

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers

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Abstract: People with good Emotional Intelligence are found to have relatively effective Coping Strategies to manage stress. The present study tries to find out the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers at secondary level (B.Ed) in the pre teaching practice period. The study revealed that Emotional Intelligence have a significant substantial relationship with Coping Strategies of student teachers. Since the correlation obtained is positive, increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a significant substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of student teachers. Female student teachers were found to have better correlation and shared variance between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies.

Key Words: Emotional Intelligence, Stress, Coping Strategies, Student teachers, Pre teaching practice period

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I. INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is an array of personal, emotional and social competencies and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures (Bar-on, 1996). Goleman (1998) defined Emotional intelligence as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships. He proposed a competencies-based model with twenty five competencies and five domains for Emotional Intelligence namely Self Awareness, Self Regulation, Motivating Oneself, Empathy and Handling Relationships or Social Skills which comprises the twenty five competencies.

Stress and coping are two major areas of research in psychology (Hobfoll et al., 1996). Coping refers to cognitive or behavioral responses to stressors, intended to remedy a stressful situation or to dampen the emotional response to a stressful situation (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). They proposed two types of coping strategies as problem focused coping strategies and emotion focused coping strategies. Problem focused coping removes the stressor or its impact through direct actions. It is a positive coping strategy. In emotion focused coping people react emotionally to the stressor and try to change what they feel about the stressor as well as their emotional reactions to the stressor. Both these strategies are used together or separately by people to deal with stress.

Coping up with stressful situations needs good Emotional Intelligence. Studies on Emotional Intelligence have shown that people with above average level of Emotional Intelligence are usually above average in their ability to cope with Stress (George, 2000). Thus a person with good Emotional Intelligence will have effective Coping Strategies to manage stressful situations. Emotional intelligence can also predict stress responses and Coping Strategies (Matthews et al., 2006). Emotional Intelligence is found to foster better coping (Carmeli et al. 2009). All the above studies reveal a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies.

Need and Significance of the Study

Emotional Intelligence is related to intelligent interaction between the individual and the environment, and coping with stressful situations successfully. Studies related to Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies suggest that Emotional Intelligence fosters Coping Strategies to manage stress and improves teaching.

Teaching is considered to be one among the most stressful professions (Clarke and O'Connor, 1990; Gold and Roth, 1993). While regular teachers themselves find teaching a stressful profession, student teachers being novice to teaching may find their school practice teaching experience still stressful. Student teachers reckon teaching practice as the most stressful period of the teacher education course (Elkerton, 1984; MacDonald, 1993; Campbell-Evans & Maloney, 1997; and Morton et.al 1997).

Pre teaching practice period is an equally stressful period for student teachers as they have to attend the regular classes in the college and prepare for the coming teaching practice along with. Student teachers have an

overload of work in preparing a number of lesson plans, charts, models and other teaching aids for teaching practice, during this period. Limited time for preparation creates stress among student teachers during pre teaching practice period the management of which needs sound coping strategies.

Hence, student teachers should be empowered to develop Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies to manage Stress fruitfully. Knowledge of relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies will be helpful in giving training for the development of both and to manage the stress of student teachers effectively.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers.
2. To test whether there exist any significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers based on gender.
3. To test whether there exist any significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers based on the type of management of the institution.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There exists significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers.
2. There exists significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers based on gender.
3. There exists significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers based on the type of management of the institution.

II. METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted to find out the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers at the secondary level (B.Ed). Survey method was adopted for the study taking a sample of 795 student teachers during the pre teaching practice period. Sample was taken from four types of teacher education institutions namely Government colleges of teacher education, aided colleges of teacher education, unaided colleges of teacher education and university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs). Stratified random sampling technique was used for giving due representation to subsamples based on gender and type of management of the teacher education institution. Emotional Intelligence Test and Coping Strategies Inventory; both developed by the investigator were the tools used for the collection of the data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers for the Total Sample

Extent of relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers was found out by subjecting the scores of Emotional Intelligence (obtained for the Emotional Intelligence Test developed by the investigator) and Coping Strategies (obtained for the Coping Strategies Inventory developed by the investigator) for the total sample to Pearson's product - moment correlation analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Hypothesis (H₀)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers.

Table 1

Data and Results of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Total Sample

| Variables | r value | Number | t | S.Er | Confi-dence interval | Shared variance | Interpret-ation |
|------------------------|---------|--------|--------|-------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.42 | 795 | 13.03* | 0.029 | -0.4952, 0.3446 | 17.64 | Substantial Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers were found to have a co-efficient of correlation 0.42 which is higher than the significance value at 0.01 level. The 't' value (13.03) is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 793 degrees of freedom. The correlation is significant at 0.01 level which lies in between the confidence interval -0.4952 and 0.3446. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

The correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers is found to be substantial. Since the correlation (r) obtained is positive; increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of student teachers. The correlation obtained has a shared variance 17.64%. Hence, about eighteen percentage of shared variation can be attributed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers.

2. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Male Student Teachers

Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of male student teachers was found out by analysing the scores of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies using Pearson's Product - Moment Correlation analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Hypothesis (H_0)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of male student teachers.

Table 2

Data and Results of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Male Student Teachers

| Variables | r value | Number | t | S.Er | Confidence Interval | Shared Variance | Interpretation |
|------------------------|---------|--------|-------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.42 | 121 | 5.07* | 0.074 | -0.2292, 0.6147 | 17.80 | Substantial Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

The coefficient of correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of male student teachers is 0.42. This is higher than the significance value at 0.01 level. The 't' value (5.07) got is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 119 degrees of freedom. So, the correlation is significant at 0.01 level which lies in between the confidence interval -0.2292 and 0.6147. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

The result shows a substantial relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of male student teachers. Since the correlation is positive, an increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of male student teachers. The correlation obtained has a shared variance 17.80%. Hence, about eighteen percentage of shared variation can be attributed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies in the case of male student teachers.

3. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Female Student Teachers

Extent of relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of female student teachers was found out by analysing the scores of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies using Pearson's Product - Moment Correlation analysis. The result of analysis is presented in Table 3.

Hypothesis (H_0)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of female student teachers.

Table 3

Relation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Female Student Teachers

| Variables | r value | Number | t | S.Er | Confidence Interval | Shared Variance | Interpretation |
|------------------------|---------|--------|--------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.43 | 672 | 12.29* | 0.031 | -0.5102, 0.3477 | 18.40 | Substantial Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

The co-efficient of correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of female student teachers is 0.43 which is higher than the value for significance at 0.01 level. The 't' value (12.29) obtained is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 670 degrees of freedom. The correlation is significant at 0.01 level which lies in between the confidence interval -0.5102 and 0.3477. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Substantial relationship was found between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of female student teachers. Since the correlation derived is positive, increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a

substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of female student teachers. The correlation derived has a shared variance 18.4% which suggests about eighteen percentage of shared variation between the two variables for female student teachers.

3. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Government Colleges

Extent of relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of Government colleges was found out by analysing the scores of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies using Pearson's Product - Moment Correlation analysis. Details of the analysis are presented in Table 4.

Hypothesis(H₀)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of government colleges.

Table 4

Data and Results of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Government Colleges

| Variables | r value | Sample Size | t | S.Er | Confidence Interval | Shared Variance | Interpretation |
|------------------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.35 | 213 | 5.49* | 0.059 | -0.1993, 0.5086 | 12.53 | Low Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

The correlation coefficient of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of Government colleges was found to be 0.35. This value is higher than the value assigned for significance at 0.01 level. The 't' value (5.49) obtained is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 211 degrees of freedom. So the correlation is significant at 0.01 level which lies in between the confidence interval - 0.1993 and 0.5086. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of government colleges have a low relationship. Since the correlation obtained is positive, increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a slight increase only in the Coping Strategies of student teachers of Government colleges. The correlation obtained has a shared variance 12.53 which suggests that about thirteen percentage of shared variation between the two variables for student teachers of government colleges.

5. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Aided Colleges

Extent of relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of aided colleges was found out by analysing the scores of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies using Pearson's Product - Moment Correlation analysis. The details of analysis are presented in Table 5.

Hypothesis (H₀)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of aided colleges.

Table 5

Data and Results of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Aided Colleges

| Variables | r value | Sample Size | t | S.Er | Confidence Interval | Shared Variance | Interpretation |
|------------------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.52 | 229 | 9.05* | 0.048 | -0.3897, 0.6402 | 26.52 | Substantial Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of aided colleges have a correlation coefficient 0.52 which is higher than the value for significance at 0.01 level. The 't' value (9.05) obtained is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 227 degrees of freedom. The correlation is significant at 0.01 level which lies in between the confidence interval -0.3897 and 0.6402. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

A substantial relationship was found between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of aided college student teachers. Since the correlation obtained is positive, increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of student teachers of aided colleges. The correlation derived has a shared variance 26.52%. Hence, about twenty seven percentage of shared variation can be attributed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies in the case of aided college student teachers.

6. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Unaided Colleges

Extent of relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of unaided colleges was found out by analysing the scores of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies using Pearson’s Product - Moment Correlation analysis. The details of analysis are presented in Table 6.

Hypothesis (H₀)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of unaided colleges.

Table 6

Data and Results of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of Unaided Colleges

| Variables | r Value | Sample Size | t | S.Er | Confidence Interval | Shared Variance | Interpretation |
|------------------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.44 | 168 | 6.31* | 0.062 | -0.2795, 0.6005 | 19.36 | Substantial Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

The co-efficient of correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of unaided colleges is 0.44. This value is higher than the value for significance at 0.01 level. The ‘t’ value (6.31) is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 166 degrees of freedom. The correlation is found significant at 0.01 level which comes between the confidence interval, -0.2795 and 0.6005. Hence, the hypothesis is rejected.

A substantial relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies was found in the case of student teachers of unaided colleges. The correlation, ‘r’ obtained is positive. So an increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of student teachers of unaided colleges. The correlation obtained has a shared variance 19.36%. Hence, about nineteen percentage of shared variation can be attributed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of unaided colleges.

7. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of University Colleges of Teacher Education (UCTEs)

Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of university colleges of teacher education was found out by analysing the scores of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies using Pearson’s Product - Moment Correlation analysis. The results of analysis are presented in Table 7.

Hypothesis (H₀)

There exists no significant relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs).

Table 7

Data and Results of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of Student Teachers of UCTEs

| Variables | r value | Sample Size | t | S.Er | Confidence Interval | Shared Variance | Interpretation |
|------------------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 0.31 | 184 | 4.41* | 0.066 | -0.1392, 0.4828 | 9.67 | Low Relationship |
| Coping Strategies | | | | | | | |

* Significant at 0.01 level

The co-efficient of correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of university colleges of teacher education (UCTE) is 0.31. This value is higher than the value for significance at 0.01 level. The 't' value (4.41) is greater than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level of significance with 182 degrees of freedom. The correlation is significant at 0.01 level which lies between the confidence interval -0.1392 and 0.4828. Hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs) have a low relationship. Since the correlation obtained is positive, increase in Emotional Intelligence will affect a slight increase in the Coping Strategies of student teachers of university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs). The correlation has a shared variance 9.67%. Thus about ten percentage of shared variation can be attributed between the two variables for student teachers of university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

1. Significant substantial relationship was found between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers. Since the correlation obtained was positive, increase in Emotional Intelligence would affect a significant substantial increase in the Coping Strategies of student teachers.
2. Significant substantial relationship was observed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of male and female student teachers. Female student teachers had more correlation and shared variance between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies.
3. Significant substantial relationship was observed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers aided colleges and unaided colleges. Low relationship was observed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies of student teachers of Government colleges and university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs).

Educational Implications

1. Since a significant substantial positive relationship was observed between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies; training for the development of Emotional Intelligence to student teachers would be productive, as part of the teacher education curriculum which would enable them to manage the stress in the teaching profession.
2. Female student teachers were found to have better correlation and shared variance between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies. So Emotional Intelligence contributed more in the increase of Coping Strategies among them. As female teachers are likely to have more chances for personal, familial and professional stress, training for the development of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies prospective teachers would be highly beneficial to them.
3. Student teachers of aided colleges have more correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies followed by unaided colleges, which is substantial too whereas Government colleges and university colleges of teacher education (UCTEs) have low correlation between these variables. Hence, the difference in the nature of management is a deciding factor in developing Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies.
4. Teacher educators shall be given training for the development of Emotional Intelligence and Coping Strategies so that they can impart that knowledge and skills to their student teachers to equip them to deal with stress.

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