

## **Emotional Intelligence in Promoting Self-Efficacy of the Visually Impaired Fresh Students of Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo, Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** This study investigate the use of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in promoting self-efficacy of the visually impaired fresh students. Twenty eight visually impaired students participated in the study, made up of 19 males and 9 females of age range from 18 to 23 and a mean age of 20.5. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of alpha. The results indicated that there were significant differences in the level of improvement experienced by the treated compared to control group. Also the male and female subjects were significantly different in their responses to treatment. The year of onset of blindness of the subjects indicated significant difference in the subjects responses. Emotional Intelligence programme is thus an effective programme for managing self-efficacy.

**Key words:** Emotional intelligence, hypotheses, self-efficacy students, impaired

### **INTRODUCTION**

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a relatively recent behavioural model, defined as the capacity to understand emotional information and to reason with emotions. It commences it's journey to prominence in 1920 when Thorndike formulated the concept of social Intelligence. Since then scholars in the field of psychology have identified other forms of intelligence.

Three clusters of intelligence have been identified. These are; abstract intelligence which pertains to the ability to understand and manipulate verbal and mathematical symbols; concrete intelligence, which describes the ability to understand and manipulate objects; and social intelligence, which relate to the ability to understand and relate with people. Thorndike conceptual social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls, to act wisely in human relations.

Mayer and Salovey (1997) define the term emotional intelligence as a subset of social intelligence which involves the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use the information garnered to guide one's thinking and action.

Mayer and Salovey (2001) postulate that emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise and express emotion and regulate emotion to promote emotional and intellectual growth. The premise of

emotional intelligence is that people are able to think and make choices, therefore they want to act in a way that will benefit them and others.

Three models are the most well known Goleman's (1998), Mayer and Salovey's (2001) and Bar-on's (2005). Goleman (1998) defines emotional intelligence as a learned capability based on Emotional Intelligence resulting in outstanding performance at research. He identifies 4 emotional and social competencies in his definition: Self awareness knowing what we are feeling and using this understanding to make decisions, self-regulation, controlling over emotion so that they add to our well-being, empathy: Understand how others are feeling and have rapport with diverse people and social skills being able to understand social situations and to interact smoothly. In addition, he highlighted other traits such as self-control persistence and motivation. Salovey *et al.* (2002) define Emotional Intelligence as a social intelligence which allows us the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action.

Bar-on's (2005) conceptualizes Emotional Intelligence as an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.

He divides Emotional Intelligence into five skill areas: (i) Mood; optimism and joy; (ii) Stress management,

impulse control and tolerance; (iii) Intrapersonal skills; self-actualization, self-esteem, independence, self awareness, (iv) Interpersonal skills; relationship, empathy; and (v) Adaptability; flexibility and problem solving.

Although, Emotional Intelligence has been defined differently by various scholars, the fact still remains that they all agreed that Emotional Intelligence is a person's ability level to perceive and apply knowledge of emotions to understand their own and others emotions which tend to allow them the ability to behave in a manner deemed appropriate for healthy living.

Meanwhile, self-efficacy as being defined as people's judgements of their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action received to attain designated types of performance (Bandura, 1997). People's beliefs about their efficacy can be developed by 4 main sources of influence: Mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion and semantic and emotion states such as anxiety, stress arousal and mood states (Bandura *et al.*, 1997).

Self-efficacy beliefs can enhance human accomplishment and well-being in numerous ways. It influences the choices people make and the courses of action they pursue. Self-efficacy beliefs also help determine the effort people will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronted with obstacles and how resilient they will be in the face of adverse situation (Payares, 2002).

The higher the sense of efficacy the greater the perseverance and resilience efforts. High self-efficacy helps create feelings of peacefulness in approaching difficult tasks and activities. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy may believe that things are tougher than they really are: a belief that promotes anxiety, stress depression and a narrow vision of how best to solve a problem (Bandura, 1997; Payares, 2002).

Self-efficacy expectations, when viewed in relation to the promotion of self-identity of the visually impaired fresh students, it may be reflected in an individual's perception about his/her ability to perform a given task or behaviour (efficacy expectation) and his/her belief about the consequences of behaviour or performance (outcome expectation) Hackett *et al.* (1994).

According to Bandura (1977) self-efficacy is mediated by a person's beliefs or expectation about his/her capacity to accomplish certain tasks successfully or demonstrate certain behaviours (Hackett and Betz, 1981).

Self-efficacy expectations, when viewed in relation to career, refer to a person's beliefs regarding career-related

behaviours performance and persistence in the implementation of those choices (Betz and Hackett, 1997).

When individuals have low self-efficacy expectation regarding their behaviour, they limit the extent to which they participate in an endeavour and are more apt to give up at the first sign of difficulty. Their efficacy beliefs serve as barriers to their career development. The purpose of the present study is to use EI in promoting self-efficacy of the visually impaired fresh students in federal college of education (special) Oyo, Nigeria.

Consequently, it is hypothesized that: There will be no significant difference in the responses of subjects exposed to emotional intelligence programme and the control groups. There will be no significant difference in the responses of male and female subjects exposed to EI programme in the improvement of their self-efficacy. There will be no significant difference in the responses of subjects whose onset of visual impairment occurred long time ago and those whose onset of visual impairment occurred recently in their level of self-efficacy.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

**Design:** The study adopts pre-post experimental design. It investigates how emotional intelligence can promote self-efficacy of the visually impaired fresh students.

**Participant:** The participants were 28 purposively selected visually impaired fresh students of Federal College of Education (special) Oyo, Nigeria. The sample consists of 19 males and 9 females with age range from 18 to 23 with average age of 20.5 years. Of the participants, 17 indicated that they have been experiencing visual impairment over ten years while 11 indicated that their visual impairment started less than 5 years ago.

**Instrument:** Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS). This was developed by Schutte *et al.* (1988). It assesses emotional intelligence based on self-report responses to items tapping the appraisal and expressions of emotions in self and others, regulation of emotions in self and others and utilization of emotions in solving problems. It is designed to help individuals label their feelings rather than labeling people or situations. The instrument also helps people to analyse their feelings rather than the actions or motives of other people.

The scale has 33 items which are on a 5-point scale - strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. The instrument has been properly assigned in such a way so as to tap all the domains of

emotional intelligence such that people will be able to take responsibilities for their emotions and happiness. The EIS has demonstrated high internal consistency with Cronbach's ranging from 0.87 to 0.90 and a 2 week test retest reliability coefficient of 0.75 (Schutte *et al.*, 1998). The instrument was pretested on 15 visually impaired state students and it yielded a value of 0.63 which shows that the instrument is reliable. When scored on a five point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to Strongly agree, positive attitude was graded 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 while the scoring made was reversed for negative attitude as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

**Procedure and intervention:** The subjects participated in eight one-hour sessions, held once a week, for eight weeks consecutively. The programme comprises 6 basic components. These are: Presentation of conceptual framework; identification of emotion, responsiveness of individual subjects, identification of emotional management; identification of emotional thinking; recognizing emotions in others; and handling of relationship. Training in relaxed temperament, developing and testing new skills to promote self-efficacy, application and practice of new acquired skills to promote self-efficacy and review of previous sessions activities and administration of post-test instrument.

- Full briefing about the essence of the training and definitions of emotional intelligence effects of negative emotions on academic performance were discussed. Pre-test questionnaires were administered.
- Participants were introduced to the identification of emotional responsiveness in individual subjects. Personal problems negative and irrational thoughts, likely to affect self-efficacy were fully discussed.
- Participants were presented with the identification of emotional management technique that will foster their self-efficacy. Emotional management as suggested by Mayer and Cobb were fully discussed.
- Participants were taught the identification or emotional thinking which is a generalised inability to distinguish emotions and thoughts. Emotional thinking is a high negative predictor of life success, it therefore relates to laid emotional control, inability to manage stress and life difficulties, inadequate communication skills due to distorted perceptions of others and low impulse control.
- Participants were introduced to relaxed temperament which refers to a generalized emotional predisposition to be relaxed.

- During this session, developing and testing new things to promote efficacy in the participants was undertaken. Precisely, the therapists and the participants discussed how to develop and test new things and to think on how they can promote self-efficacy as fresh students to attain academic success.
- Here, participants were asked to rehearse and provide some hypothetical situations. Participants were taught to develop emotional facilitation of thought which has to do with the ability to generate and then reason with their emotion.
- The post treatment conditions were administered to the participants.

## RESULTS

In order to evaluate changes during treatment on self-efficacy measure, one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was the main statistical method used.

From Table 1, the f-ratio (1.318 and 0.335) level of significant difference at  $p = 0.05$ . therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference in subjects level of self-efficacy after the treatment.

From Table 2, there is no significant difference in the self efficacy of male and female visually impaired fresh students after treatment. Therefore, the H02 hypothesis was accepted. There was no significant difference in subjects self efficacy level based on gender.

From Table 3, subjects responses based on year of onset of blindness do not differ significantly. The H03 is therefore accepted.

Table 1: Post Treatment comparison of subjects exposed to EI and the control group using one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	MS	F	Level of sign	Decision
Between groups	1586.88	18	88.18			
Within groups	546.96	10	54.70	1.318	0.335	NS
Total	2133.84	28				

N:B: Not significant at  $p > 0.05$

Table 2: Post treatment comparison of subjects exposed to EI based on gender

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	MS	F	Sign level	Decision
Between groups	419.680	9	46.63	1.529	0.201	
Within groups	533.349	19	28.07	0.502		NS
Total	953.029	28				

N:B\* Not significant at  $p > 0.05$

Table 3: Post treatment comparison of subjects responses based on year of onset of blindness

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	MS	F	Sign of	Decision
Between groups	892.015	17	52.47			
Within groups	774.488	11	70.41	1.389	0.237	NS
Total	1,666.503	28				

N:B\* No significant at  $p > 0.05$

## DISCUSSION

The results do not support the use of emotional intelligence in promoting self efficacy of the visually impaired individuals. Further, it did not reveal improved level of self-efficacy due to the treatment programme. Generally, following the treatment programmes, the group exposed to experimental conditions had their self-efficacy not improved.

The result do not support the Salovey *et al.* (2002) assertion that emotional intelligence involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions to discriminate among them and to use information to guide one's thinking and actions.

The result also indicated that the fresh visually impaired students were unable to improve their self efficacy because they are blind and encounter with a new environment.

Moreover, the results obtained indicated not significant difference in the male and female students. The reason for this is not far-fetched taking into account the fact that both sexes are not naturally emotional in the sense that they can not distinguish their friends from their enemies.

The year of onset of blindness do not poses significant difference with self efficacy level of the subjects. This is possible in the sense that subjects that have been experiencing visual impairment for long has the tendency to have adjusted using reconciling and ability approaches. Thus, this study do not support the use of emotional intelligence procedure which has been shown to be effective with clinical populations (Mehrabian, 2000).

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