

Comparative Study of Intelligence, Emotional Quotient, Stress and Mental Health In Students of Naresuan University, Pitsanulok Province

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Importance of Problem

Current social conditions changes rapidly in all aspects, affecting lives inevitably. People in the society must face a multitude of ever-increasing problems: population increase resulting in unemployment, low wages, education, cultural shifts; to the point at which it appears that everything must be competed for. When people must confront too much of problems and obstacles in life, life lacks balance, causing emotional stress. From the 1996 report of the World Health Organization, it was found that 1,500 of worldwide population were experiencing stress and mental health problems. Two-thirds of these populations were in developing countries, including Thailand. Meanwhile, information from the Ministry of Public Health has supported that, nowadays, no less than 12 million Thai people experience stress –or approximately 1 in 5 of the nationwide population. And that in the year 2000, 600,000 of the population –or 1 percent of the nation’s population, would have severe mental health problems.

All these emotional stress and mental health problems notably affect other problems, especially loss of valuable human resources for the development of the country. To enable people to conduct their lives by confronting various problems without creating emotional stress and mental health problems was an issue that sparked interests when Gibb (1995:24-31) wrote an article named “The EQ Factor” in Time magazine in 1995, reporting that intelligence capability alone could not ensure success in life, but must also rely on another factor – EQ, for success in life.

Presently, people in general have turned interested and placed significance on emotional intelligence. As, for instance,

McClelland (1973) discovered in a research-study that after graduation, students who achieved highest grades did not succeed in life, but students with moderate grades were most able to succeed in life. Medical students, whom everyone accepted as highly intelligent, commit murders when anger-emotions cannot be controlled. Even governors or leaders of nation must be able to control emotions in various circumstances, to bring about credibility and success at work, such as cited in mass media "...Emotional maturity of the leader-to-be of the nation is of much interest to Thai people..." importantly whether this can lead the nation through the crisis (Daily News, 2000:3). The important issue concerning emotional intelligence is we believe that those who lack EQ will lead to stress, and stress will lead to worry, poor health, and unhappy life in society. Conversely, those with high EQ will be able to understand themselves, live their lives appropriately, adapt to and live happily in the society; hence the reason for all to focus on development of EQ.

Present education system emphasizes development of youths to grow into valuable human resource in future, especially the EQ aspect. As can be seen from the study of Lueher (1997), on the development of quality of students' life in the USA, which found that students wanted teaching aimed at developing EQ –a fundamental human recognition skills. By this, it is believed that success in life and work must comprise IQ, Expertise, EQ (Goleman, 1998:18-22). For Thailand, it is stipulated in the Statute of National Education B.E. 2542, Section 1, General Chapter, Article 6 that "Education arrangement must be to develop Thai people into whole persons of physique, mentality, intelligence, knowledge and morality, possessing ethics and culture in conducting lives, and able to live happily with others. That is an education system that focuses on producing students with characteristics of "able, good, and happy," due to awareness that can create national resource ready for happy lives by developing since primary education until collegiate level, to progress into fully dignified adulthood.

The majority of college students are in the teenage stage, especially 1st-year students which is considered the Turning Point stage of life –that which is between childhood and adulthood, the

age of unstable physical and emotional states. Walker (1978) states

that if life is analogous to a journey, teenage is a particularly complicated part of the journey: there is always confusion and anxiety inside, uncertain whether oneself is a child or an adult. Many psychologists comment that teenage is a Critical Period in life, i.e. Erikson considers teenage to be the critical age of development, while Hall thinks that teenage is the age of stress and violence –which is equivalent to the critical age of development. Crisis refers to mental, physical, and social crisis; all of which affect development in the next stages of life, resulting in being unable to protect oneself from all-around influence and threats, falling easy victims to others taking advantage. In conjunction, in the present condition, Thailand is acknowledged and reputed from many countries to be “The Bright Star of Asia-Pacific,” a success of the nation’s economic development over the past 30 years, resulting in transformation of Thailand from a traditional agricultural society to Newly Industrialized Countries (NICS).

That Thailand has had rapid economic development – especially material prosperity, borderless communication technology leads to transmittance and reception of much Western culture, causing decline in spiritual prosperity, deficient emotional and mental capabilities that result in reduced endurance and restraint to problems, more shattered families. Generally, teenagers are the most troublesome. Most problems that occurred are consequences of physical changes, anxiety, and unhappiness; producing irritation, worry, quick-temper, unwillingness to talk to anyone, or provocative words causing misunderstanding among friends or relatives: causes of emotional and social problems of children in this age.

Naresuan University is a collegiate education institution with a background of foundation in multiple, successive stages. Started initially as the Education College, Pitsanulok on January 25, B.E. 2510, for which the Pitsanulok campus was the 4th Education College after Prasarnmitr, Pratumwan, Bansaen, respectively. Afterwards, the Education College was elevated in status to “Srinakharinwirot University” on June 28, B.E. 2517, and was conferred by His Majesty King Bhumipol Aduldej the name of “Naresuan University” on October 7, B.E. 2532.

Students are regarded as an important resource in national development. The nation requires able and good persons who are qualified, moral, and ethical, as well as emotional and mental capabilities, to be essential forces in national development. In particular, 1st-year students are categorized as Late Adolescence, which is the stage when various aspects of development reach full maturity: emotional, rational, and intelligence development will grow completely. This age will possess an effort to adapt oneself into society, to think and decide on issues themselves, to solve problem themselves; an eagerness to show that one is not a child any longer, the need to create impression on various matters, the need to demonstrate ability that they can do, and the need to equal rights to adults.

Intelligence: is a very influential factor on student development. Students with high intelligence will, in almost all aspects, have faster development than students with low intelligence. Moreover, Students with high intelligence and students with low intelligence also have different degrees in perception.

Emotion: of teenagers is a resultant effect from early adolescences, perhaps somewhat intensified. Emotional sentiments will be straightforward, open, and unable to conceal like/dislike emotions. This age still possesses doubts on various matters, easy emotional changes, unable to fully manage and control emotions.

Emotional Quotient: can be developed. By this, many have studied techniques for the development of EQ. For instance, Wynters (1996:4264) has developed EQ in teaching-vocation students with psychological-drama activities and movies; finding that development of higher EQ in teaching-vocation students could be done. In addition, there are other formats to develop EQ, e.g. music training, muscle relaxation, etc.

Stress: Students in the late adolescence age must adapt to new environments, because of entrance into university life, which is analogous to initiation into adulthood. They must learn to exhibit appropriate behaviors, i.e. social conduct, dress, responsibility on assigned tasks, pursuit of new knowledge for acceptance by peers and adults. All these affect 1st-year students who are still in late

adolescence with feeling of discomfort, dissonance, oppression, and stress, due to lack of confidence in own abilities to perform.

Mental Health: Good mental health of students is very important, because it is what helps them to learn efficiently and develop personality appropriately. Experiences that teenagers received at home and at university will be instilled in the students and will grow into adults with good mental health. Thus, students should be optimally developed in all aspects: intelligence, strong physique, cheerfully bright, ability to help themselves, capacity to make decisions and solve problems, and ability to adapt to student-colleagues and faculty.

The examiner realizes and is interested in performing a comparative study of Intelligence, EQ, Stress and Mental Health in 1st-year students of Naresuan University, Pitsanulok Province. By which this research-study will be guidelines for the development of students to grow into graduates who are valuable human resource, good citizens of the nation, wholly complete in both physical and mental aspects, emotionally intelligent, and with appropriate behaviors; who can conduct lives in society in ways that are able, good, and happy.

Objectives of the Research.

To study comparatively intelligence, EQ, stress and mental health in 1st-year students of Naresuan University, Pitsanulok Province.

Research Hypothesis:

1. Students with difference in intelligence, EQ, stress and mental health will have different study achievements.
2. Students with high level of intelligence are positively correlated to EQ.
3. Students with good relations with others are positively correlated to EQ.
4. Students with high EQ are positively correlated to good mental health.

Justifications for the research:

1. To study comparatively intelligence, EQ, stress and mental health in 1st-year students of Naresuan University, Pitsanulok Province; subsequently to be guidelines for the development behaviors and personalities of students.
2. To learn of relationship between EQ and students with emotional-behavior problems, for the development of students' potentials in quality life conducts.
3. To be guidelines for teachers, parents or interested persons to be able to construct EQ development programs for application on children with emotional problems or normal children.
4. Benefits as guidelines for research-studies concerning intelligence, EQ, stress and mental health of students.

Scope of the Research:

In this study, the examiner has predetermined the scope of the study as follows:-

1. Population in this study are 1st-year students enrolled in the General Psychology course (217102) in the 2/2547 academic year, totaling 500 students, using Purposive Sampling.
2. Variables used in this study comprise:
 - Independent variables; i.e. Intelligence (IQ), Emotional Intelligence (EQ), Stress, and Mental Health.
 - Dependent variables; i.e. Student's Achievement scores (PGA).
3. Duration of the study:
This study is a survey-study, covering 4 weeks beginning from December 1, 2004 -- December 30, 2004.

Terminology:

1. **Intelligence Quotient (IQ)** refers to the all-aspects sum of abilities in a person that enables the person on thinking, decision-making, prediction, learning, adaptation, problem-solving, and appropriate action; ability to confront situations capably and rationally.
2. **Emotional Quotient (EQ)** refers to the ability to be aware of and understand emotions of oneself and others; ability to manage emotions and control own emotions for appropriate expressions; ability to boost morale and motivations to oneself ensuring good things to oneself and others; able to control and suppress emotions in various situations; good self-conduct skills, can persuade others; ability to perceive and understand others, with good relations to others, ability to behave appropriately to time and place without discomfort; ability to solve interpersonal conflicts, to respond to emotions and needs of others appropriately; and ability to live with others in society happily, successfully in life.

Emotional Quotient (EQ): The Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health has categorized components of EQ in 3 aspects comprising 9 components:

- 2.1. Goodness aspect is capability in 3 components of sub-aspects:
 - 2.1.1. Control of emotions and needs of oneself.
 - 2.1.2. Sympathy for others.
 - 2.1.3. Responsibility to the public.
- 2.2. Ability aspect is capability in 3 components of sub-aspects:
 - 2.2.1. Self-motivation.
 - 2.2.2. Ability to make decision to solve problems.
 - 2.2.3. Relationship with others.

- 2.3. Happiness aspect is capability in 3 components of sub-aspects:
 - 2.3.1. Self-esteem.
 - 2.3.2. Satisfaction in life.
 - 2.3.3. Mental peacefulness.

- 3. **Emotional Intelligence Test** refers to the test used to measure EQ levels, of The Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health, comprising 52 questions divided into 3 aspects of mental abilities in 9 components:-
 - 3.1. Goodness aspect is capability in 3 components of sub-aspects:
 - 3.1.1. Control of emotions and needs of oneself:
Questions 1 to 6.
 - 3.1.2. Sympathy for others:
Questions 7 to 12.
 - 3.1.3. Responsibility to the public:
Questions 13 to 18.

 - 3.2. Ability aspect is capability in 3 components of sub-aspects:
 - 3.2.1. Self-motivation:
Questions 19 to 24.
 - 3.2.2. Ability to make decision to solve problems:
Questions 25 to 30.
 - 3.2.3. Relationship with others:
Questions 31 to 36.

 - 3.3. Happiness aspect is capability in 3 components of sub-aspects:
 - 3.3.1. Self-esteem:
Questions 37 to 40.
 - 3.3.2. Satisfaction in life:
Questions 41 to 46.
 - 3.3.3. Mental peacefulness:
Questions 47 to 52.

4. Emotional Intelligence Score refers to the numerical score

obtained from the EQ measurement of students from the Emotional Intelligence Test of The Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health.

Expected benefits:

1. A comparative study of intelligence, EQ, stress and mental health in 1st-year students of Naresuan University, Pitsanulok Province; which subsequently to be used as guidelines for the development behaviors and personalities of students.
2. Learning on relationship between EQ and students with emotional-behavior problems, to be used in the development of students' potentials in quality life conducts. Guidelines for teachers, parents or interested persons to be able to construct EQ development programs for application on children with emotional problems or normal children.

To be guidelines for subsequent research-studies concerning intelligence, EQ, stress and mental health of students in other aspects.

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