

The Good Teacher Inside and Out: A Correlational Study on Emotional Intelligence and Ego-resiliency

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Abstract – This study aimed to find the relationship of emotional intelligence level and ego resiliency because of its effective functioning in the diverse areas of life most especially to teachers. There were 150 teachers from Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU) in Tacloban City, Leyte, Philippines taken as a sample. Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) was used in measuring the level of emotional intelligence and Solera's Ego-Resiliency scale was used for measuring the levels of ego-resiliency. There existed a correlational coefficient of 0.475, $p < .001$ with an associated mark of a positive relationship of the two variables. This indicated that there was a significant linear association between the levels of emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency in the teachers of EVSU. The result illustrated that as a teacher with a high level of emotional intelligence, he/she is able to regulate one's emotion and to cope with different stressors and adversity. As they can regulate their emotions, they will be able to manage themselves when faced with future adversities. In addition, this study was conducted a year before the super typhoon Haiyan struck the entire city where the University was located. Therefore, a follow-up study should be conducted to further assess how they had managed their emotions and how they had bounced back from that traumatic natural disaster they experienced.

Keywords – ego-resiliency, emotional intelligence, education psychology

INTRODUCTION

It is said that for a teacher to be effective he/she must be aware of the influence of emotional intelligence on learning and behaviour [1]. A teacher must have the skills and abilities of an expert knowledge developer, which is preparing activities for a course and communicating effectively to the students. They also provide practical training to their students and shape their goals, careers, and lives that make their job more stressful. Teaching job is considered to be one of the most stressful occupations, especially because it involves daily work based on social interactions where the teacher must make great effort to regulate not only his or her own emotions, but also those of students, parents, colleagues, and the people around [2]. They should also be able to recognize, understand, and validate the importance of their emotions and feelings, in order to assist students on various levels. They must create a positive environment for learning, and better management in their own emotions. These will help to enhance students' experiences and those of teachers. Since teaching behaviours and personalities can affect student achievement, teachers who develop their

emotional awareness and interpersonal skills are better able to manage their classrooms and promote student's success.

Knowing that emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, and understand emotions to promote personal growth [3]. Emotional intelligence of the teachers is essential, both for their well-being, effectiveness, and quality in carrying out teaching-learning processes in the classroom in general, and for managing the emotions of their students as well. A teacher who is able to manage his or her emotions and feelings is very effective and competent in terms of teaching; he or she also has an innovative attitude, flexible in his or her approach, always refreshing with day-to-day developments in different subject area. At the same time, capable of recognizing the value of human potentials, understanding the diverse needs of learners and enriching the environment for its own growth. Teachers should also take control over students since classroom situations are not predictable at times due to different behaviours of the students. If such scenarios arise, a teacher who has high emotional

intelligence can think of more possible responses in order to combat the different problems inside the classroom.

On the other side, the ego-resiliency of teachers has also been shown to contribute in improving their performance and how they deal with the stressors that they encounter. Ego resiliency by definition is the ability to adapt one's level of control temporarily up or down as circumstances dictate [4]. Ego-resilient teachers are prepared in facing different situations; when a difficult situation arises, they are able to find ways in resolving such tough situation and are able to modify how sensible and self-controlled usually if the situation requires it. However, classroom situation is not enough to measure a teacher possessing ego-resiliency attitude but also outside the four-wall-corners in the classroom. An ego resilient individual tends to be resourceful, adaptive to new situations and could easily cope with after stress [5].

Thus, the need to study emotional intelligence and ego resiliency among teachers is due to their nature of work, wherein they are more exposed to different stressors. This study identified how teachers manage and adapt to the different situations in the midst of chaos inside the classroom setting, how they handle their own emotions, especially their negative emotions, and what skills they possess that allows them to rebound after stressful situations. It is the teacher's level of emotional intelligence and the ability to be ego-resilient that are to be measured since these are essential toward the success of the teacher-student relationship and to be effective and successful in the field of teaching.

Emotional Intelligence and Ego-Resiliency

Emotions compliment and complete our cognitive abilities and are essential and integral part of decision making. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, express, assimilate emotions in thought, understand and reason with emotion and regulate emotion in the self. Moreover, ego-resiliency is the ability to adapt one's level of control temporarily up or down as circumstances dictate. In addition to emotional intelligence, it is a positive characteristic that means having a positive emotion that involves 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 actions [6]. Therefore, ego-resiliency is a positive outcome of emotional intelligence since it encompasses an individual who is resourceful in adapting to stressful situations.

It is through emotional intelligence, that an individual must be competent at understanding his/her emotions -- both positive and negative, be able to process emotional information accurately and efficiently, and have the insight to skilfully use one's emotions to solve problems, make plans, and achieve in one's life. Positive emotions can be developed as coping resources; they are also useful in strengthening people's social resources by developing and maintaining social relationships. It has been stated that [7], high-resilient (vs. low-resilient) individuals were more likely to report experiencing positive emotions, such as interest, alongside their self-reported anxiety. In addition, the experience of positive emotions contributed to high-resilient individual's abilities to achieve efficient emotion regulation which was demonstrated by an enhanced recovery from negative emotional arousal. This indicates that high-resilient individuals are characterized by using positive emotions to cope with the different situations that will occur. Highly resilient individuals demonstrate greater personal insight by having the ability to judge their own strengths and limitations during difficult times [8]. Thus, it appears that resilient individuals may effectively recognize their own feelings and those of others, and utilize their emotion knowledge to effectively manage their emotional experiences [9]. Apparently, highly-resilient individuals may reflect high level of emotional intelligence.

Therefore, emotional intelligence is an ability that helps an individual build strong relationships, succeed at work, and achieve goals, whilst, ego-resiliency is considered to be the positive outcome of emotional intelligence that regulates the emotions in order for an individual to cope with stress and adversity.

As cited from the book *The Wisdom in Feeling* [10], individual differences in resilience predict the ability to harness the beneficial effects of positive emotions to one's advantage when coping with negative emotional experiences. Resilient individuals were described as happy and energetic people who frequently use humour as a coping strategy, which has been shown to help people cope effectively with stressful circumstances [11]. Highly resilient individuals were better able to find positive meaning in the problems of their daily life, more than their less resilient peers. For resilient people, positive-meaning finding may reflect insight about the benefits of positive emotions in helping to adapt to, and overcome stressful circumstances. The experience of positive emotions may contribute to people's ability to learn

from negative life events, to be optimistic about their problems, to find benefits, and to grow from negative experiences.

Emotions compliment and complete our cognitive abilities and are essential and integral part of decision making. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, express, assimilate emotions in thought, understand and reason with emotion and regulate

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Researchers of this study were eager to find the relationship of emotional intelligence and ego resiliency because of its effective functioning in diverse areas of life especially to teachers. Most people know that there is a difference between knowledge and behaviour, or applying that knowledge to make changes in one's lives. For the teachers, their job is to impart their knowledge to make someone change one's life for the better. But what happens if the teachers cannot do their job especially when under pressure? So, understanding one's level of emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency is important. This way, the teachers can assess how well they can identify, use, understand, manage emotions, and adapt on various circumstances especially dealing with students having behavioural crisis. To learn about emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency, in a way that produces change, especially in improving one's performance, it is first important to assess one's self, and then after assessing, he/she can already develop and enhance emotion skills depending on his or her sensory, nonverbal learning, and real-life practice.

METHODS

The researchers used the survey method of gathering data for this research study. This study is correlational in nature. The quantitative research technique using Likert scale was used to measure the levels of emotional intelligence and ego resiliency and to determine its relationship. The participants of this study were the teachers from Eastern Visayas State University (EVSU) in Tacloban, Leyte, Philippines. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to select the 150 college teachers of EVSU as participants of the study. Participants of the study were not forced nor harmed in any ways. They were told that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wished to do so. Full consent was obtained from the participants. The protection of privacy of the participant's data was also ensured.

The participants answered separate questionnaires, the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale and the Solera's Ego Resiliency Scale. The main instruments for this study were the survey questionnaires which elicited data on the profile of the teachers. Wong and Law's Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) [12] was used in measuring the level of emotional intelligence of the teachers. There were 16 items and four factors in the mentioned scale. The factors were: Self-Emotions Appraisal (SEA), Others-Emotions Appraisal (OEA), Use of Emotion (UEO), and Regulation of Emotion (ROE). To test the internal consistency of the questionnaire, reliability analysis was administered. The result showed that the reliability of the questionnaire is .865 which means that there is a high internal consistency of the test instrument. The Solera's Ego-Resiliency scale [13] was used in measuring ego-resiliency which consisted of 23-item Likert-scale. The Solera's Ego-resiliency scale [13] was composed of 23 statements measuring the four facets: Confident Optimism and Happiness, Productive and Autonomous Activity, Interpersonal Warmth and Insight, Skilled Expressiveness. Reliability analysis was also administered using Cronbach's Alpha to test the internal consistency of the questionnaires that were used in this study. Ego-resiliency scale was tested basing on the $p < .05$ levels of confidence, with an alpha coefficient of .839. This suggests that there is a high internal consistency among the numbers of test items in the questionnaire.

The study was conducted in Eastern Visayas State University located at Salazar Street, Quarry District, Tacloban City, Philippines. The researchers wrote a permit address to the university President to conduct a study. Upon the approval of the request, the researchers scheduled an appointment with the participants to conduct the paper and pencil tests. After gathering, the data were kept and recorded confidentially. Using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), the researchers analyzed the data using Bivariate analysis to determine the empirical relationship between emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency. Linear regression was also conducted to thoroughly investigate the relationship of the dependent variable which is the ego-resiliency from the independent variable, emotional intelligence. The researchers focused on seeking a correlation between the emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency. Bivariate analysis, specifically Pearson correlation was used to determine the strength and direction between two variables. This

was also to determine the influence of emotional intelligence to the level of ego-resiliency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The gathered data were analyzed in SPSS Bivariate Analysis in order to prove the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency.

The first objective of the study was to find out the level of emotional intelligence and the level of ego-resiliency of the participants. The results showed that the levels of emotional intelligence of the participants are high ($\mu = 65.43$ mid score = 65 SD = 7.99). The obtained scores in ego-resiliency also showed that the participants have moderate level of ego-resiliency ($\mu = 90.59$ Mid score = 91 SD = 9.08).

The levels of emotional intelligence of the participants were determined through the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) [12] and were computed using the mean and standard deviation. The participants exhibited high emotional intelligence scores for each corresponding facets; Self-Emotions Appraisal (SEA) had a mean score of 4.2217 with an SD .59467; Others-Emotions Appraisal (OEA) obtained a mean score of 4.0067 with an SD of .64046; Use of Emotion (UEO) had a mean score of 4.1233, and an SD of .76618; and for Regulation of Emotion (ROE), the participants had a mean score of 4.0367 with an SD of .69053. Self-Emotions Appraisal (SEA) scored the highest over the other components.

The Solera’s Ego-resiliency scale [13] results shown that for Confident Optimism, the participants had a mean score of 4.1387, and an SD of .43854; for Productive and Autonomous Activity, a mean score of 3.9867 and an SD of .58633; for the Interpersonal

Warmth and Insight the participants had a mean score of 3.5093, and an SD of .51479; for the Skilled Expressiveness, it had a mean score of 3.9417, and an SD of .55895, all of which were interpreted as moderate level of Ego Resiliency. Confident Optimism has the highest score over the other components.

Moreover, the main objective of the study is to identify the relationship between the two constructs, emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency. Table below showed that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency as shown by the computed r-value of .475, $p < .001$. The results also indicate a positive correlation as the correlation values of the variables are parallel. This entails that the higher the emotional intelligence, so as the level of ego-resiliency.

The result indicates that there is a relationship between the facets of the two variables, emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency. The facet in WLEIS that scored the highest is the Regulation of Emotion which was correlated to the components of the Ego-resiliency. Regulation of Emotion (ROE) is the ability to stay open to feelings, monitor and regulate emotions reflectively, in order to promote emotional and intellectual growth. Thus, this supports the idea that ego-resiliency is a positive outcome of emotional intelligence.

The mean scores of emotional intelligence and ego resiliency were analyzed through the linear regression, where the result indicates that emotional intelligence as the independent variable can be a predictor of the dependent variable which is Ego Resiliency at 22.6%. This entails that ego-resiliency can be predicted by emotional intelligence at 22.6%.

Table 1. Correlation of the facets

	(SEA)	(OEA)	(UOE)	(ROE)	Confident Optimism	Productive & Autonomous Activity	Interpersonal Warmth & Insight	Skilled Expressiveness
Self –Emotions Appraisal (SEA)	1							
Others-Emotions Appraisal (OEA)	.433**	1						
Use of Emotion (UOE)	.429**	.321**	1					
Regulation of Emotion (ROE)	.505**	.400**	.389**	1				
Confident Optimism	.377**	.360**	.398**	.457**	1			
Productive & Autonomous Activity	.280**	.187*	.271**	.329**	.486**	1		
Interpersonal Warmth & Insight	.308**	.198*	.259**	.327**	.337**	.472**	1	
Skilled Expressiveness	.317**	.283**	.297**	.266**	.502**	.490**	.637**	1

** HS (significant at 1%); * S (significant at 5%)

Moreover, there exists a correlational coefficient of 0.475, $p < .001$ with an associated mark of a positive relationship of the two variables, which means that there is a significant linear association between the two variables. From this result, it can be proven that an emotional intelligent teacher is also an ego-resilient. This finding is related to the study of Taksic & Mohoric [14], where they found that emotional intelligence have positive correlations with maintaining positive mood, and with the ego resiliency. It is assumed that a teacher with high emotional intelligence has the ability to sustain one's positive emotion and be able to bounce back from different negative outcomes and adversity.

In addition, the facets of the two constructs, emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency are positively correlated. The facet of WLEIS that scored high was the Regulation of Emotion (ROE). Ego-resiliency would be associated with the capacity to regulate emotions smoothly and within the boundaries expected in different environments. The ability to regulate one's emotions helps the teacher to be more effective in achieving academic goals, building quality social relationships, and maintaining good classroom management and discipline practices [15]. Most teachers also are aware of the outcomes of poor emotion regulation. One inappropriate display of contempt for a student can destroy forever a teacher's relationship with that student. Teachers with higher emotion regulation also may feel greater personal accomplishment because emotion regulation likely contributes to the establishment of warm, caring relationships, the ability to deal effectively with student problems, and the creation of a relaxing classroom atmosphere, to the extent that it enhances positive emotions and prevents conflict and tension [16]. Moreover, the results illustrate that a teacher with a high level of emotional intelligence (EI) may able to regulate one's emotion to cope with different stressors and adversity that might occur in the classroom setting. – ego resilient. By knowing, using, regulating their emotions, they will be able to manage themselves when faced with future difficulty in their job.

It is also important that teachers will be aware of one's emotions and be prepared in facing diverse situations that will occur in order for them to have a better teaching-performance. Teachers with higher emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency are likely to have better social support, and could easily bounce back from negative emotions when exposed to unwanted circumstances or faced with different

stressors of their job. Besides, they are considered as one of the main pillars of a sound and progressive society. They bear the weight and responsibility of teaching, and apart from parents, are the main source of knowledge and values for students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Teaching is an emotional practice, yet there is surprisingly little research on the emotional aspects of teachers' lives [17]. However, this study has shown that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency. This study can be used in developing teacher-training programs that focus on enhancing emotion-regulation skills which may result in a number of favourable outcomes for teachers [18], including, the increase of positive affect which means that a person can subjectively experience positive moods such as joy, interest and alertness. In turn, teachers may experience less stress and remain in the profession longer, and be more effective in the classroom. We all know that it needs no description that teachers are the pivot of any educational system of the students. They are the yardstick that measures the achievements and aspirations of the nation. Thus, this study will also help the teachers be aware of improving and develop their emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency since teaching is a stressful profession. Eventually, negative stress and emotional reactivity will lead to burn-out or negative outcome. A similar study from Edutopia [19] showed that an inspiring and informed teacher is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement, it is critical to pay close attention on how to train and support the teachers. Hence, the gathered data of the study can be used by trainers in making teacher's training guidelines in enhancing one's emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency because great teachers help create great students.

In the future studies, it is important to also measure the current mental and physical health of the teachers since mental and physical being of an individual also denotes how resilient a person is in facing difficulty. It might be that one experienced traumatic events that caused him/her to find it hard to bounce back and cope with different adversities. It is also important to include occupational stress in order to know the level of stress in their job that could affect their emotional intelligence and level of ego-resiliency. Also, it is important to know the factors that contribute, ranging from gender, motivation, inability to deal with problems in an area of expertise, and fluctuations in

ability (often related to age). An in-depth interview with the teachers should have been also conducted in order to hear their sentiments personally and their personal ideas could be shared, such as their ways and techniques in handling difficult situations. This would be very useful in assessing one's level of ego-resiliency and emotional intelligence.

In addition, a follow-up study is also encouraged to be conducted in the same locale since Tacloban City in Leyte had the hardest hit of all affected communities in the Philippines during the super typhoon Haiyan. Assessing teacher-survivor's level of emotional intelligence and ego-resiliency is advised, considering that the typhoon caused them trauma which may imply the need for further studies to determine the effects and develop an intervention for the teacher-survivors.

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