

The Role of Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy of Teachers

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Abstract

Background and Objective: the role of education and teachers is undeniable in human societies. The theories of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy assume that beliefs of individuals on their skills and abilities optimally influence their performance and enable them to take the best decision on the most difficult conditions and unpredictable situations. The purpose of this study was to examine the role of EI and self-efficacy of teachers. **Materials and Methods:** this study used a descriptive-correlational methodology. The samples included 345 teachers who were selected by proportional-to-size stratified sampling by Cochran's formula. Bar-On's EQ-i and Schwartz's GSE were used to evaluate teachers. **Results:** data analysis and statistical calculations revealed a significant and positive correlation between EI and self-efficacy of teachers. On the other hand, EI and self-efficacy of teachers considerably influence students. **Conclusion:** as the findings suggest that, positive teacher-student interactions reduce the symptoms of disorders and behavioral problems of students. Primary school teaching is the most important profession in the world; thus, teaching is a great responsibility which should not be considered as a mere job.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, positive teacher-student interactions

1. Introduction

Schools are of great importance as a critical social system. Since a significant portion of the educational activities happens in schools, teachers as the main factors are involved in the development of children. Teachers play a key role in academic success of children, as parents do. One of the most important factors of success is how teachers deal with students on the first days of school and their familiarity with multiple factors used to improve student behavior. In order to achieve its goals, the educational system requires efficient, committed, caring and hardworking teachers (Bakhshi-Soureshjani, 2012). Besides high intelligence quotient, there are other factors involved in professional success; these factors include emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. By controlling themselves and their emotions, teachers can understand the students better and communicate with them wisely and skillfully.

1.1 Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to a series of abilities, capabilities and skills related to perception, understanding, reasoning and management of emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). EI involves the recognition of emotions and employment of those emotions for adoption of right decisions in life and in human relationships, understanding of self and others, self-control and domination over immediate demands, empathy with others and positive employment of emotions (Akbarzadeh, 2004; Vidyarthi et al., 2014; Karimi et al., 2014). EI refers to the ability of effective management of mood and impulse control at the time of frustration and disappointment resulting from failure (Goleman, 1995). EI refers to the ability to get along with people, inhibit emotions in human relations and encourage or direct others (Goleman, 1995). Furthermore, EI allows significant relationships in workplace and facilitates the exchange of positive feelings by coordinating emotions (Goleman, 1995).

1.2 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is one of the key variables of Bandura's social cognitive theory and one of the most important components of success in the field of positive psychology. Self-efficacy is an important factor for successful performance. Self-efficacy ensures one's ability to control thoughts, feelings and activities. Self-efficacy

involves one’s beliefs about his capabilities (Baron et al., 2016; Halper & Vancouver, 2016). Self-efficacy is a productive power by which cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral skills are organized effectively to achieve different goals. Therefore, self-efficacy influences the consequence of actions and situations which will happen in the future (Bandura, 1997; Baron et al., 2016). Thus, effective performance requires both skills and belief in the ability to perform those skills (Bandura, 1997).

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The purpose of theoretical framework is to review the theories of scientists and researchers and to examine the relationship between EI and self-efficacy of teachers. One of the very important factors in the success of teachers is how they deal with students and familiarity with multiple factors. In the teaching profession, teachers need to establish mental and human relations based on EI by their self-efficacy. Teachers need high EI and positive self-efficacy to succeed in their profession and establish effective, constructive and supportive relations involving all social and emotional aspects of healthy relationships. It will be costly if teachers ignore supportive good relations with students. The conceptual model as shown in Figure 1 and Table 1 is developed based on the hypothesis.

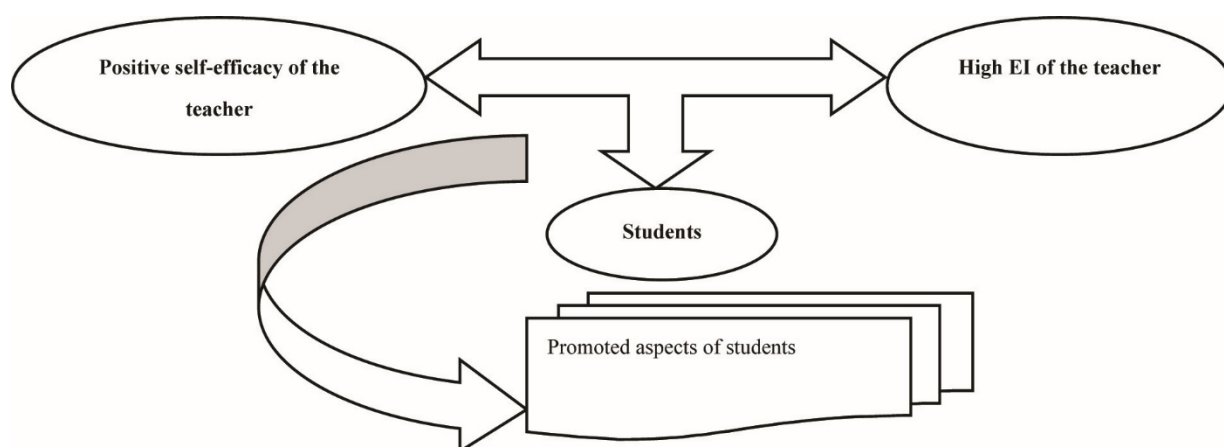


Figure 1. Conceptual model

Table 1. Analytical model

Axes	Variable	Parameter	Goal
Teacher	High EI	To provide supportive atmosphere	Improve performance
Student	Positive self-efficacy	to develop abilities of students	of students

2. Materials and Methods

This study is an applied research using descriptive correlational methodology to collect data. Considering the fact that the objective of this study is practical application of knowledge, an applied methodology was used. Descriptive research includes methods whose purpose is to describe the conditions or phenomena studied. This study collected data on the effect of EI and its relationship with self-efficacy of teachers in Tehran.

2.1 Population and Sample

The studied population included 3,433 primary school teachers (3,239 female and 194 male) during 2013-2014. The sample size (345) was determined by Cochran formula. For sampling, schools existing in Tehran were first distributed in 5 categories based on 19 districts where schools were located. The first category included northeastern schools (districts 1, 3, 4 and 8); second category included northwestern schools (districts 2, 5, 9 and 10); the third category included central schools (districts 6, 7, 11 and 12); the fourth category included southeast schools (districts 13, 14 and 15); the fifth category included southwestern schools (districts 16, 17, 18 and 19) (Table 2).

Table 2. Number of teachers selected from different districts by Cochran formula

Category	Geography	Districts	NO.
First	Northeast	Eight (25)-Four (37)-Three (14)-one (20)	96
Second	Northwest	Ten (11)-Nine (14)-five (34)-two (26)	85
Third	Central	Twelve (14)-Eleven (11)-seven (11)-six (9)	45
Fourth	Southeast	Fifteen (28)-Fourteen (21)-Thirteen (10)	59
Fifth	Southwest	Nineteen (16)-eighteen (20)-Seventeen (12)-Sixteen (12)	60

Table 3. The demographics of teachers

Educational Degree	Experience		Age		Sex						
	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.					
Diploma	13	47	<5	17	60	<30	24	84	Female	94	324
Associate	17	58	5-10	42	145	30-35	42	144	Male	6	20
BA	61	210	10-15	22	76	35-40	19	67			
MA	9	30	15-20	6	20	40-45	8	26			
			>20	13	44	45-50	2	7			
						>50	5	17			

2.2 Materials

Bar-On's Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) was used to determine EI of teachers. This inventory includes 90 questions in 15 items. EQ-i was standardized by Samouei (2003) in Iran. He reported the Cronbach's alpha (0.93). In the present study, the reported reliability (0.92) was determined by split-half method; the Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown correlation coefficient were equal to 1 and 0.92, respectively. In this study, validity was determined by construct validity. The inventory is scored on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 to 5 (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree). The minimum, average and maximum scores are 90, 45 and 270, respectively. Schwartz's General Self-Efficacy (GSE) scale was used to measure self-efficacy of teachers. GSE was developed by Schwartz and Jerusalem (1995). GSE contains 10 questions which measure self-efficacy based on attitude of the subjects. Subjects respond to the questions on a 4-point Likert scale (strongly disagree=1 and strongly agree=4). The scale has 10 multiple-choice questions ranging from 1 to 4. The minimum and maximum scores are 10 and 40, respectively. In this study, reliability (0.73) was reported by split-half method. Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown coefficient were equal to 1 and 0.74, respectively.

The hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between EI and self-efficacy of teachers.

3. Results

The mean of EI and self-efficacy of teachers was measured to examine the hypothesis.

Table 4. Comparison of EI and self-efficacy of teachers

Category	District	EI		Self-efficacy	
		Maximum	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum
First	One	424	395	39	37
	Three	408	397	39	37
	Four	420	394	38	37
	Eight	439	402	40	37
Second	Two	444	395	40	37
	Five	441	390	40	35
	Nine	443	410	40	37
	Ten	440	395	40	37
Third	Six	437	395	40	36
	Seven	449	392	40	36
	Eleven	433	390	39	35
	Twelve	399	392	37	36
Fourth	Thirteen	409	390	37	35
	Fourteen	429	390	39	35
	Fifteen	415	391	38	36
Fifth	Sixteen	409	390	37	35
	Seventeen	419	390	38	35
	Eighteen	410	391	38	36
	Nineteen	438	391	40	36

Then, descriptive statistics were obtained for EI and self-efficacy of teachers in general (Table 5).

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of EI and self-efficacy of teachers in general

Descriptive statistics			
	Mean	Standard deviation	Number
EI	405.42	14.295	345
Efficacy	37.2551	1.14825	345

To examine the relationship between EI and self-efficacy, distribution of two variables was plotted in a scatterplot (Figure 2) and a linear plot (Figure 3).

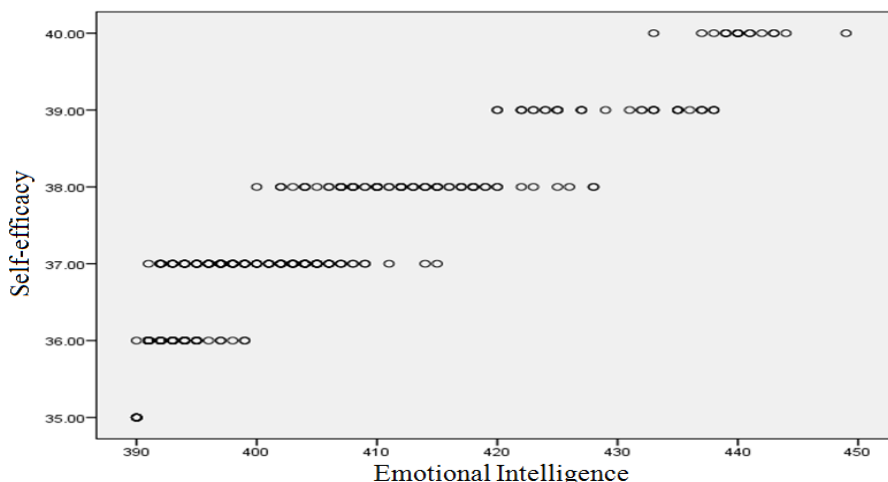


Figure 2. Distribution of EI and self-efficacy

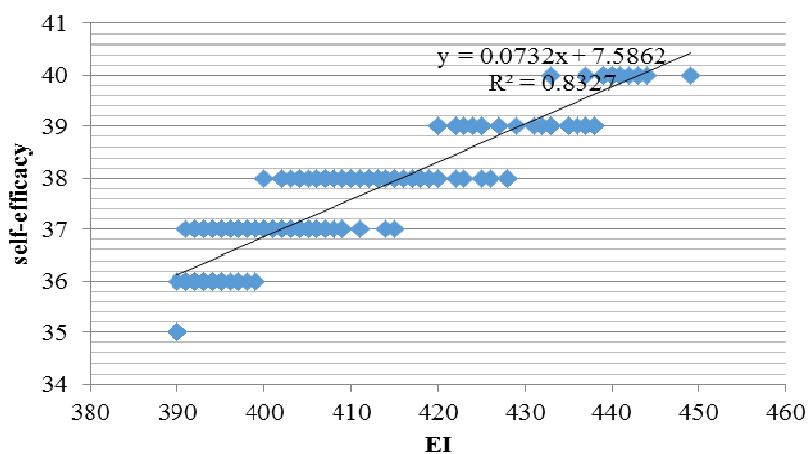


Figure 3. Distribution and linear relationship between EI and self-efficacy

Positive sign of correlation coefficient gives important information about the slope of the regression line (the best straight line which passes through the scatterplot). The positive correlation coefficient means that the slope of the regression line extends from bottom left to top right.

By calculating the correlation between EI and self-efficacy of teachers, it can be concluded that there is a very high correlation between variables. Because of the strong positive relationship between the two variables, the covariance value is positive (Table 6).

Table 6. Correlation between EI and self-efficacy of teachers

Correlations			
		EI	Self-efficacy
EI	Pearson coefficient	1	0.914**
	Sig.		0.000
	Sum of multiplicands	70298.058	5161.014
	Covariance	204.355	15.003
	Number	345	345
Self-efficacy	Pearson coefficient	0.914**	1
	Sig.	0.000	
	Sum of multiplicands	5161.014	453.554
	Covariance	15.003	1.318
	Number	345	345

** Significant correlation in 0.01.

3.1 Calculation of Regression or Regression Line Equation

Table 7 reports the regression coefficient, coefficient of determination (R²), adjusted R² and standard deviation of errors. R² indicates the extent to which variations in the dependent variable are influenced by the independent variable and other factors. R² varies from 0 and 1; here, R²=0.83. According to R², there is a high correlation between EI and self-efficacy. Standard deviation of errors represents the distribution of points around the regression line; the regression model will be more reliable when standard deviation is less than the dependent variable. Table 8 lists the results of ANOVA, which evaluates the overall accuracy of regression equation, residual values and the predicted values. In this table, F-value is obtained by dividing the variance explained by the regression line on the variance unexplained by the regression line. Considering sig=0 which is <0.05, the overall accuracy of the model is confirmed. Table 9 shows the coefficients of the regression equation and their significance.

Table 7. Regression coefficient, R² and standard deviation

Model 1	Coefficient of correlation	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Standard error of estimation and standard deviation
1	0.914a	0.835	0.835	0.46652

Table 8. ANOVA

Model	Sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	Mean of squares	F-value	Sig.
Regression	378.902	1	378.902	1740.930	0.000b
Residual	74.652	343	0.218		
Total	453.554	344			

Table 9. Coefficients of regression equation and their significance

Sig.	T	Standardized coefficients		Non-standardized coefficients		Model
		Beta		The estimated standard deviation	Beta	
0.000	10.494			0.714	7.491	Constant
0.000	41.724	0.914		0.003	0.073	EI

4. Discussion

This study showed that the teaching profession requires a high EI to be effective in personal and professional success. According to the results, the EI of 345 teachers varied from 390 at minimum to 449 at maximum (mean = 405.42) and self-efficacy of these teachers varied from 35 at minimum to 40 at maximum (mean = 37). Higher self-efficacy is associated with higher efficiency. High EI of the teachers can play a key role in the communication with students in first days of school. Therefore, higher EI is associated with higher self-efficacy and vice versa. This is consistent with Beykzad (2012), Jafari-malek (2012), Ahadi et al. (2009), Padashi (2009), Chesnut and Cullen (2014), Jha and Singh (2012), Yazic (2011), Samuel Salami (2007) and (2010), Rathi and Rastogi (2008), Defabio and Palazzeschi (2008), Chan (2008), Huang (2007), Penrose et al. (2007). The results indicate a significant relationship between EI and self-efficacy of teachers. This is consistent with Soleimani and Hoveyda (2009), Aghdami-Baher et al. (2009). The results indicate a positive relationship between EI and self-efficacy of teachers, which is not consistent with existing literature. These findings also support many previous studies on the relationship between EI and some outputs of obvious external behavior including self-effectiveness, performance self-efficacy and productivity. Moreover, findings are consistent with Jerusalem and Klein Hessling (1997). These studies emphasized the effects of EI on communication skills and ethical behaviors which underlie interpersonal relationships. By definition, the increased control on emotions leads to realization; proper realization leads to better ways to deal with realities, which provides the context for optimal performance. In this case, feedbacks will be positive whereby confidence will be improved. Consistent with cognitive theories of Bandura, this will form belief system in one's abilities and improves self-efficacy.

5. Conclusion

The results show a significant relationship between EI and self-efficacy of teachers. EI involves a series of interconnected skills for accurate perception, assessment and expression of emotions, access to feelings to facilitate thinking, the ability to understand emotions and emotional knowledge as well as the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and rational growth. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people think, how they deal with problems, decide and behave. Emotional skills play a critical role in working life of people, particularly teachers. These skills can considerably influence their success and generally education system, because schools are the bridges between home and society and play the most important role in the transmission of values of society to families. Primary school is the first social experience of children. Teachers are the second most important factor, following family, to form the characteristics of children in different aspects and reduce or eliminate behavioral problems.

6. Limitations

For teachers, a large part of professional success depends on emotional skills. Now, there are academic interests in these skills for managers, employees, entrepreneurs and learners; however, this has been neglected in the Iranian education system.

This study was conducted in Tehran; caution is required when generalizing the results to other cultural and geographic areas.

7. Remarks

Leaders of the education system are recommended to consider in-service courses on EI training for both novice and experienced teachers to deal with unseen situations which require higher emotional adjustment more reasonably and rationally.

The Department of Education is recommended to promote self-efficacy of teachers by providing available targets, replacing unsuccessful experiences by successful experiences and improving confidence.

In addition to improving the ability to identify and manage emotions, training courses emphasize on understanding and predicting the emotions.

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