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Relationship between social intelligence with effective influence among physical education expertise in Isfahan education organizations

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ABSTRACT

One concept of social intelligence referred to it as the “ability to read nonverbal cues or make accurate social inferences” and ‘one’s ability to accomplish relevant objectives in specific social settings. Based on this, the purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between social intelligence with effective influence among physical education expertise in Isfahan education organizations. For this purpose, a total of 48 physical education expertise in Isfahan education organizations participated in this research. There were 37 men and 11 women, and their ages ranged from 35-46 years-old. To data collection, all subjects filled in the Silvera Social Intelligence Scale (2001) and the Survey of effective influence (SEI). The results showed that the correlation between overall social intelligence scores and overall effective influence scores was significant at the level of $P < 0.001$. Furthermore, the correlation between overall social intelligence scores and effective influence sub-scales was significant at the level of $P < 0.001$. Based on our results, the differences between gender and experience with social intelligence and effective influence were not significant ($P > 0.05$) but there was significant difference between academic level and social intelligence ($P < 0.05$). Thus, the strength of the correlations obtained in the present research suggests that the overall social intelligence has a significant role in effective influence and its sub-scales.

Key words: Social Intelligence, Effective Influence, Physical Education Expertise, Education Organizations

INTRODUCTION

Intelligence is defined as general cognitive problem-solving skills. Thus, based on this definition, scientists, professionals and researchers argued that the intelligence is the ability to learn about, learn from, understand, and interact with one’s environment. This general ability consists of a number of specific abilities. Howard Gardner argues that there are 9 multiple intelligences such as emotional intelligence, linguistic intelligence, logical-Mathematics intelligence, social intelligence and etc [1]. Ford and Tisak (1983) defined social intelligence in terms of behavioral outcomes and were successful in supporting a distinct domain of social intelligence. They defined social intelligence as “one’s ability to accomplish relevant objectives in specific social settings” [2]. Marlowe (1986) equated social intelligence to social competence. He defined social intelligence as “the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and to act appropriately upon that understanding” [3, 4].

Based on these intelligences, several definitions about the social intelligence have been offered by theorists, but all share two common components: (1) the awareness of others and (2) their response and adaptation to others and the social situations [4,5,6]. Marlowe (1986) suggested that individuals who are socially intelligent appear to experience a rich, meaningful life, as opposed to truncated affective experiences [3]. Furthermore, aspects of social intelligence have been found to be associated with enhanced social problem-solving abilities [7], experienced leadership [6], and positive interpersonal experience [8].

Social intelligence has been studied by social scientists for the past three decades but recently has garnered increasing attention. Daniel Goleman, who has written extensively on emotional intelligence, published *Social Intelligence* in late 2006. According to Goleman (2006), psychologist Edward Thorndike developed the original conceptualization of social intelligence in 1920 as a mental ability distinct from abstract and mechanical intelligence [5]. Thorndike (1920) defined social intelligence as “the ability to act wisely in human relations” [8, 9].

More recently, Goleman’s (2006) definition divides social intelligence into two broad categories: social awareness and social facility. He defined social awareness as “what we sense about others” and defined social facility as “what we then do with that awareness” [5]. Goleman has argued that to fully understand social intelligence requires us to include “non-cognitive” aptitudes—“the talent, for instance, that lets a sensitive nurse calm a crying toddler with just the right reassuring touch, without having to think for a moment about what to do” [5]. His model emphasizes an affective interactive state where both social awareness and social facility domains range from basic capabilities to more complex high-end articulation. Social awareness is comprised of four dimensions: primal empathy, attunement, empathic accuracy, and social cognition. Primal empathy is being able to sense others’ nonverbal emotional signals. Attunement refers to active listening and giving someone our full attention. Empathic accuracy is a cognitive ability and builds on primal empathy, i.e., the individual is able to not only feel, but understand, what the other person is experiencing. Social cognition describes knowledge about how the social world works, e.g., the rules of etiquette, finding solutions to social dilemmas, or decoding social signals [4, 5]. Social facility expands on this awareness to allow smooth, effective interactions, and its four dimensions include: synchrony, self-presentation, influence, and concern. Synchrony was defined as gliding gracefully through a nonverbal dance with another person. Just as music invokes a rhythm and beat—engaging us—so does our nonverbal dance create a flow and ease with another individual. Self-presentation describes the ability to present oneself favorably, such as, leaving a good impression. Influence is the ability to constructively shape the outcome from the interaction with another, and concern is not only caring about another’s needs, but acting accordingly. Although considered soft skills, these ingredients are the basic elements of nourishing and sustaining interpersonal relationships [5,6,10].

Several studies have shown that social intelligence is multidimensional and distinguishable from general intelligence domains [7,10,11]. These concepts of social intelligence are incorporating internal and external perceptions, social skills, and other psychosocial variables [12]. Instruments used in these studies range from self-reports, peer or other ratings, use of behavioral criterion, and performance measures. Marlowe’s (1986) model of social intelligence comprised five domains: pro-social attitude, social performance skills, empathetic ability, emotional expressiveness, and confidence. Pro-social attitudes were indicated by having an interest and concern for others; social performance skills were demonstrated in appropriate interaction with others; empathetic ability refers to one’s ability to identify with others; emotion expressiveness describes one’s “emotionality” toward others; and confidence in social situations is based on one’s comfort level in social situations [3].

On the other hand, the effective influence is the important variable that directly affected on social intelligence. Professionals and researchers believed that the effective influence is personality traits to help persons that determine how effective they are at influencing others with integrity. Also, based on details of effective influence, the individual being rated then receives a detailed feedback report which provides such information as (1) the appropriateness, frequency, and effectiveness of their influence tactics, (2) an overall effectiveness rating, (3) a ranking of their influence skills, (4) a comparison of their influence skills with other business professionals, and (5) recommendations for improving their influence effectiveness [13]. Based on these results and literature, the purpose of this research was to investigate the relationship between social intelligence with effective influence among physical education expertise in Isfahan education organizations.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was the correlation study design. Participants included 48 physical education expertise in Isfahan education organizations. There were 37 men and 11 women, and their ages ranged from 35-46 years-old.

Instruments

To data collection, all subjects filled in the Silvera Social Intelligence Scale (2001) and the Survey of effective influence (SEI). The Silvera Social Intelligence Scale (2001) was used to determined social intelligence in participants. This scale has 21 questions. Silvera (2001) constructed a scale for the assessment of social intelligence. In this Scale, after recoding items that were negatively worded, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using principle components analysis and Varimax rotation was conducted on the 103 preliminary. This solution explained a total of 30% of the variance in the original item set. The Silvera Social Intelligence Scale (2001) included the social information processing, social skills and social awareness subscales. Furthermore, we used the overall social intelligence scores in this research. Silvera et al. (2001) introduced three components of social intelligence meaning, social information processing, social skills and social awareness. Social skill has been determined to be an important asset to an employee. High social awareness has been considered to be important for the workplace. Social information processing and social skills are also important for teachers [14].

Also, the Survey of effective influence (SEI) asks about impact of several of effective influence elements managers and teachers in organizations. The SIE has 4 main subscales (such as influence tactics, organizational power base, personal power base and skill at using the tactics). This questionnaire consist 96 questions in 5-point Likert scale (never = 1, very often = 5). Also, the collected data was analyzed by descriptive (mean and standard deviation) and inferential (Pearson's correlation test and independent t test) statistical tests at the $P < 0.05$ significant level with SPSS Version 15.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of the overall social intelligence and effective influence sub-scales among physical education expertise in Isfahan education organizations.

Table 1. The descriptive results of overall social intelligence and effective influence sub-scales

Variables	Means (M)	Standard Deviations (SD)
Overall Social Intelligence	3.806	0.426
Influence Tactics	3.76	0.46
Organizational Power Base	3.55	0.64
Personal Power Base	3.7	0.82
Skill at using the Tactics	3.74	0.51
Overall Effective Influence	3.69	0.68

In addition, the matrix correlation among all variables that used in this research presented in table 2. Results showed that the correlation between overall social intelligence scores and overall effective influence scores was significant at the level of $P < 0.001$. Furthermore, the correlation between overall social intelligence scores and effective influence sub-scales was significant at the level of $P < 0.001$.

Table 2. Matrix correlation between overall social intelligence scores and effective influence sub-scales

Variables	influence tactics	organizational power base	personal power base	skill at using the tactics	overall effective influence
overall social intelligence	0.475**	0.689**	0.528**	0.37**	0.515**

**** Significant at the level of $P < 0.001$**

Also, we used the independent t test to determine the differences between gender (men and women), academic level (bachelor and master of degrees) and experience in overall social intelligence and effective influence scores. Based on our results, the differences between gender and experience with these variables were not significant ($P > 0.05$). Furthermore, results showed that there was significant difference between academic level and social intelligence ($P < 0.05$).

CONCLUSION

Our results showed that the significant and meaningful correlations between overall social intelligence scores and effective influence sub-scales (for more details, see table 2). Thus, the strength of the correlations obtained in the present research suggests that the overall social intelligence has a significant role in the effective influence and its sub-scales.

Based on these results, Zirkel (2000) believed that social intelligence is closely related to one's own, personality and individual behavior [15]. Her model centered on the term "purposive behavior" which is deliberate action taken after evaluating one's environment, opportunities and risks and the goals set. In fact this model of social intelligence assists in creating a sense of identity for the individual, emphasizes intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and focuses on thinking and resultant behavior within social contexts [15, 16].

Furthermore, Marzano et al (2003) argued that the teachers and managers, who are socially intelligent, organize the work environment through establishing supportive and encouraging relationships [17].

Also, the findings of this study are parallel to works supported by Thorndike (1920), who posed that the development of social intelligence starts immediately after birth, and develops with age [9]. The finding on the relationship between social intelligence and age is also in agreement with the findings of Goleman (1997) that suggested social intelligence skill increases as one gets older [18].

Our results in this study support Albrecht's (2006) research regarding social intelligence to be required for the teachers and the important role it plays in classroom behavior management [14]. Albrecht (2006) considers social intelligence as a prerequisite for teachers. He is of the view that the educational system and teachers should respect the rules and behaviors associated with high social intelligence [14, 19].

Our results also showed that there was significant difference between academic level (bachelor and master degrees) with social intelligence. The findings of the current research are in line with Albrecht (2006). Thorndike and Stein (1937) stated that social intelligence increases with academic level of a person. Some people argue that it is a multidimensional component that does not necessarily apply across all situations [2, 19].

Wong et al. (1995) in their study focused on both cognitive and behavioral aspects of social intelligence [11]. Results from the first experiment of the study showed that social perception and heterosexual interaction are separable from each other and from academic intelligence. The second experiment evaluated the relationships between academic intelligence and three aspects of cognitive social intelligence: social knowledge, social perception, and social insight. Social knowledge was defined as knowing the rules of etiquette. Social perception was defined as the ability to understand or decode others' verbal and nonverbal behaviors. Social insight was defined as the ability to comprehend and interpret observed behaviors in the social context. They found that these dimensions of social intelligence were distinguishable from academic intelligence and that social perception and social insight were not distinguishable from one another; however, social perception-social insight construct was separable from social knowledge [11, 20].

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