

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND INSTRUCTOR PERFORMANCE IN HO CHI MINH CITY UNIVERSITY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (HUFLIT), VIETNAM

Tran Thi Vinh NGUYEN
Graduate School of Education,
Assumption University of Thailand

Abstract. Emotional intelligence represents the combination of heart and mind, which has been determined as an indispensable activator and enhancer of intellectual prowess (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). Many studies have concluded that IQ is a necessary condition but emotional intelligence is a sufficient condition to make a performance star at work (Goleman, 2001). This research aimed to investigate if emotional intelligence really helps HUFLIT instructors perform at their best. EQ Map (Q-Metrics, 1997) was employed to measure emotional intelligence of instructors in four levels: optimal, proficient, vulnerable, and caution. Besides determining the relationship between emotional intelligence and instructor performance, the research indicated the differences of emotional intelligence relative to selected demographic factors. The findings were discussed based on Vietnam's cultural and social perspectives. Some recommendations were given for emotional intelligence and instructor performance improvement as well as for further research relating to the topic.

Keywords. Emotional intelligence, instructor performance, HUFLIT instructors, Vietnamese higher education, Vietnamese culture

Introduction

In the past hundred years, academic intelligence and technical rationality have been considered as crucial factors for success in personal and professional life. As a result, education has been built on a much heralded mindset of logic and analysis. It has supplied society perfect appearing people with high intelligence quotients (IQ) and achievements, but not real people (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). The development of emotional intelligence has caused the intelligence quotient (IQ) no longer to be considered as the core value behind human ability. The belief that success of people at work is mainly due to professional knowledge and skills related to IQ has become less prominent since the concept of emotional intelligence became popular and increasingly prevalent as the best predictor of people's success. In many studies, emotional intelligence has been found to be a predictor of life satisfaction, outstanding performance at work, healthy psychological adaptation, positive interactions with peers and family (Stys & Brown, 2004).

The success of people at work is evaluated through their professional performance. According to popular opinion, and workplace testimonials, emotional intelligence has been shown to have great effect on job performance. There is a consensus that university tasks run on brain power. But to think well for lasting success, instructors must learn to compete with every aspect of their intelligence. Moreover, the latest neurological evidence indicates that emotion is the indispensable "fuel" for the brain's higher reasoning powers (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). Common cores of personal and social abilities have definitely proved to be the key ingredients of people's success. So, it must be believed that achievements of instructors in their professional performance contributively lead to university effectiveness.

Goleman (1998) stated that people now are being judged by a new yardstick of how well they handle themselves and each other. Psychologists consider this new yardstick as an instrument to measure the level of intelligence in feeling, understanding, controlling and expressing human emotion in the most positive ways.

The study was conducted to investigate the relationship of emotional intelligence and instructor performance. The study sought to show administrators, policymakers, as well as instructors how to plan appropriate methods to develop emotional intelligence for improving instructor performance. With imperative requirements of educational improvement stipulated in recent legal documents in education, conducting research in emotional intelligence was considered an important

contribution to achievement of the posted objectives in Vietnam's Government Resolution on Substantial and Comprehensive Renewal of Vietnam's Tertiary Education in the 2006 - 2020 Periods. The researcher also aims to open this field of study in HUFLIT, and to contribute ideas to HUFLIT management so that study of this issue in Vietnam will be enhanced.

The researcher applied the EQ Map (Q-Metrics, 1997) as the guideline for this study. The EQ Map is the instrument to measure many core dimensions of emotional intelligence. It is designed to help individuals assess their personal EQ levels and enhance their performance in the workplace. In this research, three major dimensions which make up the emotional intelligence of a person; namely emotional literacy, EQ competencies, and EQ values and beliefs were employed to measure emotional intelligence of HUFLIT instructors.

There still have not been any official criteria or standards to assess university instructors in Vietnam. For instructor performance, this study applied the modified conceptual model of performance standards of Vietnam's university instructors by Nguyen, Griffin & Nguyen (2006). This model is a combination of different theories in associating the basis of educational statutes and legal documents of Vietnam, namely Vietnam's Educational Law (2005), the Charter of Vietnam's Universities (2003), the Government Resolution on Substantial and Comprehensive Renewal of Vietnam's Tertiary Education in the 2006 - 2020 Period (2005). The model considered social and cultural conditions and characteristics of the educational system in Vietnam. Accordingly, performance of instructors will be assessed based on their professional knowledge, professional skills, professionalism, and professional ethics.

Related Literature

Centuries ago, Aristotle said, "Everyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way – that is not easy." This saying reveals two important aspects of emotion: management of one's emotions and expression of emotions in the most appropriate manner. Anger control does not mean never getting angry, but people should know how to show it in an effective way and not harm their relationships. Most people tend to not have control over their actions when they are in emotional situation. So, it is very important to learn how to express feelings so that others can understand the meaning of one's behavior with positive perception and then instead of hurting a relationship, it helps to reinforce rapport.

In popular perception, Thorndike (1920) was considered as the first to identify the conception of emotional intelligence. He coined the term social intelligence as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relations" (Thorndike, 1920, p.228). He also noted that interpersonal effectiveness was of vital importance for success in many fields. "The best mechanic in a factory may fail as a foreman for lack of social intelligence" (Thorndike, 1920, p.229).

Models of Emotional Intelligence

There is a wide body of research on emotional intelligence. Psychologists have used disparate approaches to discover emotional intelligence. The theory of emotional intelligence is synthesized into ability model and mixed model.

- *Ability model* defines emotional intelligence as a set of mental abilities and makes claims about the importance of emotional information and the potential uses of reasoning well with that information. Representatives of this model are Mayer and Salovey (1997) with four-branch model of emotional intelligence.
- *Mixed model* is more popularly oriented and mixes mental abilities with personality attributes such as persistence, zeal, and optimism. Goleman (2001), Cooper & Sawaf (1997) and Bar-on (1997) are representatives for this model. They expanded the meaning of emotional intelligence by explicitly mixing the ability to understand and process emotion with other diverse parts of personality or skills, hence creating mixed approaches to emotional intelligence.

Classifications of emotional intelligence models create a basis to develop an instrument to measure emotional intelligence. Mixed models use self-reports and multi-rater assessment to measure individuals' emotional quotient and ability models require task-based assessment procedure.

EQ Map

The EQ Map is an extensively researched, norm-tested and statistically reliable instrument that was developed in 1996 by Orioli, working in collaboration with Cooper. The EQ Map is a multidimensional guide that can help one to discover many facets that make up one's personal intelligence and its relationship to one's performance, creativity, and success.

The factors assessed in an EQ Map are directly tied to one's ability to stay healthy under pressure, develop trusting relationships; creatively sense and pursue opportunities for one's future. Divided into five dimensions with twenty scales, the EQ Map focuses on:

- *Current environment:* Life pressures and satisfactions
- *Emotional literacy:* Emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, and emotional awareness of others
- *EQ competencies:* Intentionally, creativity, resilience, interpersonal connections, and constructive discontent
- *EQ values and beliefs:* Outlook, compassion, intuition, trust radius, personal power, and integrated self
- *EQ outcomes:* General health, quality of life, relationship quotient, and optimal performance.

According to Orioli (2000), three major sections in EQ Map which make up emotional intelligence of a person are emotional literacy, EQ competencies, and EQ values and beliefs. Other sections set context (current environment) and represent the impact of EQ on several areas of a person's life (outcomes).

Emotional Intelligence and Working

When discussing emotional intelligence in relation to work, psychologists often compare it with the effects of IQ. IQ and EQ are relatively independent from but complement each other. IQ is more stable than EQ but high EQ creates favorable conditions to develop IQ. In reality, all intellectual actions of people relate to emotion because emotion fosters cognitive activities which then implicate the causation of actions. The roles of IQ and EQ have been understood popularly by famous slogan "IQ gets you hired, but emotional intelligence gets you promoted" (Gibbs, 1995). Cooper and Sawaf (1997) also stated that with a high IQ one can become a whiz at the daily routine, but with a high emotional intelligence he or she can thrive during times of change and uncertainty.

Psychologists do not deny the important role of IQ when combined with EQ. Studies have proved that both EQ and IQ significantly affect job performance. They suggested that data establishing the relative contribution of EQ and IQ should be balanced properly in hiring and promotion decisions. Goleman (2001) stated that IQ is a more powerful predictor than emotional intelligence of individuals' career success because it sorts people before they embark on career, determining which fields or professions they can enter. However, when studies looked within a job or profession to find out which individual become star performer, emotional intelligence was proved a more powerful predictor of success than IQ. Having enough cognitive intelligence to hold a given job does not by itself predict whether one will be a star performer or rise to management or leadership positions in her or his field. So, selection of employees solely based on academic intelligence and working expertise and ignoring emotional intelligence, often leads to poor choices that can be disastrous for an organization.

Goleman (1998) conducted research on EI-based competencies with the data collected from several hundred organizations and concluded that emotional competencies were twice as prevalent among distinguishing competencies as were technical skills and purely cognitive abilities combined. For leadership positions, 85% of their competencies were in emotional intelligence domains. Dulewicz and Higgs (1999) compared the contributions of EQ and IQ to job performance by assessing 58 general managers in the United Kingdom and Ireland in three domains of ability: emotional skill, intellectual aptitude and managerial competency. They found that emotional intelligence accounted for 36% of variance in organizational advancement whereas IQ accounted for 27% and the managerial quotient was 16%. The findings could lead to a conclusion that emotional intelligence is slightly more important to career advancement than IQ.

Instructor Performance

In general, instructor performance is defined as the capacity of an instructor to accomplish the work assigned. It is his or her competence to get things done. In university, teaching performance is considered as bottom line of instructors. It refers to the quality and quantity of task accomplishments by an instructor or group of instructors at work. It is a cornerstone of productivity and has great contribution to achievements of university. Viswesvaran & Ones (2000) generated a relatively general

view of profession performance as “scalable actions, behavior and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to organization goals.”

Vietnam is still in the process of compilation and promulgation of standards and criteria for teachers and their professional operation. Presently, assessment of university instructor performance is still based on teachers’ duties and responsibilities stipulated in Vietnam’s Educational Law (2005), University Education Charter (2003), and The Government Resolution on Substantial and Comprehensive Renewal of Vietnam's Tertiary Education in the 2006 - 2020 Period (2005). Criteria for teacher performance evaluation are considered based on multiple roles teachers play in the changing society as well as the essential, context bound. It also reflects the knowledge, skills and understanding of the requirements of teaching and learning in new contexts, as well as professionalism in higher education. These criteria are also the compromise between Vietnam’s cultural factors and the world’s common values. Combining three key criteria include aspired knowledge, skills, and values consistent with Vietnam’s social, cultural characteristics and educational laws, Nguyen, Griffin & Nguyen (2006) generated a conceptual model of performance standards for Vietnamese university instructors based on four models: The 1984 Texas Education Agency Appraisal Model; Indiana State University Model (1999); OECD 2005 England’s standard; and Vietnam’s Primary Teachers Standards.

Research Methodology

Based on the theoretical sampling size by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size of this research was 201 from population of 404. The questionnaire used to collect data was comprised of three parts: demographic information, self-report emotional intelligence test and job performance self-evaluation.

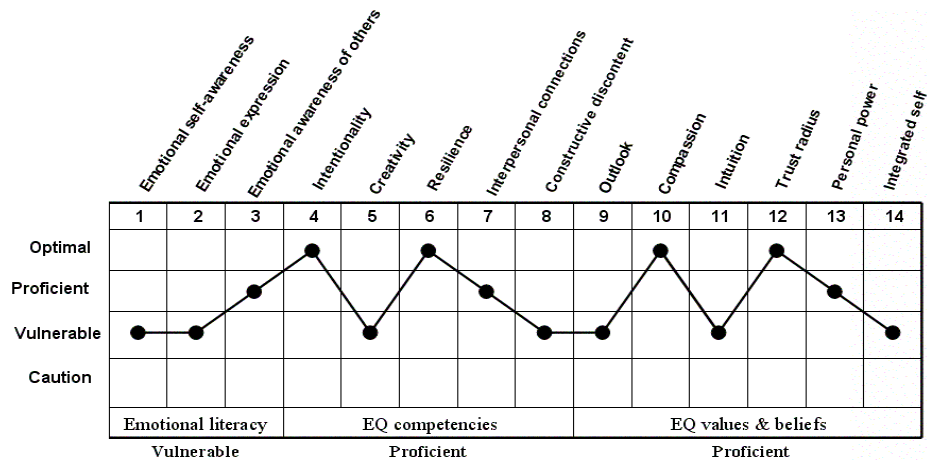
Female counted for 55.6%, male: 44.4%. Married instructors were 51% and single instructors were 49%. Age, 30 to 40 years: 36.9%; less than 30 years: 36.4%; over 40 years: 26.8%. Working experience, 5 to 15 years: 40.4%; less than 5 years: 37.4 %; over 15 years: 22.2 %.

The reliability of the research instrument was determined from a pilot study in 30 instructors of Van Lang University located on Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam. Cronbach’s Alpha computed the reliability coefficient of 0.96 for emotional intelligence and 0.97 for instructor performance.

Findings

HUFLIT instructors were overall proficient in emotional intelligence. For each emotional intelligence dimension, they were vulnerable in emotional literacy, and proficient in EQ competency and EQ values and beliefs. Regarding each emotional intelligence facet, HUFLIT instructors were optimal in intentionality, resilience, compassion, and trust radius; proficient in emotional awareness of others, interpersonal connections, and personal power; and vulnerable in emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, creativity, outlook, constructive discontent, intuition and integrated self. HUFLIT instructors were not cautionary in any facet.

The levels of emotional intelligence of HUFLIT instructors were mapped as follows:



HUFLIT instructors overall performed at a high level. They especially showed very high performance in professional ethics and scoring high in all remaining dimensions including professional knowledge, professional skills and professionalism.

Pearson’s Correlation Coefficients statistic showed the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and HUFLIT instructor performance at .01 level of significance ($r = .64, p < .01$). The correlation between all three emotional dimensions and instructor performance were positive and statistically significant: emotional literacy ($r = .55, p < .01$), EQ competencies ($r = .55, p < .01$), EQ values and beliefs ($r = .56, p < .01$).

At the .05 level of significance, t-test statistical analysis showed a difference of emotional intelligence between male and female instructors, with males scoring slightly higher than females. The results also indicated that single and married instructors were different from each other in emotional intelligence, with married instructors more emotionally intelligent than single instructors.

F-test one-way ANOVA and Post Hoc Multiple Comparisons showed a difference among instructors from different age groups in emotional literacy and intentionality. Instructors from different working experience groups were found different in emotional literacy, creativity, and intuition.

Discussion

Being emotionally smart has become a crucial factor that enables people to improve their performance at work. According to Kravitz and Schubert (2004), developing emotional smart can help people develop relationships at school and social settings plus avoid wasting time and energy on negative emotions, managing emotions and communicating intelligently as well as increasing flexibility, enthusiasm, and teamwork.

From IBM’s research, the Power Distance Index (PDI) value of Vietnam is 70 (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). This high score indicates Vietnam is a large-power-distance country. Together with Confucian-based culture, in one way or another, it has resulted in the emotional distance between instructors and their administrators. That traditional obedience seems to cause instructors not to be creative, intuitive, good in their outlooks, and vulnerable in emotional expression and constructive discontent. Additionally, Vietnam is a collectivist country (individualism index: 20) where people are cohesive in-groups, have close ties with family and community, responsible for each other, avoid direct confrontations. That can explain why HUFLIT instructors were at a proficient level in interpersonal connections and compassion. Moreover, Confucianism helped Vietnam to be at a high level of long-term orientation (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) and taught Vietnamese to be persistent. So, HUFLIT instructors were supposed to be optimal in intentionality and resilience.

According to Goleman (1995), family life is the first school for emotional learning. Being busy with different responsibilities would help married instructors learn more skills to deal with situations at workplace and in social settings. Besides, the more time of interaction and ongoing relationships also help instructors develop themselves in all aspects of life if they know how to take advantage of their own opportunities.

The policy called “Doi Moi” (1986) has resulted in many achievements in education. Effective teaching and learning methods as well as educational administration have been studied and applied. In addition, the development of information and communications technology gives instructors more opportunities to improve their teaching (Pham & Fry, 2002). So, high level of professional

performance of HUFLIT instructors were a satisfactory result of changing aspects of Vietnamese society in education and from greater efforts of HUFLIT's pedagogic community.

Teaching profession is a noble career. Instructors have a special status in society and spiritual aspects of Vietnamese life. They must be a good example and model for students to learn and shape their personal characteristics (Vietnamese Educational Laws, 2005). The result of very high performance that HUFLIT instructors represented in professional ethics was consistent with previous studies and with the viewpoints of many scientists. It was supposed that intelligence could lead people to act and behave more morally and ethically.

Recommendations

Getting instructors to perform at their best is very important for any university administration. Since the research found the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and instructor performance, it is necessary to give instructors support and assistance for richer understanding of their emotional life in order to help them achieve their goals in personal and professional life.

For application

Although HUFLIT instructors were found proficient in overall emotional intelligence, the mean score is still low in the range of criteria. They are still strongly recommended to improve their emotional intelligence, especially in the dimension of emotional literacy and the emotional intelligence facets: creativity, constructive discontent, intuition and integrated self because of the vulnerability level. The university should provide instructors with programs and activities such as training courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences in emotional intelligence. They also should be offered opportunities to participate in activities such as cultural, musical, sport, and artistic events to enhance their spiritual life, mental and human relations skills.

Instructors should motivate themselves and take the initiative such as being willing to take responsibilities above and beyond their stated tasks, especially during the difficult times of crisis and change. They are necessary to keep on-going professional development in accordance with the needs of students and society. They need to be lifelong learners to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date. Researching is a very important task parallel with lecturing operation that any effective instructor has to accomplish. The findings of this study determined the research skills of instructors were still moderate in comparison with other dimensions of performance. Therefore, instructors need to improve their research methodology by attending training courses as well as actively participate and share knowledge in academic workshops, seminars, and conferences both in country and abroad.

Research from the power distance index allows one to conclude that employee expressed a preference for a consultative style of decision-making. Therefore, it is necessary to apply a sharing leadership in university administration. For example, instructors should be given more opportunities to be involved in decision-making, especially for the problems or matters relating to their performance.

For further research

Emotional intelligence has been determined for years as an important factor in making people successful in life. However, the significant amount of controversy surrounding the emotional construct supports the need for further research (Stys and Brown, 2004). Some further study should be conducted to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and other aspects such as leadership styles, leadership qualities, and job satisfaction. It would be meaningful to find out if there is any relationship between emotional intelligence and intelligence quotient and compare the effects of those intelligences to instructor performance.

Although some research has found women are higher in emotional intelligence than men, other studies have found no significant differences between genders. This research showed negligible difference between male and female instructors. More research is required in this regard. It is also meaningful to compare emotional intelligence and instructor performance of private universities and public universities.

Self-report is advantageous to determine the levels of instructor performance. However, an assessment by administrators, peers, and students is very important for full investigation of performance. Additionally, the difference of cultures and social contexts may make inappropriate, in some aspects, the process of investigating emotional intelligence. Therefore, Asian norms should be developed for conducting research relating to emotional intelligence in Asia.

Since many studies have concluded the positive relationship of emotional intelligence and working performance, it is necessary to investigate the effect of emotional intelligence components and facets in the prediction of instructor performance. Continuing with the finding of a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and instructor performance, it would be meaningful to determine the approaches and methods to improve emotional intelligence of instructors such as team-building, emotional intelligence training application, performance feedback, and motivation.

Conclusion

The cultural and social perspectives may affect findings in research. Study on emotional intelligence has not been popular in Vietnam, so a highly reliable measurement in other country may not agree upon in Vietnamese context. Applying proper models and instrumentation need a careful concern of the society's characteristics. Vietnam's education needs more emphases on emotional intelligence at all levels and aspects. For further study on this domain, it would be necessary to apply an instrument appropriate with Vietnamese norms and cultural traditions.

The research supports the importance of emotional intelligence in work settings and personal life as well. It is consistent with previous studies that the more emotionally intelligent people are, the more effective in performance are. It is time for Vietnam's educational system to get involved emotional intelligence as a very important concern for educational development. The mission of education now needs to become to not only supply society high IQ people, but also with people having high emotional intelligence.

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