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### **Short Research Report**

## **Discovering the Emotional Intelligence exhibited by primary school teachers while delivering Physical Education in the United Kingdom**

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### **Introduction**

It has been claimed that Emotional Intelligence (E.I) is an integral part of a teacher's skill set (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012) and accordingly those teachers demonstrating a high Emotional Quotient (E.Q) produce more engaging and motivating lessons (Akhmetova et al., 2014). Primary school teachers require E.I in order to recognise and control their own emotions, and so that they can positively manage children's emotions. It is important therefore to understand how and when to utilise certain facets of E.I to differing age groups. If teachers are unable to recognise effectively which specific components of E.I to utilise, it may have a detrimental effect on the delivery of the session (Corcoran & Tormey, 2012).

In past research, Rich (2010) exposed that autocratic teaching is ineffective when instructing P.E as it cultivates humiliation, disrespect and disregard towards a child's ability. This was supported by Gard & Wright (2001) suggesting that a lack of empathy or sensitivity when delivering P.E to young age groups may reduce children's self-esteem and confidence. Brackett and Katulak (2006) contend the function of measuring teacher's E.I is to maximise quality, character and harmony, and in turn, minimise conflict, disagreement and discontent. Mayer, Caruso & Salovey (2000) concurs, arguing that professional practitioners must be able to

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recognise emotional information and perform reasoning using this material, which can empower and shape a child's mind.

Bar-On (2006) indicated there are many facets of emotions which are experienced by everyone, but some emotions are utilised more frequently due to the age group of learners and the surrounding environment. Therefore, it is important for teachers to understand how and when to utilise particular emotions whilst delivering P.E to varying age groups in primary school. As there are manifold emotional facets, theorists have sub-divided E.I in to four to five dimensions, such as the Goleman Model (1998) and the Salovey-Mayer Model (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Robert Jerus EiQ-2 Inventory and questionnaire (Jerus et al., 2011) is based on the work from Goleman's and Salovey-Mayer model as well as the applications of other variations. The EiQ-2 was designed for applying E.I skills in coaching and improvement in the workplace, learning and development in targeted areas and providing the depth of knowledge of E.I for individuals to use for specific application and in particular situations. The five-dimensional model identifies thirty-two emotionally intelligent behaviours that can be exhibited by a teacher while delivering P.E. in primary school.

When the EiQ-2 inventory was converted to the online questionnaire, the sub-categorised facets of emotional intelligence are reduced to twenty characteristics within four dimensions (Table I). It is therefore essential for an accomplished teacher to be cognisant of how to both recognise and facilitate these emotions in an appropriate manner.

Table I. Facets of emotions from the EIQ-2 test (Jerus, 2015)

Self-Recognition	Social Recognition
Self-Awareness/Understanding	Empathy, Sensitivity, Appreciation
Connections of Cause and Effect	Service, Compassion, Benevolence
Self-Appreciation, Acceptance and Confidence	Holistic Communication
Consciousness, Assertiveness	Situational Perceptual Awareness
Emotional Identification	Interpersonal Development
Self-Management	Social Management
Self-Control, Discipline	Developing Relationships, Getting Along with Others
Integrity, Trustworthiness	Leadership and Influence
Psychology, Initiative self-energising	Change Catalyst and Response
Creativity, Agility, Flexibility, Adaptability	Negotiation and Conflict Management
Goal Directed Performance, Targeted Action	Teamwork and Collaboration

There have been several studies emphasising the importance of E.I in P.E, with Hen & Sharabi-Nov (2014) highlighting how E.I is a central component in becoming a successful leader, whilst other studies underlined the importance of E.I skills among secondary education P.E teachers (Al-Adwan & Al-Khayat,

2016). Klemola, Heikinaro-Johansson and O'Sullivan (2013) examined the retrospective insights of Swedish student teachers', maintaining that educators that possess strategies of emotional understanding helped them to effectively respond to students' emotions.

From a cursory review of existing literature, it is noteworthy that little research has reviewed how specific facets of E.I are utilised by U.K teachers while delivering P.E.in primary school. The aims of this study are twofold, first, to measure which facets of E.I were displayed and utilised by teachers whilst teaching P.E to different key stages, and second to highlight which emotional skills teachers require in development and training, which may assist them to deliver more motivating P.E lessons and foster other positive competences such as cognitive skills and self-awareness in children (Kirk, 2006).

## **Method**

### *Participants*

The study was undertaken at two schools in Birmingham, UK, which were, in part, selected due to the national average of their school population (Birmingham Public Health, 2018). Seventeen school teachers participated ( $N=17$  10 female, 7 male), with all teachers having been in the profession for a minimum of three to fifteen years (*range = 11 years*). To ensure that all teachers had satisfactory levels of E.I, they were assessed on their Emotional Quotient (E.Q) by completing the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Version 2 (EIQ-2) (Jerus et al., 2011). Druskat (2005) and Bradberry & Greaves (2010) commended the reliability and the validity of the EIQ-2 questionnaire in previous studies. The results revealed all participants had a good standard of E.I., scoring above a 'good score' (67%>), with a total mean score of 77.3%.

### *Materials*

Overt observations - completed with minimal acknowledgement to the children (Cohen et al., 2000), witnessed how teachers delivered their P.E sessions. An observation checklist was amalgamated with Pugh's (2008) template, originally designed to observe and evaluate trainee nurses E.I with young patients, and the twenty facets of emotions (Jerus et al., 2011).

Within one week after completing both P.E sessions, participants expressed their own findings by completing a reflective journal questionnaire. The template was adapted by conjoining Jerus et al. (2011) EIQ-2 test and a journal designed by Harrison & Fopma-Loy (2010), which was used to research how QTS primary school teachers used E.I while delivering English and Maths. The questionnaire had a total of 26 questions, and the questions helped the participants to identify which of the twenty emotional facets were utilised during their two P.E lessons (Table I).

Additionally, semi-structured interviews ( $N=17$ ) were conducted concentrating on the teachers' experiences of the project and to justify 'why' certain facets of emotions differed in their two sessions. O'Donoghue and Punch (2003) recommended that this type of mixed method research can provide strong validity if the findings from all the methods draw similar conclusions.

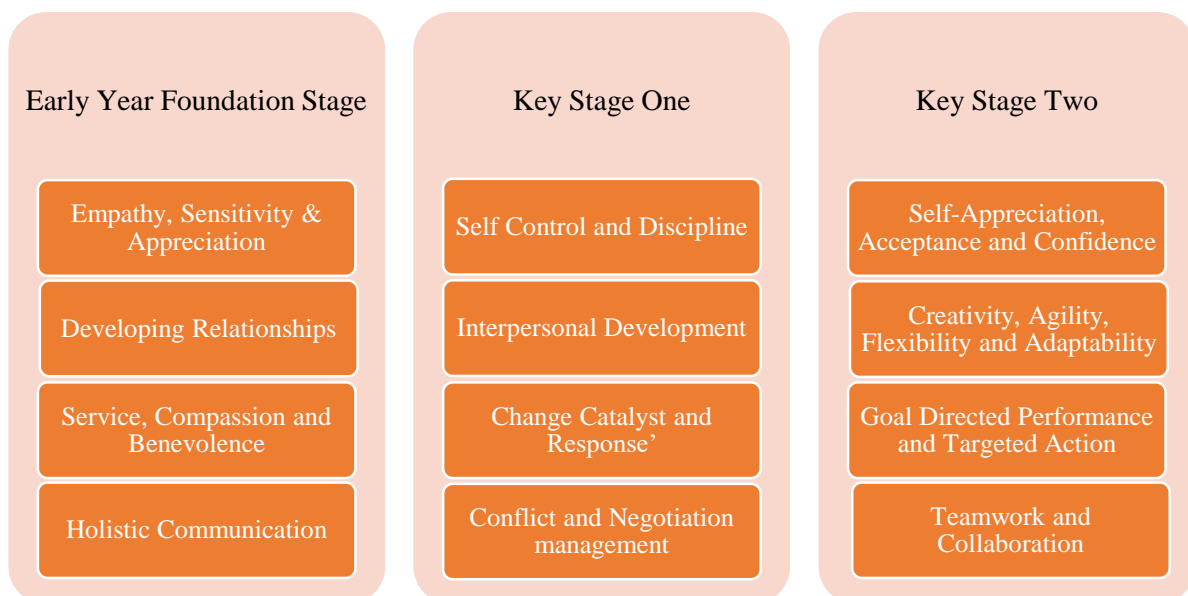
### Data analysis

Each teacher delivered a P.E lesson of their choice to two different key stages. These included Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) children aged 4-5 years; Key Stage One (KS1) (5-8 years) and Key Stage Two (KS2) (8-11 years). Deductive thematic analysis via a collection of methods (observation, reflective questionnaire and interview) helped to identify themes and establish a sense of order to which facets of E.I were being utilised during each P.E lesson (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Within each of the three research instruments, the twenty categories of facets from the EIQ-2 were carefully identified and interpreted in relation to each P.E lesson. This starting point helped the deduction process for the researcher to identify the key facets of E.I being displayed by teachers within each key stage (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data was analysed by firstly highlighting individual cases, then cross casing the interviews (Patton, 2002). The interview data and reflective questionnaires were analysed for each participant and then compared between the participants. This information was then cross referenced with the observation fieldnotes from of the P.E lessons.

### Results

The facets of E.I most frequently displayed by teachers while delivering primary P.E. to different key stages were identified. Table II shows the the four most displayed facets by the participants. for each of the three key stages.

Table II. Most utilised emotions displayed by teachers while delivering primary P.E.



The results indicate that when delivering P.E. lessons to EYFS children, teachers underlined that the tone of voice, positioning of their hands and facial expressions were key as they had to be more 'delicate' whilst teaching young children. The findings from KS1 showed that teachers found it important to set key goals and try to include interpersonal relationships in their sessions. In KS2, it was clear that providing freedom

to relatively more mature children had a greater impact on their performance as they take on greater responsibility, restricting them stopped the children from express themselves.

In the interviews, all participants stated that gaining a deeper understanding of which E.I facets are highly utilised, would allow them to deliver more engaging and enjoyable P.E lessons.

## **Discussion**

The results revealed that four different facets of emotions were displayed for each of the three key stages, this suggesting that a diverse set of emotional skillsets are required while teaching PE to different age groups in primary school. The EYFS findings are similar to those of Kremenitzer's (2005) and Kremenitzer & Miller's (2008), who reported that teachers who build on their emotional sensitivity are more aware of children's welfare, especially while teaching reception children. With regards to KS1, similar findings were identified in a study by Klemola and colleagues (2013) who reported that teachers who expressed their own emotions and respond positively to the children's emotions received a positive and enthusiastic response in the children's performance. Another interesting finding was that teachers felt it was important to be confident and self-appreciative in their ability to teach KS2 P.E as they sensed that older children could see if they could deliver the lesson correctly. Al-Adwan and Al-Khayat (2016) reported how P.E teachers can adapt to their student's needs, though it depends on their own knowledge, experience and confidence in delivering P.E.

The study had a few limitations. Firstly, teachers only delivered P.E to two of the three key stages due to time restrictions. A suggestion would to extend the duration of the field study to allow each teacher to deliver sessions at all three key stages. This potentially could provide greater scope for the teachers to identify the frequently displayed emotional skills while teaching all age groups. In addition, during the interview process, all teachers stated they already built a rapport with their own key stage class, which meant that the teachers had built a relationship with the children prior to the study; already understanding how to manage and cater to the children's needs and behaviour. In the light of this, a future recommendation would be for the participants to deliver a P.E lesson to a group of children with whom they have yet to develop a relationship. Finally, all teachers expressed their anxiety while teaching another key stage, indicating that they had been teaching the same key stage for most of their career and they have received very little continuing professional development; hence during the observation process, many teachers expressed low self-efficacy, especially during the KS2 sessions.

This study aimed to explore which facets of emotions were utilised by teachers while delivering P.E to different age groups. It suggests that teachers require support and training on specific emotional competences, which could potentially lead to better-quality P.E lessons. Building additional professional development in specific characteristics of E.I within P.E is also required. As Sutton & Wheatley (2003) argue, teachers who do not sustain their professional development in E.I will eventually tend to have poor quality teaching.

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