



Developing Students' Emotional Intelligence through Self-Initiated Portfolio Assignments

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Background

- Portfolios extensively used in higher education
 - Promote self-learning, self-assessment, insight into actions & behaviors
 - Develop ability to work together, enhance tolerance, understanding, reflection, improve self-awareness
 - Emotional intelligence (EI) involves many of these; portfolios *might* help EI development, document self-directed strategies taken

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Background (Continued)

- Since 2009 - full-time, four-year professional pharmacy program - electronic portfolio assignments
- CORE Higher Education Group, CompMS
- Portfolio assignments in each semester of curriculum, part of required course that semester
 - "Pass/fail"
 - Must complete and submit all needed assignments to pass course

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Background (Continued)

- Portfolio assignments:
 - Course assignment entries related to specific longitudinal outcomes
 - Detailed rubric self-assessments of longitudinal outcomes
 - *EI component

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Emotional Intelligence (EI)

- Initially applied to business, leadership; growing recognition of importance in higher education, healthcare professionals
- EI characteristics modified
- *Key aspect - Emotions & ability to discern, modify, regulate
 - Different EI models
 - Emotions, empathy, motivation, social/relationship skills, self-awareness, self-regulation

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Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Continued)

- Several tools to measure EI, related constructs
- Some - wide range psychological attributes
- No universally accepted instrument to measure EI in health professions
- Our EI focus in portfolio – Bradberry & Greaves (2009) book – Emotional Intelligence 2.0
- Includes Emotional Intelligence Appraisal (EIA) test

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Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Continued)

- EI model (Bradberry & Greaves [2009] book) – Four main skill areas:
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-management
 - Social awareness
 - Relationship management
- EIA – self-administered online, measures all four areas

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Objectives

- Determine whether:
 - EI focused portfolio assignments can facilitate successful implementation of self-identified, self-initiated strategies to enhance EI
 - Successful strategy implementation is related to EIA changes from initial test (first professional year) to 2nd test (third professional year)
 - EI changes were correlated with students' GPA

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Study Sample

- Total 136 students
 - Two class years (Graduating class of 2019 – 69 students, Graduating class of 2020 – 67 students)
- Each completed EI portfolio component and two EIA tests (first professional [P1] year and for 2nd time in third professional [P3] year)

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EI in Curriculum

- Fall, P1 year: Book; EIA test 1st time; an introductory course session reviewed EI & relationship of first chapters (self-awareness, self-management) to personal/professional growth; students develop individual self-management goals and plan
- Portfolio used for specific EI assignments P1 through P3 years – requirements reviewed in hour session start of each semester

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EI Portfolio Assignments

- Each semester – students read book chapters, identified three improvement strategies for an EI area:
 - Self-awareness (Fall P1)
 - Self-management (Spring P1)
 - Social awareness (Fall P2)
 - Relationship management (Spring P2)

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EI Portfolio Assignments (Continued)

- Beginning Spring P1 year, students also asked to indicate if three strategies from prior semester implemented
 - If yes, how successful?
 - If no, why not?
- No penalty if not implemented

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EI Portfolio Assignments (Continued)

- Fall semester P3 year – students further asked to review EIA results from P1 year and reflect on areas they feel improved the most and least
- Spring semester P3 year – EIA test taken 2nd time

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Outcome Measures

- EIA scores, changes from P1 to P3 years – for four areas, combined personal competence skills (self-awareness & self-management) and social competence skills (social awareness & relationship management)
- Three strategies for each EI area – reviewed and coded for implementation status & perceived success
- GPA start of spring P3 year

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Examples - Student Entries

- **Strategy:** "Give myself some time each day to recharge mentally." **Comment:** "I don't consciously set aside time to focus on recharging, as I am always thinking of the next thing that I have to get done."
- **Strategy:** "Realize and accept that change is a part of my life." **Comment:** "I have tried to think more about this, because I realize that I don't react very well to change, but it has been hard for me to go beyond that."
- **Strategy:** "Take Control of Your Self-Talk." **Comment:** "I have worked to implement this, but sometimes it is still difficult to control. I find myself still slipping in to negative self-talk when under stress, but I am working on it."
- **Strategy:** "Focusing my attention on my freedoms rather than my limitations." **Comment:** "I have implemented this and it was successful. I try to focus more on the positives than negatives... I have a lot to be grateful for, and I should not let the small trials in front of me forget about all the blessings I have."

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Summary of Main Findings

- 569 entries
- Overall, 54-60% scores increased P1 to P3 years; *several score decreases

EIA Component	Scores Increased	Scores Decreased	No change
Total EIA Score	78 (57.4%)	55 (40.4%)	3 (2.2%)
Personal Competence	82 (60.3%)	51 (37.5%)	3 (2.2%)
Social Competence	74 (54.4%)	60 (44.1%)	2 (1.5%)

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

Did number of planned activities successfully implemented affect EIA score changes?

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

- Did number of planned activities successfully implemented affect EIA score changes? **Yes**
- As number of successfully implemented activities increased, significantly greater proportion of EIA scores increased ($p \leq .014$)
 - Score increases for partially implemented or successful activities - in between all & none successful
 - EIA scores increased from 1 to 3 activities implemented with at least partial success
 - Greater # of improvement strategies successfully implemented with score increases of ≥ 5 points vs. score decreases of ≥ 5 points

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

Self-Awareness

Strategies Implemented	Scores Increased	Score Decreased	No change
All successful	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	0 (0%)
Partial (1 or more, at least some success)	66 (56.9%)	39 (33.6%)	11 (9.5%)
None	1 (10%)	8 (80%)	1 (10%)

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

Self-Management

Strategies Implemented	Scores Increased	Score Decreased	No change
All successful	15 (93.8%)	0 (0%)	1 (6.3%)
Partial (1 or more, at least some success)	55 (50.9%)	41 (38%)	12 (11.1%)
None	1 (8.3%)	9 (75%)	2 (16.7%)

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

Social Awareness

Strategies Implemented	Scores Increased	Score Decreased	No change
All successful	9 (81.8%)	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Partial (1 or more, at least some success)	49 (44.6%)	41 (37.3%)	20 (18.2%)
None	2 (13.3%)	11 (73.3%)	2 (13.3%)

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

Relationship Management

Strategies Implemented	Scores Increased	Score Decreased	No change
All successful	22 (73.3%)	5 (16.7%)	3 (10%)
Partial (1 or more, at least some success)	49 (50.5%)	36 (37.1%)	12 (12.4%)
None	0 (0%)	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

- Mean EIA scores significantly lower (~10-11 points) on 1st test (total, personal & social competence subsections) for students with subsequent increases of ≥ 5 points, compared to those who had decreases of ≥ 5 points
 - Perhaps – some students overestimated EI skills on 1st EIA
 - After completing readings, assignments, lowered 2nd EI skill self-assessments

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Summary of Main Findings (Continued)

- Only very low, non-significant correlations found between GPA and any EIA score comparisons

Variable	r value	p value
Total score - P1 year	-0.04	.68
Total score - P3 year	0.06	.46
Total score difference	0.09	.32
Personal Competence difference	0.02	.86
Social Competence difference	0.1	.27

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Conclusions

- EI skills could be developed in students
- **Self-identified, initiated activities as portfolio assignments appeared to result in EI score increases
- Difference in EIA improvements striking between stated success in all three activities (73-94%) vs. no success/not implemented (0-13%)

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Conclusions (Continued)

- 27-35% who expressed at least partial success in implementing 2 or 3 strategies had combined EIA score decreases
 - Were activities *actually* implemented?
 - Activities selected were “easier” to change but not ones that would most benefit EI?
 - “Perceived success” in error?
 - Insufficient time spent completing 2nd EIA?

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Future Research

- Success of self-identified, self-initiated portfolio activities vs. formal coursework?
- Benefit from increased faculty involvement in reviewing EI portfolio entries/providing feedback?
- Better tools to measure EI?

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Questions?



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