Distributed Leadership Influence on Professional Development Initiatives: Conversations with Eight Teachers

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Introduction

Achieving the kind of balance that encourages all children to learn, work, and contribute to their fullest potential has been a continuing challenge as the world grows more complex and our communities enveloped with various challenges of socio-political and economic disintegration. With rapid changes in technology and global competition in all facets of human endeavour, it is more crucial than ever that adolescents are fully equipped to compete for knowledge and technology based jobs. When students are not well prepared for the challenges ahead most especially from the secondary school stage of education, the cost to individuals and the implication to the society can better be imagined. For example, the transition from high school to university is very stressful for most individuals (McLaughlin, Brozovsky & McLaughlin, 1998; Perry, Hladkyj, Pekrum & Pelletier, 2001; Pratt et al, 2000). The majority of high school students who go on to post-secondary institutions withdraw before graduation (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994; Pancer, Hunsberger, Pratt & Alisat, 2000). First-year university students face a variety of stressors: making new relationships, modifying existing relationships with parents and family (e.g. living apart), and learning to cope with the new academic environment. Furthermore, they must learn to function as independent adults (e.g. budgeting time and money). Failure to master these familiar tasks appears to be the most common reason for undergraduate students withdrawing from university (Blanc, DeBuhr & Martin, 1983).

Before now, educational institutions have embraced the academic model which focuses on cognitive learning rather than on the thinking processes that leads to emotional learning and play a big role in career and life success. However, recent research findings have proved that having a high cognitive intelligence is not enough to ensure success in ones endeavour. In fact, it has been established that "Intelligent Quotient (IQ) accounts for only 20 percent of the factors that determine success in life" (Chemiss & Goldman, 1999, p. 26). And that many of the most successful people in academic, business and social world have a high degree of what has become known as Emotional Intelligence (EQ) (Parker, et al, 2004; Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan & Majeski 2003; Ransdell, 2001).

The accumulating body of evidence from research on emotion has indicated that affective phenomena constitute a unique source of information for individuals about their surrounding environment, and this information informs their thoughts, actions and subsequent feelings (see Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler & Meyer, 2000). Since individuals cannot be assumed to be equally skilled at perceiving, understanding and utilising this emotional information, suggesting that such individual differences now described under EQ contribute substantially to individuals' intellectual and emotional well-being (Barrett & Gross, 2001; Ciarrochi, Chan & Caputi, 2000). The concept of EQ provides a psychometric framework for the intuitive and appealing idea that people differ in their "emotional skills" and that these differences would be expected to relate to real-life outcomes such as career and relationship success.

Emotional Intelligence is the capacity to monitor emotions in oneself and others, to discriminate among emotions, to understand messages in emotions and to use energy in emotions for personal gains and

fulfilment. In a nutshell, emotional intelligence is all about being intelligent with messages in emotions and using them to solve various life challenges. It describes a set of non-cognitive abilities that influence human ability to succeed in life. (Akinboye, 2003). Emotional intelligence is the basis for personal qualities such as realistic self-confidence, personal integrity, knowledge of person strength and weaknesses, resilience in times of change or adversity, dogged perseverance in the face of difficulties, self-motivation and the knack for getting well with others.

When viewed against the backdrop of the growing complexity of technological development, which the world is now, and the conditions of modern day living in countries of the world, which are characterised by poor leadership, corruption, unemployment, low income earning, socio-political and economic stress, diseases and other various emotional ridden social vices, one will realise the fact that the most valuable resource of any country is its inherent intellectual assets, which can be exploited through EQ. Furthermore, the unprecedented research outcome on the relationship between EQ and human performance, further points to the fact that the single most important thing government of any nation in the world today can do to enhance the personal development of its citizenry is to encourage the teaching of life-long skills such as EQ. For example, it was reported that EQ accounts for more than 85 percent of innovation (exceptional performance) in graduate trainees (Lay group, 2000). This finding is highly surprising. There has never been a psychological variable that has made any such prediction in a century of research in applied psychology (Mayer, 2000).

This study therefore attempts to investigate into the differential effectiveness of provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery at fostering emotional intelligence of adolescents.

Provocation is a technique that requires lateral thinking. It involves moving our thinking out of the established patterns that we use to solve problems normally. Generally, we think by recognising patterns and reacting to them; such reactions come from our past experiences and logical extensions to those experiences, all too often we do not venture outside of these patterns. Judgement is the powerful tool we use to make sure that we keep to these routine tracks. While we may know the answer as part of a different type of problem, the structure of our brains makes it difficult for us to link this in. The provocation technique involves making deliberately stupid statements (provocations), in which something we take for granted about the situation is not true. The assumption of this technique is that statements need to be stupid to shock our minds out of existing ways of thinking. Once we have made a provocative statement, our judgement is then suspended and the statement is used to generate ideas.

Brainstorming, the second treatment programme used in this study is a creativity technique. It is a conference technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all the ideas spontaneously by its members. Although the technique can be used by an individual to generate new ideas, but it is a process that works best with a group of people. Brainstorming technique is a process designed to obtain the maximum number of ideas relating to a specific area of interest.

Emotional mastery which is the third treatment used in this study is all about getting our emotions to serve us. It requires gaining an understanding of how our emotions affect us and how we can use them to improve the quality of our lives. Emotional mastery is about regaining control of our lives by developing a strong healthy and stable emotional core (Castella, 2000). Emotional mastery happens when we become capable of allowing ourselves to feel our emotions and still to do what we want to do.

While acknowledging the fact that many researches have been conducted on the effectiveness of different creativity techniques at fostering EQ (Zhou et al 2003); the differential effectiveness of provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery, put together, in fostering emotional intelligence has not been investigated; hence the need for the present study.

Since there are differences in how boys and girls are socialised in our society, gender may facilitate the influence of training programmes on the EQ skills of subjects. This can be sustained by research outcome of previous study on EQ that indicated that emotion is a complex construct with differential implications for people according to gender (Smith, 2002). The present study therefore considers gender as second level independent variables to determine its influence on EQ of adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the effect of provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery on subjects' level of emotional intelligence.

2. There is no significant difference in the effect of gender on subjects' level of emotional intelligence.

3. There is no significant gender difference on the effects of provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery on subjects' level of emotional intelligence.

Method

Design and Subjects

A 3X2 factorial design was employed. The various factors are treatments, which exist at three levels (i.e. provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery) and gender which was observed at two levels (i.e. male and female). A total of 270 senior secondary school students randomly selected from 3 public secondary schools in Ijebu North Local Government Area of Ogun State participated in the study. Thirty (30) of them each were randomly assigned to the three treatment groups with regards to gender in each of the sample school. On the whole, a total of 125 males and 145 females were used for the study. The age range of the participants was between 12 and 18 years with the mean age and standard deviation of 16.89 and 1.43 years respectively.

Instrumentation

The emotional intelligence scale (EIS) developed by Schutte et al (1998) was used in this study to obtain pre-post treatment mean scores. The scale is a one-dimensional scale that assesses emotional intelligence through 33-self referencing statements tapping the appraisal and expression of emotions in self and others, emotion perception and regulation in self and others, and emotion utilization. The scale is made up of two sections. Section A contains items to measure the demographic data, while Section B of the scale contains items that assess emotional intelligence level of individual. Subjects are to rate the extent they agree or disagree with each statement on a 5 point likert scaling format ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree). Since (EIS) contains 33 items, the total maximum of score that can be obtained on the scale is 33 X 5 = 165, and the lowest is 33 X 1 = 33.

Of the available measures of EI, the researcher opted for EIS developed by Schuttee et al (1998) for

the following reasons: First, the development of the items has a theoretical foundation. It was fashioned after Salovey and Mayer's early work model of emotional intelligence. Second, Schutte and her colleague showed that the scale has sound psychometric properties. They reported that the scale has high internal consistency with Chronbach's alpha (α) ranging from 0.87 to 0.90 and two-week test-retest reliability co-efficient of 0.78. Third, there is evidence for convergent and divergent validity of the instrument. For instance, the scale has been found to correlate with theoretically related construct such as alexithymia, mood repair, optimism and impulse control (Schutte, 1998). Fourth, the EIS has been used extensively in the southern part of the country with both adults (Adeyemo & Ogunyemi, 2003b; Adeyemo & Ogunyemi, 2005) and Secondary School Students (Mabekoje & Ogunyemi, 2003c; Ogunyemi, 2007d) with cronbach alpha (α) ranging from 0.72 to 0.93. Fifth, the scale is one of the most readily available scales of emotional intelligence. And lastly, the content of the scale is culture-free and easy to understand; and found suitable for use with adolescents (Schutte et al, 1998). Some of the items of the scale are "I know when to speak about my personal problems to others", "I find it hard to understand the non-verbal messages of other people", "I like to share my emotions with others", "By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing", "I know why my emotions change"

Procedure

Participants were welcomed and briefed on the purpose and the nature of the study, and were then randomly distributed into the 3 experimental groups with regard for gender. Emotional intelligence scale (EIS) was then administered on them at each level of the experimental group (i.e. provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery groups) for the purpose of forming a baseline data against which to compute the post-treatment data. All participants in each experimental group were thereafter given standardized instructions explaining the task involve in each treatment group through lectures, discussion, case study analysis, simulation exercise and take home assignments.

The tasks considered to be a complex heuristic task were presented at each level of the experimental group after each session of serious lectures/discussions. Participants were made to respond to them, first, as an individual and the whole group was also made to consider the same problem. To ensure that participants remain focus on the objective of the study (i.e. enhancing their emotional intelligence level), they were encouraged to generate novel ideas/solutions to the problem presented before them. They were told to come up with novel ideas that were not typical response to the type of problem presented to them in normal day life situation.

The programme lasted for eight weeks of eight sessions of one hour of intensive training at each level of the experimental group. In each session, participants were given 30 minutes lectures/discussions. Additional 15 minutes were given for individual work/practice on every treated topic; and another 15 minutes were given for group work/practice. In some cases where participants could not provide solutions to the problem presented, they were encouraged to work on them at home. At the end of the 8th week of serious training, emotional intelligence scale was again administered on all participants to collect post-test scores. Some of the tasks presented to them to solve at each level of the experimental group are: "Imagine set of armed bandits suddenly breaking into your room while you are fast asleep in the night. What is likely to be your first reaction? (This is one of the tasks given to participants in emotional mastery group)". "How best can the menace of cultist be nib on the bud in our tertiary institutions? (This is one of the tasks given to participants in brainstorming group)". "Houses do not

have roofs" (This is one of the provocation statements given to participants in provocation experimental group).

Method of Data Analysis

The Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to analyse the data collected through pre-post test treatment administration .

Results

Hypothesis One

There is no significant effect of provocation, brainstorming, and emotional mastery on participants' emotional intelligence.

The results in Table 1 revealed that there is a significant effect of provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery on subjects' emotional intelligence ($F_{(2,263)}$ = 5.341; p <.05). However, no significant effect of gender on subjects' emotional intelligence was indicated ($F_{(1,263)}$ = .001; p >.05). Also no interaction effect of treatment and gender was shown ($F_{(2,263)}$ = 1.233; p >.05).

The results in Table 2 above revealed that there is a significant effect of treatment exists in the emotional intelligence of subjects. The calculated F Ratio of 5.341 was found to be higher than the critical F ratio of 3.00 at 2

Table 2: Univariate Analysis of the effects of provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery on subjects' level of emotional intelligence

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Contrast	2942.565	2	1471.283	5.341	.005
Error	72447.405	263	275.465		

The F tests of the effect of group. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

and 263 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis of no significant effect of provocation, brainstorming, and emotional mastery on subjects' emotional intelligence was rejected by this finding. To determine the directions of difference a pairwise comparison was done on the treatment techniques. Results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Pairwise comparison of the differences in emotional intelligence scores of subjects in provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery groups

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.(a)	95% Confidence Interval for Difference(a) Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Provocation	brainstorming	3.053	2.477	.219	-1.825	7.931
	emotional mastery	-5.031(*)	2.497	.045	-9.949	-.114
brainstorming	provocation	-3.053	2.477	.219	-7.931	1.825
	emotional mastery	-8.084(*)	2.495	.001	-12.997	-3.171
emotional mastery	provocation	5.031(*)	2.497	.045	.114	9.949
	brainstorming	8.084(*)	2.495	.001	3.171	12.997

Based on estimated marginal means
* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.
a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Least Significant Difference (equivalent to no adjustments).

Results in Table 3 showed that significant difference existed in the emotional intelligence between subjects exposed to provocation and those exposed emotional mastery, and also between subjects exposed to brainstorming and those exposed to emotional mastery. However, no significant difference existed in the emotional intelligence between subjects exposed to provocation and those exposed to brainstorming.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant effect of gender on subjects' emotional intelligence

The results in Table 4 revealed that there is no significant effect of gender on subjects' emotional intelligence. The calculated F-Ratio of .001 was found to be lower than critical F-Ratio

Table 4: Univariate Analysis of covariance of the differences in emotional intelligence scores of male and female subjects.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Contrast	.352	1	.352	.001	.971
Error	72447.405	263	275.465		

The F tests the effect of gender. This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means.

of 3.84 at 1 and 263 degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis of no significant effect of gender on subjects' emotional intelligence was therefore accepted by this finding. This implies that emotional intelligence of subjects is not gender specific.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant interaction effect of treatment (i.e. provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery) and gender on subjects' level of EQ.

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The results in Table 5 indicated that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender in the emotional intelligence of subjects.

Male subjects under the provocation group had a mean score of 122.454 and a standard error of 2.567 compared to those under the

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of emotional intelligence scores of male and female subjects in provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery treatment groups

Group	gender	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Provocation	male	122.454(a)	2.567	117.401	127.508
	female	124.536(a)	2.400	119.810	129.263
brainstorming	male	122.742(a)	2.447	117.923	127.560
	female	118.143(a)	2.502	113.216	123.070
emotional mastery	male	127.379(a)	2.755	121.954	132.803
	female	129.674(a)	2.296	125.154	134.195

a. Covariates appearing in the model are evaluated at the following values: pre-test emotional intelligence = 121.6852.

brainstorming group with mean and standard error of 122.742 and 2.447 respectively, and those under the emotional mastery group with mean and standard error of 127.379 and 2.755 respectively.

Also female subjects under the provocation group had a mean score of 124.536 and a standard error of 2.400 compared to those under the brainstorming group with mean and standard error of 118.143 and 2.502 respectively and those under the emotional mastery group with mean and standard error of

129.674 and 2.296 respectively.

The null hypothesis which stated that three is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on subjects' EQ was sustained by this finding. The finding implies that treatment would not interfere with gender in fostering EQ of subjects.

Discussion

Results of this study indicated that the three treatments (i.e. provocation, brainstorming and emotional mastery) significantly affect the EQ levels of subjects. The results corroborate the research finding of Fischer and Fischer (2003) whose subjects in a study on the development, testing and evaluation of emotional intelligence performed better after receiving treatment programme similar to the one used in the present study. Although the three techniques significantly improved emotional intelligence level of subjects, it is however crystal clear that emotional mastery is the most effective of the three techniques at fostering adolescents' emotional intelligence. This was followed by provocation, and brainstorming techniques respectively. (See table 3 & 5) This is not surprising. Emotional mastery and emotional intelligence are two related constructs that should influence each other. The skills involve in emotional mastery (emotional literacy, emotional fitness, emotional depth and emotional alchemy) are the cornerstones in the development of emotional intelligence. And they are related to the four domains of emotional intelligence (emotional perception, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional understanding and emotional management) identified by Mayer and Salovey (1997).

It is also worth noting that provocation and brainstorming are in the same category (i.e. they are both creativity tools); and will enhance the emotional intelligence level of adolescents almost at the same rate. This is reflected in the non-significant difference in the scores of emotional intelligence of subjects exposed to the two techniques (provocation and brainstorming).

The findings that there are no significant effect of gender, and 2-way interaction effects of gender and treatments on subjects' level of emotional intelligence are at odds with the results of earlier studies who found that emotion is a complex construct with differential implication for people according to gender (see Smith, 2002); and that female gender is more socially skilled than male (Argyle, 1999; Hargie, Saunders & Dickson, 1995), and score significantly higher on existing emotional intelligence test than males (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 1998). This discrepancy is likely due to response bias. Several studies on gender difference in self-evaluations of performance (Beyer, 1990; Beyer & Bowden, 1997; Furnham & Rawles, 1995) have shown that there is a self-enhancing response bias in men and a self-derogatory bias in women. The findings of this study here, seems to suggest that there is also a response bias. The nature (self-enhancement versus self-derogation) and source (male versus female) of this bias are unclear. It could be for example, that males self-enhance, and females self-derogate. It may however, be argued that the response bias is more likely to be self-derogatory and on the side of females. An indication of this is reflected in the data analysis of emotional intelligence scores of subjects under brainstorming groups which revealed that the mean emotional intelligence score of females' subjects is lower than their male counterpart (see table 5).

Another plausible reason for the discrepancy in findings is likely due to major methodological differences between this study and earlier studies (Smith, 2002, Argyle, 1990; Hargie, Saunders & Dickson, 1995; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 1998). As noted by more recent writers (Matthew, et al, 2003) that early claims on emotional intelligence were made largely on the basis of very preliminary

data, sentiments, and without scientific investigation. The difference in findings here may be methodological. The so-called previous works on emotional intelligence have largely been carried out on theoretical level and have not been accompanied by empirical studies (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

Furthermore, cross-cultural studies of gender difference in intelligent quotient (IQ), which is a related construct to EQ found fairly consistent gender and culture differences (Furnham & Baguma, 1999). It is also plausible to think that the difference in finding might be connected with the different in culture and geographical location of participants. Which ever way it goes, the finding cannot be definitive. The study needs to be replicated; more so that there is dearth of empirical research, at least for now, on influence of gender on the emotional intelligence of Nigerian adolescents. It may be more beneficial and interesting too, to conduct a cross-cultural study for better comparison with the findings of the present study.

Recommendations

It is clear by the findings of the present study that EQ skills are learnable skills and since there is ample research evidences (Parker, et al, 2004; Parker, Summerfeldt, Hogan & Majeski, 2003; Ransdell, 2001; Salovey, Bedell, Detweiter & Mayer, 2000) pointing to the fact that human behaviour and achievements are directly influenced by their levels of emotional learning competencies. What is reasonable for any government to do to enhance social and personal development of its citizenry, is to encourage the teaching and learning of EQ skills as early as elementary school stage. Emotional intelligence involves a cluster of skills including self-control, zeal, persistence, and self-motivation. Every child must be taught the essentials of handling anger, managing conflicts, developing empathy, and controlling impulses. Parents/caregivers and teachers in particular may need to take seriously their share of responsibility in nurturing the innate potentials of creative thinking and emotional learning competencies skills of their children and students respectively. Each person is born with certain potentialities but these innate potentialities can be either developed or damaged by emotional lessons taught by parents/care-givers and teachers during childhood and adolescence

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