

Correlation Between Teacher-Student Communication And Emotional Intelligence of Primary School Students Based on Positive Psychology

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Abstract. The development of emotional intelligence is significant for primary school students who are in a critical period of social and emotional development. In recent years, the integration of positive psychology and education has attracted more and more attention from the public, and teacher-student communication has always been an essential component in the education sector. In summary, the correlation between teacher-student communication under the theory of positive psychology and primary school students' emotional intelligence has research significance and value. This research collects three cases of teacher-student communication based on the three major fields of positive psychology in a school and combines the 'Emotional Intelligence Scale' (EIS) to analyze the correlation between teacher-student communication and pupils' emotional intelligence. The results show that teacher-student communication based on the three major fields of positive psychology promotes the four dimensions of primary school students' emotional perception, self-emotional regulation, regulation of others' emotions, and use of emotions. Primary school teachers are recommended to adopt this method for teacher-student communication.

1 Introduction

Positive psychology is a discipline that studies positive qualities such as human development potential and virtue. It was first proposed by Maslow and has played an important role in psychology, medicine, sociology, and other fields in recent years [1]. B.L. Fredrick proposed that positive emotions could enhance people's abilities. Snyder believed that positive psychology could use effective experimental and measurement methods to improve ordinary people's lives [2,3]. Its research significance in education should be considered. Professor Kaiping Peng said in the book "Children's Character" that the proper use of positive psychology could improve children's emotional strength, resilience, self-control, and so on [4]. Among them, the emotional force was at the beginning of the article, and the importance could be seen. The "Education 2030 Action Framework" adopted by UNESCO in 2015 also emphasized that education should focus on and cultivate children's ability to identify and manage emotions [5]. Therefore, it is significant to develop individual emotional intelligence, especially to pay attention to the emotional intelligence development of primary school students in the critical period of social and emotional development, to improve the comprehensive quality of primary school students.

Emotional intelligence is an essential ability for individuals to process emotions subjectively. Petrides believed that people's emotional intelligence was related to their perception of their emotional ability. The better people understand, regulate, and express emotions, the more they can adapt to the environment and remain positive [6]. At

present, China's school education has invested less in the cultivation of students' emotional intelligence, especially in the practice of teacher-student communication based on positive psychology. Pengchao Chen proposed that the current teacher-student communication ignores students' positive emotions and lacks the cultivation of students' positive personalities [7]. Liting Fu also said that teachers' educational concept of solving students' problems has been unable to meet the training needs of applied talents in the new era [8]. Therefore, the case study in this area has a certain value.

Based on the case study method, the researcher took three fifth-grade students with apparent problems in emotional management in a school in Shenzhen as the research objects, summarized the three major fields of positive psychology-positive emotional experience, positive personality traits, and positive organizational system to form communication logic and comprehensively used the literature and observational methods as auxiliary methods. In the past year of school time, the researcher communicated with three objects, observed their behaviors in the process, and clarified the changes in their emotional intelligence through the 'Emotional Intelligence Scale' (EIS) filled out by objects to verify the promotion effect of teacher-student communication based on positive psychology on the emotional intelligence of primary school students. This study aims to enrich the relevant content of emotional intelligence education, provide direction for positive communication between teachers and students, and provide practical and powerful methods for improving the emotional intelligence of primary school students.

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2 Background of case

The research objects of this paper are from a for-profit private school in Shenzhen, which provides integrated education from Pre-K to Grade 12. The primary school is from Grade 1 to Grade 5, with about 25 students in each class. Each class in the primary school is assigned with a full-time head teacher to accompany the student to grow. The family conditions of the students in this school are excellent. Most students are knowledgeable and open-minded, so their thoughts are more independent and open. Parents generally pay more attention to the education of students, but because of busy work and other reasons, the length of time to accompany children is uneven. After students enter the higher grades in primary school, the ignorance of adolescence and the increase of academic pressure lead to emotional problems one after another. The researcher is the head teacher of one Grade 5 class.

3 Research object description

During class management, the researcher found that some students had obvious emotional problems, so three of them were chosen as the objects of the case study. The study period was from November 2022 to June 2023 (about six months after removing the intermediate holidays). The three students' general information are as follows:

3.1 Object A information

Male, 11 years old, Grade 5 student, average grade. His father is strict, and his mother is often not at home but is very concerned about the child. A is a positive and serious child in a normal emotional state. Still, once something does not meet his psychological expectations, he will be emotionally out of control, concentrating on uncontrollable shouting and arguing with classmates. Reminders and suggestions from others are forcibly refuted.

3.2 Object B information

Male, 10 years old, Grade 5 student. His achievements are top-notch. His parents attach great importance to their children's education and hold a respectful attitude towards their children. B's pursuit of rules is almost fanatical. He will insult the participants if things do not meet their psychological expectations. Even if the object is a teacher, he will not let go. And he is not willing to admit his mistakes.

3.3 Object C information

Female, 11 years old, 5 grade student, good grades. Her family management is dominated by her strict mother. C often holds a negative attitude towards the surrounding things. In class activities, she will directly and unfriendly put forward her own needs regardless of others' ideas, causing student dissatisfaction. However, she finds it difficult to

recognize her mistakes and often uses crying to solve problems.

4 Case process description

In order to help three objects better control their emotions, develop emotional intelligence, and actively maintain their relationship with others while obtaining their own well-being, the researcher explored ways in teacher-student communication during students' growth, drawing on the successful experiences of previous researchers, and based on positive psychology content, conducted themed teacher-student communication with three objects in November, March, and May, respectively, as follows: psychological suggestion, feeling of happiness, personal dominance.

In addition to the three thematic communications mentioned above, the researcher actively communicated with objects based on the following positive psychology three major fields when problems arise.

4.1 Positive emotional experience

Positive emotional experiences are emotions that feel joy, happiness, and satisfaction, such as joy, love, gratitude, and so on. The researcher hopes that objects can feel more positive emotions, understand, and explain problems from a positive perspective, and have positive emotions toward the past, present, and future. At this level, the researcher should guide objects to be grateful for the past, passionate about the present, and longing for the future in teacher-student communication.

4.2 Positive personality traits

At this level, the researcher mainly stimulates objects' positive self-characteristics, such as optimism, strength, enthusiasm, etc. And constantly strengthen objects' self-identity and internal pride through continuous affirmation of objects in teacher-student communication.

4.3 Positive organizational system

In school, the class is the most closely organizational system related to students. The class environment is a significant place that infiltrates objects' thoughts and behaviors. At this level, the researcher should establish a positive class environment and continuously strengthen the role of the class in teacher-student communication, providing positive environmental support to objects.

4.4 Emotional situations

During the six months of observation, three objects experienced big emotional problems. Both emotional problems (processing time greater than 10 minutes) and the researcher's intervention were shown below:

4.4.1 Object A's emotional problems

Object A had major emotional problems eight times in total. The situations were as follows:

1. In music class, Object A was dissatisfied because of the seat problem. His face turned red, and his veins popped out. He left the classroom angrily and cried loudly, "Who the hell is a music teacher? If you don't know how to teach, then don't teach. That's my position; why should I give it to others and respect others?" The researcher encouraged Object A to start with "positive experiences" and thought about what positive experiences he had gained in music class, such as the freedom and joy of dancing.

2. Object A erupted in PE class due to the failure of competition, with angry eyes and almost took action. "You cheat... how this my business?... Idiots"; The researcher asked Object A to reflect on a positive class culture and a united class atmosphere.

3. In English class, Object A tore up his test papers and cried uncontrollably due to unsatisfactory grades. The researcher communicated from the perspective of personality traits, affirming Object A's past contributions to learning and recognizing Object A's resilient qualities.

4. Object A was not satisfied with the teacher's referee and made a fight with the PE teacher, saying, "It's not fair at all, why is this... stupid judgment, speechless." From a future perspective, the teacher worked with Object A to design fair competition rules for the public, making Object A full of longing and expectations for future PE classes.

5. Object A had an emotional fluctuation when his homework was not handed in, but there was already some restraint. "Can you please let it go..." Object A silently rubbed the homework paper. The researcher and Object A reminisced about the situation when he achieved good grades, encouraging him to believe in himself, and Object A also discussed emotional control methods with the researcher.

6. Due to note-taking issues in history class, Object A scolded his desk mate and said, "It's clear that you took my notes, but you lied..." At this point, Object A's tone of voice was already quite gentle. The researcher affirmed Object A's progress and stated his advantages, such as kindness and a sense of responsibility.

7. During recess time, Object A had an argument with first-grade students due to a football issue, saying, "We're very uncomfortable when the first-grade students took our ball... they didn't apologize, and first graders were able to express their feelings and put forward their needs; The researcher continued to praise Object A for his personality traits and helped him solve problems.

8. There was a conflict between Object A and the security guard when leaving school. Object A said, "I just want to come in..." The researcher guided Object A to shift focus, pay attention to the flowers, trees, and amusement facilities on campus, and experience the small beauty of life everywhere.

4.4.2 Object B's emotional problems

Object B had major emotional problems six times in total. The situations were as follows:

1. In science class, Object B had a misunderstanding with the Science teacher, with his head down and an angry expression. He secretly cursed and said, "What kind of thing is he? I did not do anything wrong... I hate him...he is so annoying". He smashed all the materials. The researcher asked Object B to recall when the science teacher helped him solve problems and the joy of doing experiments in science class.

2. In Chinese class, Object B had some issues with the Chinese teacher. Object B was angry and left the seat, crying wrongly, "She didn't see me raise my hand. Blind lady... there must be some problems in her brain." The researcher guided Object B to think more actively about problems, considering the teacher's intentions for the benefit and looking at the overall situation at a higher level.

3. In English class, Object B lost control of his emotions due to the score in the group competition, saying, "This score is not fair... English teacher doesn't call us... disgraceful", disrupting the classroom order. The researcher took the entire class as the starting point and explored the core of fairness with Object B, as well as the happiness brought to the whole class through a stable and friendly class environment.

4. In the English activity class, Object B encountered conflicts due to the division of labor among group members, and then he burst out, "They are too annoying; I don't want to work with them anymore." Under the guidance of the researcher, Object B was able to realize the irrationality of his speaking style quickly, and the researcher took advantage of the situation to encourage his fairness and sense of responsibility.

5. In science class, Object B talked around and was criticized, then he got dissatisfied. "I'm not the only one who talks..." The researcher praised Object B's passion and pursuit of learning, encouraging him to see the positive side of the science teacher's criticism, such as helping him improve.

6. During a break, Object B had conflicts with other class teachers due to activity issues. "Why is it just our problem... You have to apologize if you're wrong." Object B consciously expressed his needs with a calmer tone and attitude. The researcher affirmed his progress and raised expectations of treating others with kindness.

4.4.3 Object C's emotional problems

Object C had major emotional problems five times in total. The situations were as follows:

1. On the field trip, Object C had a disagreement with other classmates. She shouted, "I am going to sleep now; why are you guys still playing the song?... shut up." The researcher encouraged Object C to enjoy the present and worked with her to envision what can be done, using the present time well.

2. Object C had an unpleasant experience with her classmates in Chinese class due to transmitting negative energy. Object C shouted, "Oh, it is really boring... the class is dull... Oh!" The researcher discussed the joy of literature

with Object C and encouraged her to read more interesting Chinese books, allowing her to see the positive side of learning Chinese.

3. In math class, Object C cried because of homework problems and said, "My mom will definitely scold me... why am I that bad..." Object C can bravely express her troubles, which is a good start. The researcher affirmed Object C's continuous efforts and guided her to admit her strengths and to believe in future possibilities. The researcher also communicated with Object C's mom, hoping to give her a positive sense of security from her mother's perspective.

4. Object C had a conflict with her classmates on the chat platform by sending many meaningless emoticons. After the classmates raised the issue, Object C declared, "Everyone sent it, why blame me?" Object C's expression this time was quite calm. The researcher affirmed Object C's humor and encouraged her to use her wit on other occasions, then guided her to treat her classmates' suggestions with kindness.

5. During the art class grouping, Object C collapsed because no one was willing to be in the same group with her. Object C muttered, "no one wants to be friends with me, they all exclude me." Due to Object C's long-standing behavior, her classmates kept her distant. The researcher told Object C that "loneliness is also a sense of happiness," encouraging her to be nice to herself, broaden her horizons, and see positive aspects of life.

5 Case analysis and results

The researcher recorded the frequency of individual communication with the objects in 6 months (December and February were not counted due to holidays) (See Table 1) and the duration of each communication (See Figure 1). Before each teacher-student communication, the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) compiled by Watson et al. was used to visually evaluate the emotional state of students (See Figure 2). The scale was verified by Huang Li et al. It has high reliability and validity and is suitable for Chinese [9,10]. PANAS has 20 questions, with 10 questions for positive and 10 for negative emotional expression, using a five-point scale scoring method.

Table 1. Communication frequency (unit : times)

	Nov.	Jan.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.
Object A	3	2	1	1	1	0
Object B	2	2	1	0	1	0
Object C	1	2	1	1	0	0

It can be seen from Table 1 that the frequency of teacher-student communication between the researcher and objects is decreasing month by month, indicating that the frequency of emotional outbursts of research objects is falling, and they have been able to control themselves gradually.

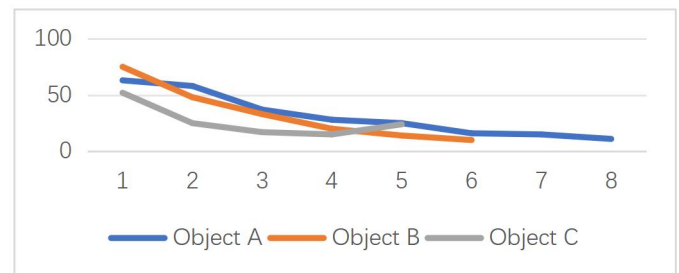


Fig 1. Communication duration (unit : minutes)

The first point to note is the massive decrease in the communication duration from Figure 1. There were two reasons: firstly, after the previous communication, the objects were conscious of thinking about problems with a positive attitude when encountering new situations. They knew how to perceive emotions and exert positive emotions, thus preferring to control their own bad emotions. Secondly, when sometimes the emotions were still difficult to control, they could quickly calm down during teacher-student communication without starting from the beginning. Object C broke out at a particular time because of the accumulation of some interpersonal problems, so the fifth communication time was longer than the first four times.

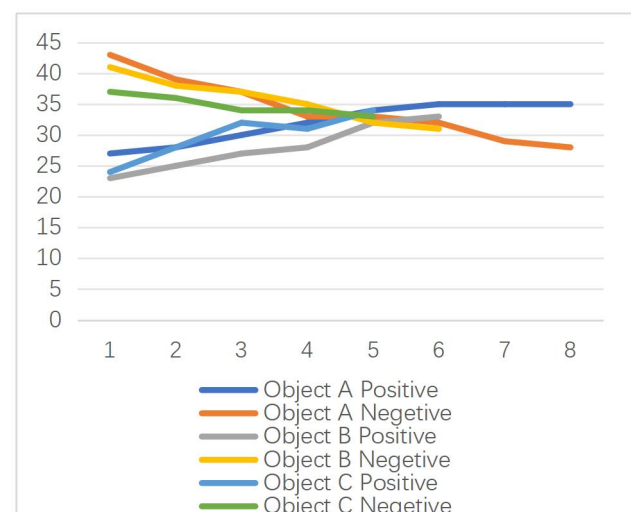


Fig 2. Positive Affect and Negative Affect Points

Figure 2 shows that the positive affect scores of Object A, B, and C gradually increase while the negative affect scores gradually decrease. In the meantime, the positive scores gradually exceed the negative scores. The above results indicate that students' internal emotions have steadily shifted towards positivity rather than sustained negativity when facing new emotional problems.

At the end of the semester, the researcher also communicated with the teachers and parents of the three objects. Among them, English teachers, Science teachers, and Chinese teachers highly evaluated the emotional changes of the three objects. For example, "Object A is making rapid progress in his emotional control, he used to yell in class and is much more rational now." "Object C has more of a smile on her face than she did at the beginning of

the school year, and her whole state of being is so much more positive, and I am so happy for her." "Object B is much more settled, and adjusting his mood that fast is not easy for him." After communicating with the researcher and learning about positive psychology communication methods, the teachers said they would also try the methods in the future. In terms of parents, Object A's parents stated in an email that "Object A's dad is too strict with him at home, which has caused him to be in a bad mood when encountering things... Thank you for the hard work this year. Your active communication and patient guidance have greatly changed his emotions... He doesn't have much conflict with us at home." At the parent's meeting, Object B's parents expressed that "Object B's emotional issues have always been a concern, especially when it comes to getting along with teachers... He keeps telling me he really enjoys your communication methods. He feels very relaxed and at ease, and his emotions have greatly improved. I also feel that communication with him is much smoother, and he is becoming more sensible..." Object C's mom also expressed at the parents' meeting, "Thank you for the continuous attention and encouragement to Object C. She is no longer that aggressive or negative anymore. I have not even noticed that my upbringing style has significantly impacted her emotions, and I will gradually adjust my own emotions."

In order to better evaluate the development of students' emotional intelligence, the researcher needs an emotional scale to analyze and sort out various emotional intelligence scales, among which the more common ones are the MEIS scale (Multibranch Emotional Intelligence Scale) and the EIS scale (Emotional Intelligence Scale). The MEIS scale was developed by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso in 1998 based on Mayer and Salovey's emotional intelligence model. In 1999, Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso published a revised version of the scale to assess people's ability to perceive, identify, understand, and regulate emotions [11]. However, after the empirical test of Rong Cao and Xiaojun Wang, the internal consistency reliability (α) coefficient of MEIS is low, and the validity is also obviously insufficient [12]. Therefore, MEIS does not have the function of effectively measuring emotional intelligence. The 'Emotional Intelligence Scale' (EIS) compiled by Schutte et al. includes four dimensions: emotional perception, self-emotional regulation, regulation of others' emotions, and use of emotions, 33 items, using a five-point scale scoring method, a total of 165 points. Lei Xu said in the paper that EIS, translated and revised by Professor Caikang Wang, had high reliability and validity. It is an emotional intelligence assessment scale suitable for adolescents [13]. According to the research, this paper uses EIS for analysis.

After the end of teacher-student communication, the researcher analyzed the differences in the EIS filled out by three objects before and after communication. Through the EIS, the researcher noticed the improvement of Object A's emotional intelligence is the most obvious, with a pre-test score of 75, a post-test score of 130, and an increase of 55 points. Among them, the emotional perception significantly jumped from 18 points to 40 points, the self-emotional regulation increased from 17 points to 30 points, the

emotional regulation of others increased from 18 points to 28 points, and the use of emotions also went up from 22 points to 32 points. The pre-test score of Object B was 83 points, and the post-test score dramatically rose to 124 points, which increased by 41 points. Among them, emotional perception increased from 28 points to 40 points, self-emotional regulation went up from 17 points to 28 points, regulation of others' emotions changed from 17 points to 25 points, and the use of emotions increased from 21 points to 31 points. The pre-test score of Object C was 105 points, and the post-test score is 122 points, an increase of 17 points. Among them, the emotional perception jumped from 32 points to 40 points, the self-emotional regulation increased from 24 points to 28 points, and the regulation of others' emotions and the use of emotions also went up from 24,25 points to 26,28 points, respectively.

6 Conclusion

In summary, it can be concluded that teacher-student communication based on the three major fields of positive psychology has a certain role in promoting the emotional intelligence of primary school students. The emotional intelligence of students has been improved in teacher-student communication. Students have improved in the four dimensions of emotional perception: self-emotional regulation, regulation of others' emotions, and use of emotions. Among them, the dimension of emotional perception has the most noticeable improvement, followed by self-emotional regulation. By combining students' daily performances and feedback from others, students can better perceive their and others' emotions, control them better when emotions arise, and learn to use positive emotions to influence their choices and judgments.

Therefore, the researcher proposes the following suggestions to teachers, especially primary school teachers:

1. Teachers should understand and accept positive psychology and believe in the positive impact that positive psychology brings to the students. Learn systematic knowledge of positive psychology, such as watching Harvard University's Course on Positive Psychology; Read books related to positive psychology, such as "Positive Psychology for Educators" and "Methods of Happiness." Teachers should form a preliminary understanding of positive psychology in their hearts and become learners of positive psychology.

2. Teachers should strengthen communication with students, especially when encountering emotional problems. Teachers also need to use positive psychology to construct communication methods, such as shifting from only focusing on students' grades to concentrating on their overall development needs. Teachers should constantly try to identify shortcomings in each attempt to become positive psychology practitioners.

3. Teachers should establish a good classroom environment, allowing a positive atmosphere to permeate every corner of the class. This behavior will subtly affect the mindset and behavior of students, making the entire environment a practice ground for positive psychology.

It should be noted that the starting point of this study is to assist students who have difficulties in emotional perception and control to improve their emotional intelligence. In fact, every student is an independent individual with a different personality, and their externalized behaviors also vary. Although communication with each child has commonalities, there are also individual parts. In view of the different emotional problems shown by each child, even if the theory of positive psychology supports them, different communication measures are still needed. Therefore, the cost of teacher-student communication is high, resulting in a small number of objects in this study. In future research, students with emotional problems can be classified into dimensions first, and then communication methods can be designed based on the three major fields of positive psychology. This way can enable more teacher-student communication practices, increase research samples, and improve the reliability and validity of the research.

In addition, different researchers have different classifications for the dimensions of the Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS), such as three dimensions and six dimensions. In future research, other dimensions can be selected to evaluate students' emotional intelligence, enriching experimental results.

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