

On the Would-be Bonds between Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy: The Case of Iranian EFL University Professors

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Abstract—Though a plethora of varied probes, thus far, have been conducted into the effectiveness of emotional intelligence as well as the paramountcy of self-efficacy in educational settings, one area of research that seems to have remained partly intact or which has been given scant attention is the viable relationship between these two constructs, i.e. EQ and self-efficacy. In effect, the principal incentive underlying the researchers' interest in the current study emanated from their credence in the fact that meager heed has been given to the possible links holding between these two realm, particularly when it comes to considering the case of academic professors; indeed, the few number of studies being carried out in this respect have merely centered on the lower-level teachers among which a reference can be made to Chan (2004) and Fabio and Palazzeschi (2008). Hence, in view of the aforesaid facts, the researchers in the current study aimed at addressing the correlation between EI and self-efficacy in a brand new context (academic arena) and with a totally unique community (university professors). Age and teaching experience of professors were also the issues of secondary concern in performing the present research. To this end, 50 EFL university professors (both MA and PhD holders) were selected from a range of different universities in Urmia, including the English departments of Urmia state and Azad universities, Azarabadegan non-profit University, as well as Payam-e-Nour University. To gather the data, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy's (2001) self-efficacy scale and Bar-On's (1997) EQ-i questionnaire were administered to the participants. The final analysis of data revealed a significant correlation between the participants' responses to these two questionnaires. Yet, the participants' ages and years of teaching experience were not found to be of significant role with respect to the relationship between the participants' performance on the said scales.

Index Terms—Bar-On's EQ-i, EI, emotional intelligence, EQ, self-efficacy

I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers as practitioners of educational principles and theories are heavily involved in different teaching and learning processes, so, understanding teachers' perceptions and beliefs is important (Jia, Eslami & Burlbaw, 2006). Knowing the perceptions and beliefs of teachers enables one to make predictions about teaching and assessment practices in classrooms. Research has shown that teachers have exciting potential to affect students' educational outcomes (Anderson, 2004). According to Sanders and Horn (1998) the teacher effects on students' achievement are "additive and cumulative with little evidence those subsequent effective teachers can offset the effects of ineffective ones" (p. 32). Further, they maintained that "regardless of race, students who are assigned disproportionately to ineffective teachers will be severely academically handicapped relative to students with other teacher assignment patterns" (p. 254). Therefore, they concluded that "educational assessment that does not address teacher effectiveness is at the very least, seriously limited in its ability to serve its primary purpose" (p. 255). In the last two decades great interest has been given to the role of affectivity and emotion in education. Education professionals believed that feelings are crucial in the overall development of their pupils and in their own daily tasks. Thus, they are voicing the need to encourage not only the academic development of children and young people, but also the development of their social and emotional competencies (Elias, et al., 1997; Greenberg, et al., 2003).

Emotional competence of teachers is necessary both in general and in particular. In general it is essential for their own well-being and for effectiveness and quality in carrying out teaching-learning processes in the classroom, and in particular for the socio-emotional development of students (Sutton & Wheatly, 2003). A number of studies (e.g., Boyatzis, 2006; Carmeli, 2003; Schutte, et al., 1998, as cited in Moafian and Ghanizadeh, 2009) have reported a positive relationship between different affective traits, in particular, emotional intelligence (EI), and job attitudes such as affective commitment. As Carmeli (2003) noted, emotionally intelligent individuals are expected to recognize, manage, and use their emotions to manipulate the ensuing obstacles and prevent their negative effects on attitudes

towards their profession (cited in Salami, 2007). This is particularly true when it comes to professions such as teaching, with its high levels of complexity and constant interaction.

Though, a multitude of research projects have been conducted on EI (e.g., Brackett and Salovey, 2006; Carmeli, 2003; Schutte, et al., 1998) and on self-efficacy (e.g., Ross, 1992; Tschannen-Moran, et al., 1998), very little (Chan, 2004; Fabio and Palazzeschi, 2008; Penrose, et al., 2007) has been carried out or reported on the relationship between these two. Since these two factors, i.e. EI and efficacy, are of current concern in all levels of education (Gil-Olarte, et al., 2006; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998) and since they contribute to teaching effectiveness (Mortiboys, 2005; Pajares, 1992), it seems that some serious research is called for to address the would be go-togetherness between these two focal constructs. Hence, the purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy beliefs for Iranian university professors in EFL context. In doing so, an attempt is also made to identify the possible significant differences among EFL university professors with different ages and teaching experiences concerning their emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. To this end, the following research questions were formulated:

1. Is there any significant relationship between EFL university professors' emotional intelligence and their sense of self-efficacy?
2. Does the age of EFL university professors have any significant effect on their performance on emotional intelligence and self-efficacy scales?
3. Does the teaching experience of EFL university professors have any significant effect on their performance on emotional intelligence and self-efficacy scale?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. *The Origin and Definition of EI*

The history of EI originated from the concept of social intelligence, introduced by Thorndike. Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as “the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relations” (cited in Gürol, et.al. 2010). The concept of emotional intelligence was originally conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990); however, emotional intelligence became popular outside academia by Daniel Goleman. Later on, emotional intelligence became a well-known phrase in popular media circles (Matthews, et al., 2002). Subsequently, emotional intelligence was espoused by big businesses enterprises adopting it as a leadership mantra. Since 1995, Goleman has published two seminal books concerning EI, entitled *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998) and *Primal Leadership and Social Intelligence* (2006). The literature related to emotional intelligence reveals that Reuven Bar-On, Daniel Goleman, and the team of John Mayer and Peter Salovey were among the researchers who proposed the three main theories about emotional intelligence. The first model by Peter Salovey and John Mayer perceives EI as a form of pure intelligence, that is, emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability. A second model by Reuven Bar-On regards EI as a mixed intelligence, consisting of cognitive ability and personality aspects. This model emphasizes how cognitive and personality factors influence general well-being. The third model, introduced by Daniel Goleman, also perceives EI as a mixed intelligence involving cognitive ability and personality aspects. From Salovey and Mayer's (1990) point of view emotional intelligence is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions and to use the information to guide thinking and actions. They defined it as “the subset of social intelligence 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 ones thinking and action” (Mayor and Salovey, 1990, p.186). They also propose a four-branch model of emotional intelligence that includes the abilities to: accurately perceive emotions in oneself and in others, use emotions to facilitate thinking, understand emotions, emotional language, and the signals conveyed by emotions, and manage emotions so as to attain specific goals.

According to the theoretical model of Bar-On (1997), EI is defined as “an array of non cognitive abilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demand and pressures” (p. 14). The director of the Institute of Applied Intelligences in Denmark and consultant for a variety of institutions and organizations in Israel, Reuven Bar-On developed one of the first measures of emotional intelligence that used the term ‘Emotion Quotient’. Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence relates to the *potential* for performance and success, rather than performance or success per se, and is considered process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented (Bar-On, 2002). It focuses on an array of emotional and social abilities, including the ability to be aware of, understand, and express oneself, the ability to be aware of, understand, and relate to others, the ability to deal with strong emotions, and the ability to adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature (Bar-On, 1997). He identified 5 major scales and 15 subscales which are given below:

1. **Intrapersonal Component:** including the five subscales of *Emotional Self Awareness*, *Self Regard*, *Self-Actualization*, *Assertiveness*, and *Independence*;
2. **Interpersonal Component:** incorporating the subcomponents of *Empathy*, *Social Responsibility*, and *Interpersonal Relationships*;
3. **Stress Management:** being composed of *Stress Tolerance* and *Impulse Control*;
4. **Adaptability:** having as its subparts the three categories of *Reality Testing*, *Flexibility* and *Problem Solving*;
5. **General Mood:** encompassing two subcategories of *Happiness* and *Optimism*.

Goleman is best renowned for his dissemination of two seminal texts on emotional intelligence (1995, 1998, as cited in Masroor Alam, 2009). For Goleman (1998), emotional intelligence is "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationship" (p. 317). In his eyes, emotional intelligence is composed of self awareness, self-management, social awareness and social management (1998). Hence, emotional intelligence allows individuals to not only recognize their own emotions in and outside strictly intellectual situations, but also to recognize the emotions of others. As people understand their emotions and those of others, they are then able to better control and/or regulate those emotions. Emotional intelligence plays a large role in shaping individuals. Goleman (1998, 1999) explained that emotional intelligence creates passion, confidence, friendliness, motivation, pride, and energy in individuals (cited in Masroor Alam, 2009). Previous research has shown that there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and success in many areas such as effective teaching (Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2010), student learning (Brackett & Mayer, 2003), and academic performance (Gil-Olarte, Palomera, & Brackett, 2006).

Striving to determine whether student teacher performance was associated with emotional intelligence, Tod (2006) found that EI and College Supervisors' assessments of student teacher performance were significantly related. Moafian and Ghanizadeh (2009), on the other hand, examined the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their self-efficacy in Language Institutes. To this end, 89 EFL teachers were selected from different Language Institutes in the city of Mashhad, northeast Iran. The participants were asked to complete the *Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale* and the *Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire*. Data analysis and statistical calculations revealed a significant relationship between the teachers' emotional intelligence and their self-efficacy.

B. Sources and Definitions of Self-efficacy Beliefs

Before the 1990s, teachers were neglected in the research agenda despite the fact that they were one of the main rings of educational chain. However, in recent years, with the postulation of post-method pedagogy, which empowers language teachers "to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 541) and critical pedagogy, which considers teachers as "transformative intellectuals" (Pennycook, 1989, p. 613), more attention has been paid to them. Researchers have investigated different characteristics of language teachers such as their pedagogical knowledge base (e.g., Watzke, 2007), professional development (e.g., Ross & Bruce, 2007), and identity (e.g., Tsui, 2007), which affect teachers' classroom practices and subsequently students' achievement. One of the features that has been given much attention in recent years is teachers' sense of self-efficacy, which plays a crucial role in determining teachers' opinions about their job, their influence on students' outcomes and also their classroom activities.

In the last couple of decades, the concept of self-efficacy has attracted a considerable amount of attention as a significant measure for understanding and predicting human behavior and its assumed consequences. The concept of self-efficacy is based on the social cognitive theory. Bandura (1986) defines it as "the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations." Perception of one's own self-efficacy may not reflect an individual's real capability. However, perceived self-efficacy has an important role in arranging one's behavior (Senemoglu, 2001, as cited in Uzun, et al., 2010). Self-efficacy perceptions affect goals which people identify for themselves, amount of effort which they are to spend to reach these goals, duration of exposure to difficulties, and reactions they show against failure (Alabay, 2006, cited in Uzun, et al., 2010). Bandura (1986) categorized four types of teacher experiences (Bandura, 1977) that play a role in the formation of teacher efficacy: mastery experiences (an individual's past successes and failures), physiological and affective states (somatic information conveyed by physiological and emotional arousal), vicarious experiences (skill in question is modeled by someone considered competent by and comparable to the individual) and verbal persuasion (encouragement received from a knowledgeable source). He believed that positive experiences of these types generally contribute to the formation of high teacher efficacy, whereas negative experiences generally contribute to the formation of low teacher efficacy. The most prevailing and powerful influence on efficacy is mastery experience, where the successful implementation of behavior increases self-efficacy for that behavior. The perception that a performance has been successful enhances perceived self-efficacy and ensures future proficiency and success. In contrast, the perception that a performance has been a failure weakens efficacy beliefs and leads to the expectation that future performance will also be inefficient. The second influence, vicarious experience, originates from observing other similar people perform a behavior successfully. It provides people with ideas about successful manners of action. In contrast, observing people similar to oneself fail, lowers an individual's confidence and subsequently undermines his/her future efforts.

A third source of influence is social or verbal persuasion received from others. Successful persuaders foster people's beliefs in their capabilities, while at the same time, ensure that visualized success is achievable. Negative persuasion, on the other hand, may tend to defeat and lower self-beliefs. The most contributing effect of social persuasion pivots around initiating the task, attempting new strategies, and trying hard to succeed (Pajares, 2002). Psychological and affective states, such as stress anxiety and excitement, also provide information about efficacy perception and boost the feeling of proficiency. Hence, trying to reduce an individual's stress and anxiety and modifying negative debilitating states to positive ones plays an influential role in amending perceived self-efficacy beliefs. Another important affective factor, according to Pintrich and Schunk (2001), is attribution. For example, if success is attributed to internal or

controllable causes such as ability or effort, efficacy will be enhanced. Nevertheless, if success is attributed to external uncontrollable factors, such as chance, self-efficacy may be diminished (cited in Woolfolk Hoy and Burke Spero, 2000).

C. Teacher Self-efficacy

During the past two decades, the construct of self-efficacy has received increased attention in educational research. Teachers are one group of professionals whose self-efficacy has been extensively researched. Teacher efficacy is defined as “the teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (Tschannen-Moran, et al., 1998, p. 22). Teacher efficacy has also been defined as teachers’ “beliefs in their ability to have a positive effect on student learning” (Ashton, 1985, p. 142). This means that teachers with higher teaching efficacy find teaching meaningful and rewarding, expect students to be successful, assess themselves when students fail, set goals and establish strategies for achieving those goals, have positive attitudes about themselves and students, have a feeling of being in control, and share their goals with students (Ashton, 1985). Henson (2001) stated that teacher efficacy has been found to be one of the important variables consistently related to positive teaching behavior and student outcomes.

Efficacy beliefs have also been associated with various important aspects of the teaching occupation. It has been consistently demonstrated that teachers with a strong sense of efficacy are more enthusiastic and satisfied with their job (Allinder, 1994; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca & Malone, 2006), experience lower levels of burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Friedman, 2003; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008), exhibit greater commitment to their profession (Coladarci, 1992; Imants & Van Zoelen, 1995), and are more likely to continue teaching (Glickman & Tamashiro, 1982).

The results of many studies in the literature have proved the effects of teacher efficacy on different aspects of teacher performance, as well. For example the findings of the studies conducted by Brouwers and Tomic (2000) and Fires, Humman, and Olivarez (2007) confirmed that teacher efficacy is related to teacher burnout. Salami (2007) investigated the degree of correlation between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy to work attitudes among 475 secondary school teachers in southern Nigeria. Results of the study indicated that emotional intelligence and self-efficacy had significant relationships with work attitudes. This study provided no support for experience, age and gender differences.

In another study, Salami (2010) examined the relationship between psychological well-being, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence, on the one hand and students’ behaviors and attitudes on the other. This study also examined the moderating roles of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. Hierarchical regression analyses showed that emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, happiness and life satisfaction over and above depression predicted students’ behaviors and attitudes.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The population of the present study comprised of 50 EFL (29 males and 21 females) university professors instructing at a range of different universities in Urmia (Urmia state and Azad universities, Azarabadegan non-profit University, as well as Payam-e-Nour University). The participants enjoyed varying degrees (1-30) of teaching experience, and aged between 28 and 57 years. Additionally, they had majored in different branches of English studies, i.e. TEFL, Translation, or Literature, and were either MA or PhD holders.

B. Instruments

The following instruments were used in the present study:

- a. Emotional intelligence scale (Bar On, 1997).
- b. Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tchannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).
- c. Demographic questionnaire

To evaluate EFL university professors’ EI, the researcher employed *Bar Ons’ EQ-i*, which was originally designed by Bar On in 1980s. Bar On EI test, widely known as emotional quotient inventory (EQ-i), is a self report measure of emotionally and socially intelligent behavior that provides an estimate of emotional-social intelligence (Bar On, 1997). While the original version of the questionnaire encompasses 133 Likert-type items, the domestically standardized version of the test, which has been translated to Persian by Samouei (2003), has been reduced to 90 items, categorized in five higher-order scales and 15 subscales. Following the test designer’s lead, participants of the study were required to provide their responses on a continuum ranging from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’.

The Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale, also called the *Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale* (OSTES), consists of two versions: long form (including 24 items) and short form (including 12 items). The long form was utilized in the present study which comprises three subscales: *efficacy in student engagement*, *efficacy in instructional strategies*, and *efficacy in classroom management*. Each subscale loads equally on eight items, and every item is measured on a 9-point scale anchored with the notations: “nothing, very little, some influence, quite a bit, a great deal.” Before conducting the main study, a pilot study was conducted with 25 individuals to assess the reliability of the instrument. According to this pilot study four questions (4, 6, 13, 22) were eliminated and the questionnaire was found to enjoy adequate reliability ($\alpha = 0.767$).

English language professors were also asked to fill in demographic information. Demographics asked about participants' age, gender, experience and the last degree obtained.

C. Data Collection Procedure

As stated earlier, the current study was carried out in a range of different universities (Urmia state and Azad universities, Azarabadegan non-profit University, as well as Payam-e-Nour University) in Urmia, west Azerbaijan, Iran. The needed data were obtained from the participants during the year 2011, using the said instruments, i.e. Bar-On's EQ-i, Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale and demographic questionnaires.

D. Data Analysis

The data thus collected were then analyzed using Pearson product-moment correlation in order to determine the relationship between the participants' EI and self-efficacy. To find out the potential significant differences among EFL university professors with different ages and years of teaching experience, independent t-test and one-way ANOVA were run for both male and female groups.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes the descriptive results of the two instruments, i.e. EQ and self-efficacy questionnaires used in this study.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF EQ AND SELF-EFFICACY

N		Self-efficacy	EQ
	Valid	50	50
	Missing	0	0
Mean		173.5200	189.9600
Median		175.5000	186.0000
Mode		183.00 ^a	181.00
Std. Deviation		27.37438	28.81253
Variance		749.357	830.162
Minimum		84.00	133.00
Maximum		279.00	233.00

a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

To investigate the relationship between EFL university professors' emotional intelligence and self-efficacy, a Pearson product-moment correlation was applied. The results of correlation revealed that there is a significant correlation between EFL university professors' emotional intelligence and self-efficacy at the level of 0.05 ($r = 0.68^*$, $p < 0.05$) (see Table 2 for additional elucidation of the gained result).

TABLE 2
THE RESULTS OF CORRELATION BETWEEN PROFESSORS' EQ AND THEIR SELF-EFFICACY

Correlations			
		EQ	Self-efficacy
EQ	Pearson Correlation	1	.675**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.675**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

To determine whether there were any age-induced significant differences among EFL university professors concerning their EI and self-efficacy, one-way ANOVA was run. The results showed that there was no significant difference among EFL university professors with regard to their age (see Tables 3, 4, 5 & 6).

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ABOUT AGES OF THE PARTICIPANTS FOR SELF-EFFICACY

Descriptives								
Self-efficacy	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
28_37	40	172.8000	29.90172	4.72788	163.2370	182.3630	84.00	279.00
38_47	6	180.5000	12.94218	5.28362	166.9180	194.0820	164.00	203.00
48_57	4	170.2500	14.77329	7.38664	146.7424	193.7576	156.00	183.00
Total	50	173.5200	27.37438	3.87132	165.7403	181.2997	84.00	279.00

TABLE4
RESULTS OF ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR SELF-EFFICACY OF PARTICIPANTS

ANOVA					
Self-efficacy					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	355.830	2	177.915	.230	.795
Within Groups	36362.650	47	773.673		
Total	36718.480	49			

TABLE5
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS ABOUT AGES OF PARTICIPANTS FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Descriptives								
EQ	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
28_37	40	194.4000	28.21420	4.46106	185.3767	203.4233	133.00	233.00
38_47	6	163.8333	25.76367	10.51797	136.7960	190.8706	133.00	191.00
48_57	4	184.7500	20.98214	10.49107	151.3627	218.1373	167.00	215.00
Total	50	189.9600	28.81253	4.07471	181.7716	198.1484	133.00	233.00

TABLE6
RESULTS OF ONE-WAY ANOVA FOR EQ OF PARTICIPANTS

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1613.720	2	806.860	.971	.386
Within Groups	39064.200	47	831.153		
Total	40677.920	49			

Next, in order to examine whether there were any significant differences among EFL university professors with different teaching experiences concerning their EI and self-efficacy, independent t-test analysis was applied.

TABLE7
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE FOR EI AND SELF-EFFICACY

Group Statistics				
x	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self-efficacy	50	173.5200	27.37438	3.87132
EQ	50	189.9600	28.81253	4.07471

TABLE8
RESULTS OF INDEPENDENT T-TEST ANALYSIS

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
x	Equal variances assumed	23.612	.000	28.532	98	.123	-16.44000	5.62053	-27.59376	-5.28624
	Equal variances not assumed			28.532	97.744	.123	-16.44000	5.62053	-27.59413	-5.28587

The obtained results revealed that there was no significant difference among EFL university professors concerning their EI and self-efficacy. In other words, teaching experience of EFL university professors was not found to have any significant effect on their performance on the scales of emotional intelligence and self-efficacy (Tables 7 and 8 illustrate this piece of finding).

V. DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: As stated earlier, the current study sought to investigate, in the first place, the possible association between emotional intelligence and sense of self-efficacy beliefs in a sample of Iranian EFL university professors. The findings showed that there was a positive significant correlation between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy among EFL university professors. The findings are in line with those reported by Chan (2004) and Martin et al. (2004). This piece of finding is also consistent with that gained by Penrose et al. (2007) who states that there is a moderate association between EI and teacher self-efficacy of primary and secondary school teachers. In a similar study, in L2 context, Moafian and Ghanizadeh (2009) demonstrated that enhancing EFL teachers' emotional intelligence had a positive influence on their sense of efficacy beliefs among 98 language Institute teachers in Mashhad, a city in north-east of Iran. Bandura (1977) discussed that "somatic information conveyed by physiological and emotional states" gives

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