

Honors Project Proposal: Emotional Competence and Academic Performance

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Goals and Objectives

For my honors project I will be conducting a meta-analysis of psychological research on the effect of social-emotional competence on academic performance in students. Currently I have chosen students as my target because that is the demographic which I hope to work with. I would like to either work with elementary school children as a School Psychologist or with college students in Higher Education and Student Affairs. As I spend more time in research articles, I will be able to narrow down which group has richer research and then focus on that target group. This “narrowing down” process is part of conducting the meta-analysis.

My goal in my meta-analysis is to grasp a deeper understanding of how social-emotional competence affects how we all learn, or if it does at all. It will be important regardless of which career path I go down, whether it be with children or college students. This meta-analysis will inform what I focus on when I interact with students. Should I be focusing solely on improving academic intelligence and giving practical studying tips? Or, instead, should I be focusing on how to develop better coping skills? In either profession, I will be spending a significant amount of time mentoring students. When I am not mentoring them, I will be advocating for them and the improvement of their education. My goal is that this project will help me to learn more about how to better guide and mentor students at either age. I also expect this meta-analysis will increase my knowledge about what kinds of programs or initiatives should be advocated for in an educational system, whether that be elementary schools or universities. By conducting a meta-analysis I can be even more confident in the results of multiple studies, especially if they are all pointing to the same answer.

Methodology

To conduct this meta-analysis, I will be using the PRISMA Statement for Transparent Reporting of Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (Liberati et al., 2009). This includes a checklist of twenty-seven items to complete. There are seven sections listed including: title, abstract, introduction, method, results, discussion, and funding (Liberati et al., 2009). I will be including each section in my meta-analysis in order to ensure a complete and accurate analysis. Along with this PRISMA checklist, I will be using their flow chart to identify exactly which studies I will be using. The PRISMA flow chart includes four steps that I will follow which are identification, screening, eligibility, and included (Liberati et al., 2009). I hope to have at least ten studies included; however, depending on the results of the flow chart more may be included.

Once all of my primary research articles and variables are selected, I will annotate and extract the data so that it can be properly coded in a spreadsheet. I will code based on a handful of variables dealing with the independent variable of emotional competence and the dependent variable of academic performance. These will be used to create a universal measure across all selected studies so that I can accurately compare them. This measure will be a standard deviation or d (Baumeister, 2012). From there we will be able to find the effect size, conventionally based on Cohen's d effect size (Baumeister, 2012). Once the analysis is complete, I will begin writing the written report.

Tentative Timeline

December 15, 2019: Primary research articles selected through PRISMA flow chart.

January 6, 2020: Primary research articles are annotated.

February 10, 2020: Research articles are coded.

March 2, 2020: Results analyzed.

March 9, 2020: Introduction section is written.

March 16, 2020: Methods section is written.

March 30, 2020: Results and Discussion section is written.

April 6, 2020: First round of revisions from sponsor and readers.

April 13, 2020: Completed revision #1 sent to sponsor and readers.

April 20, 2020: Second round of revisions from sponsors and readers.

April 27, 2020: Final revisions completed.

Outcomes

I intend for the outcome of this research to be presented through the written report. The results will be reported based on the overall effect size found and a conclusion will be made. The results could either be support the idea that high emotional competence improves academic performance, high emotional competence worsens academic performance, or that emotional competence has no effect on academic performance. Regardless of the outcome, this meta-analysis will be useful in identifying how education can be improved on a micro-level and a macro-level.

Academic Impact

This meta-analysis will be an important addition to my undergraduate experience. It will help me to conceptualize what I have learned in my courses and apply them to what I want to do with my career. Specifically, I expect many lessons from Experimental Psychology, Developmental Psychology, and Social Psychology to translate into many ideas that I read about. I expect what I learn through this project to inform how I view my future courses in School

Psychology or Higher Education and how I interact with students in the future. I hope to learn some of the best practices in teaching social-emotional competence, and how that will affect different facets of academic performance. I can use what I have learned in my undergraduate career as a springboard into my future endeavors in graduate school and beyond.

References

- Baumeister, R. F. (2013). Writing a literature review. In M. J. Prinstein (Ed.), *The Portable Mentor: Expert Guide to a Successful Career in Psychology* (pp. 119-132): Springer.
- Liberati, A., Altman, D. G., Tetzlaff, J., Mulrow, C., Gøtzsche, P. C., Ioannidis, J. P. A., ... Moher, D. (2009). The PRISMA statement for reporting Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses of Studies That Evaluate Health Care Interventions: Explanation and Elaboration. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *151*(4). doi: 10.7326/0003-4819-151-4-200908180-00136