emotion chart. The CCECE also mentions the verbal representation of different emotions and feelings in games, a practice



that some educators implement. They also conduct dialogue circles to discuss and speak about emotions, ensuring that everyone listens. Another strategy involves recognizing emotions in oneself and in others through dialogue or storytelling, which some interviewees utilize. They read aloud, and one of them uses a puppet where each color represents an emotion to generate dialogue and ask the children how they feel. Another strategy involves communicating emotions through the observation of images.

In turn, educators also emphasize pedagogical strategies based on verbal language, where children are expected to verbalize their emotions using clear language.

Likewise, the essence of artistic languages is also used by educators in their presentations to express emotions and provide bodily relaxation experiences.

In summary, all the pedagogical strategies mentioned by the educators are valid for responding to the emotional needs presented by children at specific times of the day. It is essential for the pedagogical team to remain attentive to any signal manifested by the child, in order to attend to them individually or in group settings.

Furthermore, according to the analysis of Table number 5, the pedagogical strategies implemented by educators in the classrooms contribute to different areas for children; the most frequently repeated indicator is group strategies (16), while the strategies least used by the interviewees—having received only one response—are: reflection, collaborative learning, representative play, observed situations, and oral presentation.

In relation to the above, it is important to consider that few educators mention reflection as an implemented strategy, given that, to understand emotions, we need to reflect and, consequently, be capable of analyzing and recognizing them. When reflecting, we question ourselves with queries such as “What am I feeling? Why do I feel this way?”, etc., thus managing to discover the event that triggered that emotion at that moment.



Table 6 - Emotional competencies targeted by the interviewed Educators for development in children, in relation to the methodological strategies used.

Regarding the previous question (Table 5), what emotional competencies can you foster for children's development in your Early Childhood classroom with the mentioned strategies?																					
Indicators/ Subjects	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	S8	S9	S10	S11	S12	S13	S14	S15	S16	S17	S18	S19	S20	Frequency
Attitude/Positive reinforcement	x											x									10%
Affectionate language	x																				5%
Gestural and bodily expressions	x	x																			10%
Recognition and identification of emotions		x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x							x	x		50%
Social development				x			x		x				x					x		x	30%
Emotion control				x					x		x		x					x	x		30%
Personal development				x				x	x		x	x	x	x					x	x	45%
Emotion management					x																5%
Emotion expression							x			x											10%
Emotional analysis															x	x	x				15%

Source: Own elaboration.

According to the results presented in Table 6, it is evident that 50% of the participants (10 out of 20) use the strategies described in Table 4 to enhance and/or promote the development of skills that allow children in the early childhood education stage to recognize and identify emotions; whereas 45% use their pedagogical strategies to work on children's personal development. Likewise, it is observed that social development and emotion control are addressed by 6 out of 20 participants (30%), and emotional analysis by only 3 out of 20 (15%).

Among the categories or indicators with the lowest percentages are emotion expression, attitude/positive reinforcement, gestural and bodily expressions, and emotion management—the first three reaching only 10% and



the fourth 5%, indicating that these skills are developed by only one or two of the twenty surveyed educators.

The primary interpretation highlights a tendency among educators to develop skills related to the recognition and identification of emotions. This can be attributed to the participants' understanding that, from an early age, human beings must be prepared to perceive and respond to various environmental stimuli. Therefore, it is advisable to provide them with the appropriate tools from the first years of life, whenever possible. Likewise, this may stem from the educators' reflection that teaching children to recognize and identify their emotions is fundamental for them to develop the capacity to feel, manage, verbalize, or express what they experience in the future. This is reflected in some of the participants' responses, who stated: "The recognition of one's own emotions based on the sensations produced by different situations, associated with specific words to enhance their expression." "(...) the identification of emotions and the actions associated with them, the ability to express emotions." "Identifying emotions and, through this identification, being able to perform actions that allow experiencing them in a natural and fluid way."

These responses are closely related to the fact that it is essential, in the first years of life, to promote awareness of one's own emotions and to name them, given that awareness of one's own emotions is the primary competency upon which subsequent competencies are built (Sevilla; Serrano; Ortega, 2016).

If we continue interpreting this first section, it can be observed that several of the subjects direct their strategies toward children's personal development, possibly because some educators believe it is necessary to start working on children's self-awareness so that they become capable of independently generating and utilizing positive emotions in the near future.

This inference is further corroborated by Sevilla, Serrano, and Ortega (2016, p. 69), who mention that: "the Early Childhood Education student must begin to develop the ability to handle emotions appropriately, possess good



coping strategies, self-generate positive emotions, and develop appropriate emotional expression.”

Regarding social development and emotional regulation skills, it is observed that perhaps few students benefit from the emotional strategies applied in the classroom. This suggests, in turn, that few educators concern themselves with creating opportunities for children to perceive others’ feelings, socialize, and manage and regulate their emotions.

This is clearly incorrect, because, as mentioned by Lafranchise et al. in Gendron (2009 cited in Marconi, 2017, p. 178), emotional competencies are: “(...) the skills and capacities related to emotions that a person needs to mobilize to deal with a constantly changing environment, consolidate their identity, adapt better, and reinforce their sense of personal efficacy and self-confidence.” Therefore, educational professionals need to develop more strategies that incorporate the reinforcement or maximization of social development and emotional regulation in children.

On the other hand, in the second part of the results from Table 6, it can be observed that very few early childhood educators apply strategies focused on emotional expression and management skills, which is not positive for children, as they are exposed to serious health repercussions; the lack of management of their own emotions and feelings, according to Soriano and Osorio (2008, p. 9), “is associated with health and behavioral problems, leading to physical and psychological distress.”

Similarly, in this section, the response percentages of the participants indicate that almost none offer children tools that promote gestural and bodily expression, nor strategies involving the development of emotional skills based on attitudes and/or positive reinforcement. This is possibly because, currently, early childhood educators may lack the necessary tools to implement these strategies in the classroom.

This statement is corroborated by Cases (2001) and Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2004) cited in Gallardo (2017, p. 7), who mention that:



Very few teacher training institutions have specific programs with emotional education content that foster in teachers the necessary skills to satisfy the current demand for emotional education from students, and research on the complex emotional world of teachers and on the emotional skills needed to face daily classroom events is insufficient.

Conclusion

Finally, in light of the evidence obtained, this study sought to corroborate whether the information and research questions posed throughout this investigation align with the responses provided by the study participants—namely, early childhood educators. To perform this comparison and reflection, it is important to remember that this research arose from the need to determine whether educators implement pedagogical strategies to work with children's emotions in early childhood education.

With a substantial sample of 20 educators (in the city of Talca, Chile, there are 50 early childhood education centers, and the sample represented 20 of these 50 centers), ranging in age from 24 to 58 years old, diversity is also reflected in teaching experience, which spans from 0.50 years (6 months) to 30 years. This enabled an understanding of the Emotional Education pedagogical strategies implemented by educators across different generations. Furthermore, the participant sample works across various early childhood education centers, including municipal, subsidized private, and private schools, making it even more representative.

Based on the responses obtained from the subjects, the results suggest that 75% of them believe that Emotional Education is an educational process, while 70% consider it to involve teaching how to recognize and identify emotions, which aligns only in certain aspects with the definition proposed by Bisquerra (2000, cited in López, 2005, p. 156), who defines Emotional Education as:

A continuous and permanent educational process aimed at enhancing emotional development as an essential complement to cognitive development, both being core elements of comprehensive personality development. To this end, it proposes the development of knowledge



and skills related to emotions in order to empower individuals to better face daily life challenges. All of this with the objective of increasing personal and social well-being.

Regarding the pedagogical implications of Emotional Education, 25% mention that they pertain to the education, recognition, and development of emotions, indicating that these are the primary reasons why they consider and implement pedagogical strategies to develop the emotional domain in children. Among the least mentioned implications or reasons are respect, the valuation of emotions, and the teacher's inability to work with them, each at 5%.

In addition, the results showed that group activities (80%) were among the most frequently used pedagogical strategies by educators. These activities included educational experiences such as the verbal representation of different emotions and feelings through games, group discussions about emotions, reading, puppetry, and image observation, among others. These activities help children recognize and express their emotions, as well as cope with complex situations.

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Note

- 1 Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence – Gemini, an artificial intelligence tool developed by Google, was used to assist in translating this article into English. The translated version was fully reviewed and adjusted by the editorial team to ensure fidelity to the original text, terminological accuracy, and compliance with the journal's editorial standards. The tool was not used to generate the article's arguments, analyses, or academic content.





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