
RESEARCH ARTICLE

Analysis of Emotional Intelligence in the Context of University Students

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ABSTRACT

Given the teacher's pivotal role in providing next generation professional, it is also not undeniable that teaching is a profession of high occupational stress. Literature revealed that teachers with high emotional intelligence undermined work-related challenges, and the same goes for the students. Thus, this study measures the emotional intelligence (EI) of the students (pre-service education teachers). Findings suggest that students have high emotional intelligence. Based on these results, academic institutions must focus on developing programs that enable the emotional intelligence of the students. Moreover, this study confirmed the predictive importance of EI to academic achievements. In fact, literature pointed out that a person with a high EI tends to become more productive. Hence, EI programs must be included in the curriculum. The future research agenda includes possible consideration of the mediating factors that affect the emotional intelligence of the students.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Intelligence, intrapersonal and interpersonal awareness, intrapersonal and interpersonal management.

ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The concept of emotional intelligence has evolved over time from a new scientific construct to a popular fad, to a mainstay concept in leadership & team development (Keefer et al., 2018) and job performance & leadership ability (Shiple et al., 2010). Students' emotional health, academic progress, and emotional adjustment in school have all received increasing attention in recent years because of the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) (Martins et al., 2010; Costa & Faria, 2015). In the scientific world, it is highly regarded, and the general public understands it, making it a rare notion (Ackley, 2016). Emotional intelligence, according to Sharon & Grinberg (2018), is a kind of intelligence that represents a broad ability to identify and control emotions in oneself and others. Gershon & Pellitteri (2018) found that efficient social-emotional functioning not only enables optimum development trajectories in the personal and interpersonal domains but also extends to the academic realm. Even though Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been a hot issue in psychology and education over the last several decades (Viguer et al., 2017), there has been much debate on how EI relates to students' academic performance (Parker et al., 2018). According to research, there is a significant connection between emotional intelligence and educational performance (Wajdi et al., 2018). Emotional intelligence, according to Fernandez et al. (2012), has a direct impact on students' learning strategies and academic performance (Ahmed et al., 2019).

Multiple studies have revealed a link between Emotional Intelligence (EI) as well as general intelligence (GI) and academic and professional achievement as well as an increase in an individual's cognitive performance (Romanelli & Smith, 2006; Chaudhry & Usman, 2011; Amalu, 2018). Students and adults with greater levels of emotional intelligence are seen by their peers as more prosocial, less hostile, and less conflictual in their interpersonal relationships (Bracket et al., 2011). As a result of their increased social skills and connections, their cognitive and intellectual growth might improve, ultimately leading to higher academic achievement (Schutte et al., 2001). As described by Meggas et al. (2019), Gubtersdorfer & Golubeva (2018, 2019), Drigas & Papoutsis (2018, 2018), and Meggas et al. (2019), EI is defined as the capacity to recognize, access, and produce emotions for the aim of

aiding understanding (Bracket & Salovey, 2006). Understanding and controlling emotions are two of the four abilities outlined in this model of EI, along with perceiving and analyzing emotions. An investigation on the relationship between emotional intelligence and undergraduate students' drive for academic success, undertaken by Priyanka Datta (2015), also came up with conclusive evidence that the two are inextricably linked. As a result, poor academic performance is attributed by Oyinloye (2005) to a lack of emotional intelligence among pupils. In his opinion, a student's ability to adjust to academic expectations is hindered if they lack emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence may be lacking in these students, and they may not be able to fulfill personal objectives such as good academic success (Nwadinigwe & Azuka-Obieke, 2012). Academic achievement, as assessed by traditional intelligence tests or other types of standardized testing, is clearly the fundamental goal of education, and schools cannot overlook or disregard the development of emotional domains and other personal aspects that contribute to the success of students (Nelson and Low, 2003).

Given the importance of Emotional intelligence (EI) in the academic literature (Keefer et al., 2018; Salavera Usan & Teruel, 2019; Mendoza, 2018; Zhoc et al., 2018; Suson et al., 2020), relevant results, as stated by Mirrahimi et al. (2011), EI helps teachers become more aware of their own emotions and those of others, allowing them to better understand their own and their students'. Educators will be better able to recognize their own feelings and thoughts, as well as their own strengths and weaknesses, as a result of this (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005; Poligrates & Suson, 2019). There is evidence that teacher emotional intelligence is vital for student adjustment and learning, but little is known about the emotional skills of teachers and pre-service teachers (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012). The research on teachers' emotional intelligence, on the other hand, is scarce (e.g., Corcoran & Tormey, 2012a, b; Byron, 2001; Kremenitzer, Lopes, Grewal, & Salovey, 2004). In addition, the absence of EI programs to help students succeed in school is problematic. Before using EI to enhance academic performance, it is necessary to have a deeper understanding of students' emotional intelligence.

Attaining quality education, especially for pre-service education teachers, has become a considerable challenge in the education system, particularly in higher education. In line with this, at Cebu Technological University, particularly in the Main Campus, the College of Education continually looks at the goal of producing quality graduates. This means that the College aims to equip its learners with the competencies to be at par with others in a more competitive environment. However, as observed, the College is not taking great advantage of improving learners' capacity to become more productive through the development of their emotional intelligence. Instead, it focuses on developing the learners' cognitive and psychomotor abilities as associated with their academic achievement. Securing productive and enlightened students is highly important in producing globally competitive graduates; hence, this study measures the emotional intelligence (EI) of the students (pre-service education teachers). Moreover, the analyses developed a policy insight for the institution, particularly for the beneficiary (pre-service teachers).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Emotional Intelligence

Extensive empirical research demonstrates the importance of cognitive capacity and personality in academic achievement (O'Connor & Paunonen, 2007). A recent study has started to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement (Mohzan et al., 2013). To present, this field of study has shown equivocal results. Some researchers have observed a connection between emotional intelligence and academic achievement (Gharetepeh et al., 2015; Akbarilakeh et al., 2018), whereas others have observed a weaker correlation (Codier et al., 2014). Among those who do observe a correlation, cognitive ability, and personality are frequently found to be stronger predictors of academic performance than emotional intelligence. Concerning at-risk groups and the transition to college, EI principles have shown some potential benefits, although research in both of these areas is sparse. For instance, Petrides, Frederickson, and Furnham (2004) discovered that persons with below-average intellect improve academically if they had higher emotional intelligence scores (however, no benefit was observed for individuals with above average intelligence). Additionally, some evidence indicates that the effective transition from high school to college is associated with greater emotional intelligence test results (Parker et al., 2006). Emotional intelligence and academic achievement research is in its beginnings and should be viewed with caution.

2.2 Emotional Intelligence and Pre-service Teachers

Given the teacher's central role in student learning and accomplishment and in preparing children and adolescents for life and their obligations as adults, teaching is acknowledged as one of the most essential professions in modern society (e.g., McIntyre & Battle, 1998; Murphy, Delli, & Edwards, 2004). Through EI training, programs have been devised to handle stress (Hansen, Gardner, & Stough, 2007). More general applications of EI principles have been used to improve emotional management and regulation, such as mindfulness-based EI training (Ciarrochi, Blackledge, Bilich, & Bayliss, 2007), a theory-based practical training of EI skills (Kornacki & Caruso, 2010), and an EI development course within a variation of the Leadership Executive Assessment and Development program (Boyatzis, 2007; see also Cherniss & Adler, 2000). Researchers have been effective in enhancing EI abilities in a variety of populations, ranging from UK managers (Slaski & Cartwright, 2003) to at-risk college students (Parker, Hogan,

Eastabrook, Oke, & Wood, 2006). In addition, research shows that by enhancing EI, resilience, stress management, and approaches to bad circumstances may be enhanced. EI training is also successful in enhancing self-reported EI, organizational commitment, and work satisfaction, as well as lowering occupational stress, according to Gardner (2006). The EI training curriculum developed by Hansen and colleagues (2007) has been adopted for both instructors and students (Hansen, 2010; "Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom"). The former, the original Australian program, was effective in boosting the participants' EI, decreasing their occupational stress, and enhancing their psychological and physical wellness, according to an assessment (Gardner, 2005). According to research conducted with Canadian student teachers, EI scores increased at the end of the program and one month after completion (Poole & Saklofske, 2009).

3. Materials and Methods

3.1 Respondents Profile

This research was conducted at the Cebu Technological University-Main Campus, specifically in the College of Education, which is situated at the corner of MJ. Cuenco and R. Palma Street in Cebu City. The respondents of this study were first-year students of the College of Education on the Main Campus of Cebu Technological University enrolled in the academic year 2015-2016. These respondents came from three undergraduate programs: the Bachelor of Elementary Education (49.2%), Bachelor of Secondary Education (48.4%), and Bachelor in Technical Teacher Education (2.4%).

3.2 Instrument and Data Gathering Procedure

The measurement of the constructs, Intrapersonal Awareness (12 items), Intrapersonal Management (24 items), Interpersonal Awareness (12 items), and Interpersonal Management (24 items) were adopted questionnaire also known as the Emotional Competence Inventory developed by Goleman, Boyatzis, Hay and Mcber (2000). The survey instrument measures all the constructs utilizing the 5-point Likert scale. Measurement items of all constructs ranged from "Very Low" to "Very High" for the student's emotional intelligence. Descriptive statistics such as means, frequency counts, and percentages were used to present the gathered data. While weighted mean and t-test were utilized for the significant difference in the students' emotional intelligence.

4. Results and Discussions

Table 1. Intrapersonal Awareness

Constructs	n=250	Mean	SD	VD
Emotional Awareness	n=250	3.84	0.17	High
Accurate Self-Assessment	n=250	3.71	0.32	High
Self-Confidence	n=250	3.72	0.41	High
Total		3.75		High

Table 1 presents a summary of the student's intrapersonal awareness in terms of emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, and self-confidence. Based on the data, emotional awareness was rated a high level of EI with a weighted mean of 3.84 (sd=0.17), followed by self-confidence with a weighted mean of 3.72 (sd=0.41), and lastly, emotional awareness was rated as the least among the other constructs of intrapersonal awareness with a weighted mean of 3.71 (sd=0.32). Overall, the student's intrapersonal awareness got a final weighted mean of 3.75, which is considered high emotional intelligence.

Table 2. Intrapersonal Management

Constructs	n=250	Mean	SD	VD
Emotional Self-Control	n=250	3.43	0.25	High
Transparency	n=250	3.74	0.13	High
Adaptability	n=250	3.78	0.21	High
Achievement	n=250	3.99	0.15	High
Initiative	n=250	3.35	0.24	Average
Optimism	n=250	4.21	0.13	Very High
Total		3.75		High

Table 2 presents a summary of the student's Intrapersonal Awareness in terms of emotional management, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism. Data shows that optimism was rated as a very high EI with a weighted mean of 4.21 (sd=0.13), while initiative was rated as an average EI with a weighted mean of 3.35 (0.24). Overall, the student's intrapersonal management got a final weighted mean of 3.75, which is considered high emotional intelligence.

Table 3. Interpersonal Awareness

Constructs	n=250	Mean	SD	VD
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Empathy	n=250	3.88	0.18	High
Organizational Awareness	n=250	3.57	0.18	High
Service Orientation	n=250	3.65	0.15	High
Total		3.70		High

Table 3 presents a summary of the student’s interpersonal awareness in terms of empathy, organizational awareness, and service orientation. Based on the data, empathy was rated a high level of EI with a weighted mean of 3.88 (sd=0.18), followed by service orientation with a weighted mean of 3.65 (sd=0.15) and lastly, organizational awareness was rated as the least among the other constructs of intrapersonal awareness with a weighted mean of 3.57 (sd=0.18). Overall, the student’s interpersonal awareness got a final weighted mean of 3.70, which is considered high emotional intelligence.

Table 4. Interpersonal Management

Constructs	n=250	Mean	SD	VD
Developing Others	n=250	3.69	0.15	High
Inspirational Leadership	n=250	3.89	0.85	High
Change Catalyst	n=250	3.65	0.89	High
Influence		3.68	0.11	High
Conflict Management		3.25	0.32	Average
Teamwork and Collaboration		4.09	0.28	High
Total		3.71		High

Table 4 presents a summary of the students' interpersonal management skills in terms of developing others, inspirational leadership, change catalysts, influence, conflict management, and teamwork and collaboration. Data shows that teamwork and collaboration were rated a very high EI with a weighted mean of 4.09 (sd=0.28), while conflict management was rated with an average EI with a weighted mean of 3.25 (0.32). Overall, the student’s interpersonal management got a final weighted mean of 3.71, which is considered to be high emotional intelligence.

Table 5. Test of Relationship Among the Four Domains of Emotional Intelligence

		Intrapersonal Awareness	Intrapersonal Management	Interpersonal Awareness	Interpersonal Management
Intrapersonal Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.697**	.579**	.538**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	250	250	238	237
Intrapersonal Management	Pearson Correlation	.697**	1	.720**	.637**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	250	250	238	237
Interpersonal Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.579**	.720**	1	.680**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	238	238	238	237
Interpersonal Management	Pearson Correlation	.538**	.637**	.680**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	237	237	237	237

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows the results of the Pearson R correlation (2-tailed) set at 0.01 level of significance. When Intrapersonal Awareness is correlated with Intrapersonal Management, it yielded an r-value of .697. When correlated with Interpersonal Awareness, it yielded an r-value of .579, and when correlated with Interpersonal Management, it yielded an r-value of .538, which is obviously higher than the critical t-value set at 0.01 level of significance. This means that the null hypothesis was rejected.

This study aimed to ascertain the relationship between students’ emotional intelligence using the 4 domains of EI. With reference to the analysis above, the findings show that students have a high level of emotional intelligence. This finding is supported by a recent study by Kant (2019), which focuses on university students. His study also shows that students have high emotional

intelligence and indicates emotions are significant predictors of anyone's success. Moreover, Statistical findings show that when Intrapersonal Management was correlated with Intrapersonal Awareness, Interpersonal Awareness, and Interpersonal Management, it yielded the r-value of .697, .720, and .637, respectively. This also shows that these results are higher compared to the critical t-value set at 0.01 level of significance. Moving on, when Interpersonal Awareness was correlated with Intrapersonal Awareness, Intrapersonal Management, and Interpersonal Management, it yielded the r-value of .579, .720, and .680 respectively. This again shows that the r-values are higher compared to the critical t-value set at 0.01 level of significance. Finally, when Interpersonal Management was correlated with Intrapersonal Awareness, Intrapersonal Management, and Interpersonal Awareness, it yielded the r-value of .538, .637, and .680 respectively. This also shows that these results are higher compared to the critical t-value set at 0.01 level of significance. All in all, it is observable that there is a significantly high positive correlation with $r \geq +0.5$ for all pairwise correlations. Bar-On [4] opined that emotional intelligence is an array of non-cognitive and cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's own ability to succeed in life, whether it is personal or professional. It also helps to cope with the surrounding environment so that one can live in harmony and satisfaction. According to Cooper and Sawaf's (1998) research, emotional intelligence is the capacity to perceive, comprehend, and successfully utilize a range of emotions as a source of human endeavors, knowledge, relationships, and influence on others (Cooper and Sawaf, 1998). Thus, this study concluded that there is strong evidence that EI has a stronger relationship with students' (pre-service teachers) performance.

5. Conclusion

Despite the popularity of emotional intelligence in the literature, understanding EI in the context of the university level, particularly to the students (i.e., pre-service teachers), is limited. Thus, this study is important in determining students' EI. Based on the findings, emotional intelligence demands emotional balance and maturity in understanding self and others, as reflected in the statistical result showing a significant relationship among the four domains. Applying it to enhance interpersonal relationships and be effective is also needed. Moreover, in the case of the College of Education of the Cebu Technological University-Main Campus, learners are highly selected and have qualified the necessary standard for emotional balance in order to become better and effective teachers in the future, though sustaining the balance is another factor to take a look at.

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