
INFLUENCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON THE PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE LAW TEACHERS

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Abstract

The emotional intelligence is the the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. This paper aims to ascertain the influence of emotional intelligence on the performance of college law teachers. The research data were collected through a questionnaire survey on college law teachers from two provinces in eastern China. During the survey, each question was scored by the Likert 5-point scale. The survey results were subjected to multiple regression analysis. The results show that female lawyers have higher emotional intelligence than their male counterparts; all four dimensions of emotional intelligence have positive impacts on the performance of college law teachers; the emotional intelligence of college law teachers should be improved through group psychological counselling, case analysis and experience exchange. The research results are of great significance to the law education in colleges.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, College Law Teachers, Law Teaching, Education, Teaching Quality.

Received: 04-01-19 | Accepted: 21-06-19

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability of an individual to adaptively perceive, understand, and regulate the emotions for themselves or others, and use emotions to solve problems (Choi, Song, & Oh, 2015). College law teachers are the backbone of China's education. They play a huge role in the development of Chinese universities. Emotional intelligence has been regarded as a key factor in the job competence of teachers. The education community starts to pay more attention to teachers' emotions, which has caused relevant scholars to conduct research on this issue in many aspects and achieve some positive results. Some scholars have deeply studied the concept of emotional intelligence. Yang, Xu, & Luo (2011), based on information processing theory, defines emotional

intelligence as the ability to process emotional information and solve emotional problems. Wang, Liao, & Zhang (2013) believes that the essential connotation of emotional intelligence is the ability to reasonably explain the intrinsic relationship between intelligence and emotional intelligence. Lu, Chen, Xu et al. (2016) think that emotional intelligence is the personality psychological characteristics required for people to successfully complete emotional activities. For the concept of emotional intelligence, although different scholars have different opinions, the concepts themselves are not contradictory and complement each other. With the improvement of the emotional intelligence concept, there have emerged many applied researches on ordinary staff (Boudreaux, Mandry, & Brantley, 1997; Lin & Li, 2018) and or teachers in the education field etc. (Liu & Dan, 2019). In addition, some other scholars have analysed the factors affecting teachers' emotional intelligence, finding that gender (Qie & Zhu, 2014), professional identity (Yao & Guan,

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2013), managerial cognition of emotional intelligence (Pillen, Brok, & Beijaard, 2013; Platsidou, 2010), etc. are important influencing factors on teachers' emotional intelligence level, and then proposed the related measures to improve teachers' emotional intelligence from the perspectives of classroom teaching, case analysis, and experience exchange (Hou, Jiang, Chen et al., 2014). Through the above analysis, it can be found that the existing related literature rarely involves special research on the emotional intelligence of law teachers in colleges and universities.

With the rapid development of higher education in China, the scale of college teachers has gradually expanded. Also, the number of highly educated teachers in colleges and universities, especially those engaged in law teaching, has increased rapidly. However, the colleges focus on the training of logical thinking and the improvement of scientific research for the law teachers, rather than their emotional intelligence. This study intends to clarify the influence of emotional intelligence on the professional growth of law teachers in colleges, as well as its influence on teaching ability and teaching effect, and then explains the occurrence mechanism of the above influences. Finally, it proposed corresponding countermeasures.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The emotional intelligence of law teachers has a positive influence on their own professional growth, interactive teaching and teaching quality.

The impact of emotional intelligence of law teachers on their professional growth

The professional growth of law teachers requires the support of strong resources. On the one hand, a variety of exercises is required, to cultivate teachers' various abilities in different situations, and thus enhance their professional development; on the other hand, those law teachers with high emotional intelligence need to be able to manage their own emotions, and in the interacting process with others, they can perceive the emotional changes of others, regulate, control and deal with their own negatives emotions accordingly, so as to leave a good impression for others and acquire the key resources effectively.

The impact of law teachers' emotional intelligence on the interactive teaching

Interactive teaching means that the teacher interacts with the students and spread the knowledge by guiding the students into the teaching process. For this, the teachers should have two abilities: 1) Teachers can grasp the emotional changes of students in a timely manner; 2) Teachers are required to guide students to discuss and express opinions according to the emotional changes of students. Teachers' emotional intelligence has a positive impact on interactive teaching. First of all, teachers with high emotional intelligence can quickly perceive the students' emotions. When they find that the students become tired in the class, they will quickly change the teaching methods, reduce the teaching part, and increase the discussion, thinking and questioning of students, to attract their attention. However, teachers with low emotional intelligence have no way to perceive the emotional changes of students. Regardless of the students' performance in the classroom, they still adopt the same teaching method. Secondly, teachers with high emotional intelligence can lead students towards the established teaching goal through interactive teaching. In addition, teacher's emotional intelligence has a positive relationship with students' teachers and courses. In the course of teaching, teachers not only represent themselves, but also this course; students are the audience of the whole course, so the teachers must understand the audience's cognition in the process of imparting course knowledge. If the teachers have high emotional intelligence, then they can timely understand the student's learning state and effectively promote the overall quality of the teaching, while students will think that this course itself has values, which will enhance the student receptivity to the curriculum. Thus, the hypotheses are proposed below:

Hypothesis 1a, the emotional intelligence of law teachers has a positive impact on their professional growth;

Hypothesis 1b, the emotional intelligence of law teachers has a positive impact on interactive teaching;

Hypothesis 1c, the emotional intelligence of law teachers has a positive impact on the student receptivity to the curriculum;

Hypothesis 1d, the emotional intelligence of

the law teacher has a positive impact on the student receptivity to the curriculum teacher.

The impact of interactive teaching and professional growth on teaching quality

In interactive teaching, law teachers can mobilize students' enthusiasm in the classroom, which will inevitably benefit both teaching and learning so that the teachers can make more progress in their teaching skills and methods, while the teachers and courses are also recognized by the students. With their professional growth, the teachers prefer to repay their jobs with more enthusiasm. Blau (1964) points out that in the process of social exchange, individuals not only emphasize the fairness of exchange, but also the retribution mechanism of exchange, i.e., when individuals are treated fairly in the exchange, they are more inclined to pay back. College law teachers achieve professional growth, which is itself a kind of social exchange. This is manifested in their outstanding performance during the teaching to reward the college's training. In summary, the following hypotheses are proposed:

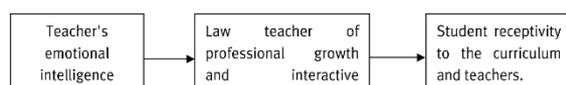
Hypothesis 2a: Teacher professional growth has a positive impact on student receptivity to the curriculum and teachers.

Hypothesis 2b: Teacher interactive teaching has a positive impact on student receptivity to the curriculum and teachers.

Hypothesis 2c: The impact of teacher's emotional intelligence on student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher is achieved through the intermediary role of interactive teaching and teacher professional growth.

Based on the theoretical analysis results and research hypotheses, the theoretical model of this study was obtained (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Research path of theoretical hypothesis



RESEARCH DESIGN AND HYPOTHESIS VERIFICATION

Variable measurement and questionnaire design

On the basis of relevant research, this paper mainly adopts the scales with high reliability and validity at home and abroad. Considering the differences in expressions under different situations, all the questions were scored by Likert 5-point scale, 1 for "strongly disagree" and 5 for "strongly agree".

Table 1 lists the variable measurement and questionnaire design results. In terms of emotional intelligence, this paper draws on the related researches of Law, Won, & Mobley (1998), Weng & Xi (2011), and obtains a scale consisting of four items, covering the four dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely Self-Emotion Appraisal (SEA), Other-Emotion Appraisal (OEA), Use of Emotion (UOE), Regulation of Emotion (ROE), as well as the description about interactive teaching, student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher, and teacher professional growth. In terms of the interactive teaching, four items were formulated with reference to the relevant research of Li Tai et al. (2015); in terms of student receptivity to the curriculum, four items were formulated according to the relevant researches of Weng & Xi (2011); in terms of student receptivity to the teacher, five items were formulated according to Chen, Tsui, & Farh (2002); in terms of teacher professional growth, five items were formulated according to Yang (2016), Fan, Yan, & Zhang (2016).

Sample selection and data collection

Using the random sampling survey, this paper investigates the impact of college teachers' emotional intelligence on student receptivity to the teacher and curriculum. Therefore, it is a cross-level study in the nature of research. In the data collection process, the questionnaires were first distributed to the college legal teachers, and then the students in the class made evaluations for the teaching quality and receptivity to the teacher.

This study selected the law teachers and their students from the four universities in Jiangsu and Anhui in 2019 as survey samples, and distributed 500 e-questionnaires and paper questionnaires, 50 for university teachers and 450 for the students in the class they taught. Finally, 500 questionnaires were collected with the recovery rate of 100%, of which 478 were valid questionnaires at the effective rate of 95.6%, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 1. Variable measurement and reliability and validity test results

variable	Item	Cronbach's a
Emotional intelligence(A)	Self-emotion appraisal(A1) Generally, I know why I have some feelings. I have a good understanding of my emotions I understand exactly how I feel inside	0.751
	Other-emotion appraisal(A2) I always know his emotional state according to the behavior of my friends around me I can observe other people's emotions very well I'm sensitive to other people's feelings and emotions	0.802
	Use of emotion(A3) I always tell myself that I am a capable person I am a self-motivated person.	0.779
	Regulation of emotion(A4) I always encourage myself to do my best I can control my temper and handle problems sensibly I can completely control my own emotions When I am very angry, I can always calm down quickly.	0.811
Interactive teaching(B)	In the course of teaching, teachers communicate with students will adopt the way of discussion The teacher guides the students to think during the teaching process Teachers often ask questions during the course Students actively answer questions in class I showed a strong interest in this course.	0.726
Student receptivity to the curriculum(C)	If someone gives a negative comment on this course, I will explain and explain it in time I am also honored by the students' praise for this course. The students like the course very much I admire the lecturer of this course	0.858
Student receptivity to the teacher(D)	If someone says something bad about this teacher, I will stand up and defend it If other students praise this teacher, I will be happy from the bottom of my heart The students are doing very well in this course	0.891
Teacher professional growth(E)	The students have achieved excellent results in this course Compared with my colleagues, my salary is growing faster Compared with my colleagues, my job promotion is faster The job promotion speed is faster in the current work unit, The promotion speed of professional titles is faster in the current work unit Received multiple awards in the current work unit	0.793

Table 2. Questionnaires

Study object	Items	Number of questionnaires (piece)	Proportion (%)
University Teachers	Man	38	76%
	Woman	12	24%
Students taught by University Teachers	28-35years old	28	5.6%
	36-40years old	14	2.8%
	40-45years old	8	1.6%
	Man	269	59.8%
	Woman	181	40.2%
	18-20 years old	288	57.6%
	21-23 years old	162	32.4%

Reliability and validity testing

As one of the most common methods of internal reliability testing, the Cronbach's α coefficient was used to test the reliability of the sample data in this paper. The overall Cronbach's

α coefficients of emotional intelligence, interactive teaching, student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher, and teacher professional growth were 0.906, 0.794, 0.878, 0.754, and 0.912 respectively, which were all greater than 0.7 in each dimension (Table 1), indicating that the data in this paper has strong

internal consistency and stability, as well as high reliability.

Since the scales in this study were based on the ones with good reliability and validity in the domestic and foreign literatures, the content validity was considered to be good. The exploratory factor analysis of the data was performed using SPSS19.0 to test structural validity. The KMO values were 0.823, 0.801, 0.905, 0.879, and 0.864, respectively, which were all greater than 0.8, indicating that they are suitable for factor analysis. Through principal component analysis, it's found that all five variables can extract common factors. On the whole, the sample data had a good structural validity.

Hypothesis verification

Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out based on related literatures and collected questionnaire data, as shown in Table 3 below.

It can be seen from Table 3, the four dimensions of emotional intelligence have a pairwise correlation with the interactive teaching, student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher, and teacher professional growth respectively. They also passed the significance test, which laid the foundation for the following work.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis of variables

Variable	Mean value	Variance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Teacher	1.52	0.287	1									
student	2.64	0.834	0.041	1								
A1	2.87	0.645	0.051	-	1							
A2	2.09	0.735	-	0.101	0.113	0.019	1					
A3	3.11	0.467	0.052	0.103	0.059	0.027	0.091	1				
A4	2.05	0.502	0.095	-	0.153	-	0.754*	1				
B	2.67	0.646	0.002	0.044	0.186	0.068	0.791*	0.601*	1			
C	3.08	0.631	0.154	0.251	0.019	0.028	0.045	0.828	0.652*	0.574**	1	
D	2.67	0.585	0.062	0.062	0.012	0.036	0.034	0.603*	0.558*	0.606*	0.519**	1
E	3.88	0.472	0.072	-	0.062	0.069	0.599*	0.628	0.649*	0.545*	0.672**	1
				0.015								

Note: N=478, * indicates that the correlation coefficient is significant at $p < 0.05$, and ** indicates that the correlation coefficient is significant at $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed test).

Table 4. Analysis for multiple model regression results

Variable	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Students' Consentien (Dc)	C	D	E	Dc	F	
Nt	0.12**	0.10	0.13	0.05	0.06	0.01
Ns	0.02	0.09	0.06	-	0.01	0.26*
Gt	0.05	0.05	0.13	0.01	0.20	0.18*
Gs	0.16**	0.12	-	0.02	0.14	0.12
St	0.06	0.28	0.01	0.17	0.38*	0.05
Sk	0.23	0.10	0.06	0.01	0.07	0.08
A1	0.19**	0.15*	0.27*	0.13*	0.20**	0.11**
A2	0.23*	0.26*	0.15*	0.31*	0.19*	0.10*
A3	0.31*	0.14*	0.20*	0.18*	0.18**	0.35*
A4	0.39**	0.28	0.20	0.21**	0.21**	0.16**
B	-	0.11	-	-	0.18*	0.24*
E	-	-	-	0.08	0.39*	0.27**

Note: * indicates that the correlation coefficient is significant at the $p < 0.05$ level, and ** indicates that the correlation coefficient is significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

Data verification

The variables involved in this study include group variables (teachers' emotional intelligence, interactive teaching and teacher professional growth) and individual variables (student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher), and the impact of the two should be from top to bottom rather than individual level. This study analysed the impact mechanism from the class level to the individual level, so HLM software was used for this problem. In order to test the above hypothesis, the author attempted to draw on the regression analysis (Choi, 2007; Li, Huang, & Yu, 2015) for firstly the impact of the teacher's emotional intelligence on the student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher, then that of the teacher's emotional intelligence on interactive teaching and teacher professional growth, and finally the teachers' emotional intelligence, interactive teaching and teacher professional growth on the student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher respectively. Through the significant change level of regression coefficients, it's found that the influence mechanism of emotional intelligence on student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher is developed through interactive teaching and teacher professional growth. The calculation process was performed using HLM7.01. In the process of model regression, the difference in studying subjects and in the age and gender of the teachers may affect the regression results. Therefore, the teacher's age (Nt) and the student's age (Ns), teacher gender (Gt) and student gender (Gs), teacher curriculum (St) and student curriculum (Sk) were controlled in the regression process, and the above control variables were included in the regression model. The final data statistic results are shown in Table 4.

CONCLUSIONS

Through analysis for the results in Table 4 above, the conclusions have been drawn as follows:

(1) The gender and emotional intelligence of legal teachers were positively correlated, indicating that female teachers have higher levels of emotional intelligence than male teachers, that is, female law teachers can better observe the emotional changes of students and

control their emotions in the process of teaching. In different groups, the individual's emotional intelligence is also changing, which is reflected in the positive correlation between age and emotional intelligence;

(2) The four dimensions of law teachers' emotional intelligence had a positive correlation with the professional growth of law teachers, and especially the coefficients of regression equations M1 and M2 were relatively large, which indicates that the various dimensions of law teachers' emotional intelligence had the greatest positive impact on student receptivity to the curriculum and teacher; further, the regression process showed that if the law teachers have higher emotional intelligence, they will have a positive impact on the student receptivity to the teacher. The emotional intelligence of law teachers also had a positive impact on teachers' own professional growth (M3). The regression analysis was performed for the impact of the four dimensions of legal teachers' emotional intelligence on interactive teaching (M4); the regression results show that the emotional intelligence of law teachers had a positive impact on interactive teaching, indicating that law teachers with high emotional intelligence are more inclined to adopt interactive teaching. In order to verify the mediating role of teachers' professional growth and interactive teaching, the regression of emotional intelligence and interactive teaching was performed to student receptivity to the teacher (M5); the regression results showed that the coefficient of the four dimensions of legal teacher's emotional intelligence was reduced relative to the four dimensional coefficients of M1, but the regression coefficient of teacher professional growth and interactive teaching was still significant, which indicates that the influence of legal teachers' emotional intelligence on legal teacher identity is partly exerted through two mediating variables: interactive teaching and teacher professional growth. Similarly, the regression analysis (M6) was performed for the impact of teachers' emotional intelligence, interactive teaching and teacher professional growth on student receptivity to the teacher can also draw similar conclusions;

(3) In view of the fact that emotional intelligence factors have a great influence on the teaching of college law teachers, it is necessary to improve their emotional intelligence through

group psychological counselling, case analysis and experience exchange, so as to improve their education and teaching level, and further promote the quality of teaching in colleges and universities.

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