



SUSTAINING HIGH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS OF INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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ABSTRACT

Social work is one of several helping professions with a lot of obligations and responsibilities in their field. In their line of work, challenges are mostly likely to arise. The concept of emotional intelligence can be used to develop a model of practice that focuses on the use of various perspectives and points of views. This can help social workers develop a more effective and efficient client-worker relationship. This study tackles about sustaining the emotional intelligence of Social Work students of the International School of Asia and the Pacific to be able to put their emotions into point of view, making it possible for them to control their negative emotions and their positive ones. This phenomenological study describes how the Social Work level 4 Social Work students of the International School of Asia and the Pacific sustain and maintain their high emotional intelligence. Qualitative approach using descriptive phenomenological research design was utilized to understand subjectively the experiences and insights from the respondents. The researchers used guide questionnaires in gathering data from the respondents' containing questions related to the study to determine how the respondents manage and sustain their emotional intelligence. With the use of Colizzi's seven steps allows the researchers to understand the respondent's experiences and to reveal the emergent themes and their intertwined relationships. The implications of this study shows that the social work students display emotionally intelligent behaviors and skills associated with emotional intelligence that are important for their success. There may be variables that make it harder for them to overcome difficulties and challenges but their ability to control their emotional aspect help them perform better academically.

Key words: *Emotional Intelligence, Social Work, Qualitative, Sustainability, Motivation*

INTRODUCTION



Social workers are often more susceptible to burnout than other health care professionals. In many cases, the ability to efficiently manage one's emotional response in complex care situations is central to the role of social workers. Enhancing Emotional Intelligence is needed for Social Workers to develop professional reasons as well as to avoid burnout. This can be tool for them to be able to handle both one's own and other's emotions effectively.

Social work is one of several helping professions with a lot of obligations and responsibilities in their field. In their line of work, challenges are mostly likely to arise. These include increased environmental stressors and emotional and physical weariness. Despite their personal beliefs, social workers still have to perform their duties in the best interests of their clients. This means they must be able to cope with their emotions in a way that is the same on how they handle challenging situations. It is believed that the emotional intelligence of social workers is very important for them to perform their duties effectively. However, it is also possible that social work students and especially newly trained professionals may find their placements stressful and demanding. This is because many of them may not have the necessary skills to cope with the demands of their jobs (Grant LI., 2014). Moreover, self-control, passion, perseverance, and self-motivation are among the skills that make up to emotional intelligence. The fundamentals of controlling emotions, handling conflicts, fostering empathy, and self-control must be taught to every child. Students need support in school to understand and control their emotions. Educators must act as role models for students and deal with them with kindness and respect. (O'Neil, J.)

Emotional intelligence is also supported and linked to the emotional competences. An emotional intelligence is for instance, possible to build a specialized talent like influenced with the ability to precisely understand what other person is feeling (Gowing, in press). Similar to this, those who are more adept at controlling their emotions will have an easier time growing a competency like initiative and achievement drive. In the end, if we want to be able to look into the performances, we need to examine and identify these social and emotional competences.

In addition, the concept of emotional intelligence can be used to develop a model of practice that focuses on the use of various perspectives and points of views. This can help social workers develop a more effective and efficient client-worker relationship. The objective of this study was to compare the emotional intelligence of individuals with and without practical skills with those of social workers. The



concept of emotional intelligence can be used to provide social work with a more holistic view of the emotional context (Ingram R., 2013).

Hence, this study aims to achieve these objectives; To determine the stressing factors experience by the social work students, to determine how the Social Work students sustain their Emotional Intelligence in responding to the needs of their clients, and to proposed an action to strengthen the emotional aspect of Social Work students.

Furthermore, it is proposed that emotional intelligence might also additionally assist college students control their emotional reactions extra efficiently throughout placements and their next career.

However, little systematic studies were explored whether or not emotional intelligence and related abilities may be improved throughout social work education and the results for wellbeing. Hence, this study therefore tackles about sustaining the emotional intelligence of Social Work students of the International School of Asia and the Pacific to be able to put their emotions into point of view, making it possible for them to control their negative emotions and their positive ones. So, they can become more mindful to how they speak to themselves and to their clients as they become more conscious of their emotions.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researchers used Descriptive Phenomenological Research design in gathering information from the social work students about their experiences during their Field instruction. Descriptive phenomenology is a method used mostly in social sciences research as an effective way to understand subjectively and explore the lived experiences and insights of the individual. (Library, 2021). The general definition of phenomenology is that it is a theoretical perspective that encourages the study of people's experiences because phenomena of experience, rather than objective, physically specified reality that is external to the individual (Cohen et al 2007). Through this research design, the researchers are able to describe and observe how the respondents sustain and manage their emotional intelligence. This is a qualitative approach that involves interviewing through the use of questionnaires.

Respondents of the Study



The respondents of this study are 10 available Level 4 Social Work students of the International School of Asia and the Pacific Alimannao hills, Peñablanca, Cagayan. A convenient sampling was utilized. To collect the data, questionnaires were used which serves as an instrument to identify the stressing factors and how it affects the emotional aspect of the Social Work Students and how they sustain their emotional intelligence.

Data Gathering Tool

Semi-structured and open-ended interviews were used in gathering the data needed in this study. A combination of face-to-face and online interviews were utilized. The questionnaires contained questions related to the study that was utilized to determine how the respondents manage and sustain their emotional intelligence.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers prepared a letter of request addressed to the Social Work department which was subjected for approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. After the approval, consent was obtained from the respondents.

A self-made questionnaire was used in gathering the necessary data needed in the study. The said questionnaire was floated among the respondents after necessary integration of corrections made. Researchers conducted formal and informal interview by first asking for the permission of the respondents before sending the questionnaires the personally and through online.

Data Analysis

The data will be gathered through the distributed questionnaires. The collected data were organized into themes using the Colizzi's method of analysis in order to find commonality in the responses provided by the respondents to the indicated difficulties. The use of Colizzi's seven steps allows the researchers to understand the respondent's experiences and to reveal the emergent themes and their intertwined relationships.

- All of the transcripts were read and re-read in order to make sense about the whole content.
- Significant statements were extracted from the transcripts related to the investigated phenomenon.



- Formulated meanings were derived from significant statements
- Organization of formulated meanings into clusters of themes and themes
- Integration of the findings into an exhaustive description
- Summarizing the description of the fundamental structure of the phenomenon
- Validation of the findings from the study participant

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

TABLE 1. THEME CLUSTER AND FORMULATED MEANING UNDER THE EMERGENT THEME CLUSTER “PERPLEXING SITUATION”

CODES	CLUSTER THEMES	EMERGENT THEMES
Financial Problems	Financial Constraints	Perplexing Situation
Financial deficiency to pay for tuition fees		
Financial difficulties		
Meeting of Deadlines	Academic Difficulties	
School Requirements	Abrupt Changes	
Slow Internet Connection		
Had a hard time coping up with present situation		
Pressure from family/society		
Exhaustion with the situation		

The table above denotes the stressing factors that is experienced by the Social Work Students. In this table, the first cluster theme was described as financial constraints because figuring out how to pay the bills and their tuition fees is what makes them feel more stress. That according to Wynes, Halliday, 2014, financial problems is one of the factors that affects the students’ mental health and their commitment in learning which will affect their academic performance.

Similarly, the students felt more stress with their academic requirements because they had to submit all the activities and requirements at the same time. Reviewing for incoming examinations and compiling requirements can be so stressful, and tiring. Thus, it may reduce motivation and hinder academic achievement of students (Pascoe et al., 2020)



Additionally, abrupt changes can also be another factor that is experienced by the students because these changes forced everyone to unexpectedly adapt to the new learning environments that according to Giuntella et al., 2021, the abrupt changes have brought considerable consequences and effects on the mental health of people.

Furthermore, the emergent theme that was described above is perplexing situation because Perplexity not only helps us figure out what to ask, but also whom to ask. We need help in which can come in many forms. (Allen E., 2022)

TABLE 2. THEME CLUSTER AND FORMULATED MEANING UNDER THE EMERGENT THEME CLUSTER “SELF-CARE”

FORMULATED THEME	CLUSTER THEME	EMERGENT THEME
Read Novels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversional Activity 	Self-Care
Watching		
Eating		
Playing Christian Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual 	
Seeks God Guidance		
Commit to the Lord		
Praying		
Stop Overthinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism 	
Have a Positive View		
Look for Positive Side		
Hangout with friends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support System 	
Talk to close friends, teachers, and family		

The table above denotes how the respondents manage their emotions. In this table, the first cluster theme was described as Diversional activity Spending time to read and watch or go out with friends can already reduce stress and improve self-confidence. As the students takes time to unwind, their stress level decreases results to the boost of their productive and performance (Bryan, M. 2018).

Growth in spiritual aspect also helps the students manage their emotions because it encourages them to have an inner peace and help them in dealing stress by giving them sense of peace, purpose, and forgiveness. It is often more important in times of emotional stress. (Dan Brennan, MD, 2012)

Another thing that the students do to manage their emotions is being optimistic. It helps in strengthening motivation to try harder and focus on what is good about the situation and what they can to make things better



instead of giving up. Because of these, optimistic people feel more in control of their situations and have higher self-esteem. (Gavin, Mary L., MD)

Furthermore, having a support system helps the student to manage their emotions. These people may aid in problem-solving and alternative thinking, as well as serve to divert you from worries. As a result, they encourage you and help to relieve your stress and emotions of loneliness.

The table above was described as Self-Care. An individual can manage stress by taking care of themselves. Even the smallest self-care practices can make a significant difference in life. With all the stress that students experienced, developing effective emotional management skills would have a significant impact on how to deal with difficult circumstances. According to the study conducted by O’Neill, Slater and Batt shows that students who practice self-care had a lower chance of experiencing academic stress.

TABLE 3. THEME CLUSTER AND FORMULATED MEANING UNDER THE EMERGENT THEME CLUSTER “COMPETENCY”

CODES	CLUSTER THEME	EMERGED THEME
Remember the client worker relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professionalism 	Competency
Be professional		
Always set boundaries		
Set aside personal issues		
Control emotional involvement		
Positive mindset	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimism 	
Think positively		
Being strong and positive		
Just pray		

The table above denotes how the respondents sustain their high emotional intelligence in responding to the needs of their clients. In this table, the first cluster theme was described as professionalism because being



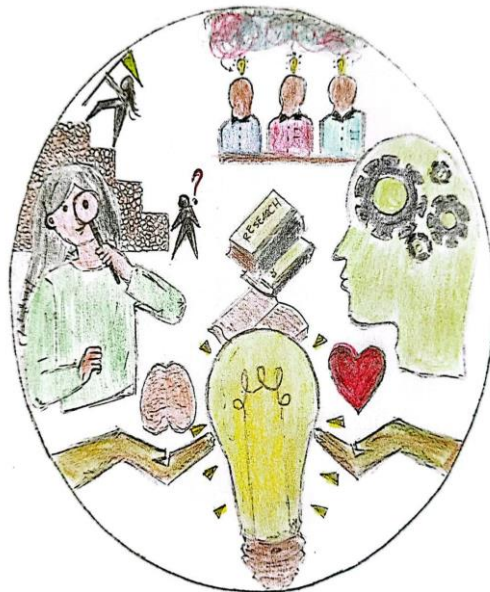
able to understand and analyze things professionally only shows how you carry yourself, your attitudes and the way you communicate with others. As the students responds to the needs of their clients, they are already fulfilling their roles and develop these characteristics: Competence, Knowledge, Consciousness, Integrity, Respect, Emotional intelligence, Appropriateness, and Confidence. (Mind tools, 2009).

Being optimistic is another thing that student uses to sustain their high emotional intelligence because it helps them respond to problems with a sense of confidence and belief in their personal ability even when they're under a lot of stress. With optimism, they can develop their capacity for self-awareness, assertiveness, empathy and impulse control. According to research, having a positive outlook has certain benefits, including improved health, higher success, fewer stress and longer life.

Furthermore, the emergent theme that was described in the table is competency because it enables students to accurately analyze situations, apply concepts from theory, and learn new information. Competence is a combination of ability, wisdom, and motivating outlook. (Swinton B., Fields A., Frazier T., Sauls C., & Capobianco K., 2019)

The figure below represents the central phenomenon of the study.

“ISAP VALUES”



Sustaining the emotic
into point of view, making it possible for them to control their negative emotions and their positive ones. Based on the result of the study, three (3) emergent theme Perplexing Situations, Self-Care, and Competency was

be able to put their emotions



develop from the formulated meaning of the response of the respondents and has now serve as the Central Theme of the Study.

The picture illustrates the ISAP Values (Perplexing Situations, Self-Care, and Competency) as the Central Theme. It depicts how important it is for students to not just be academically intelligent but must also have a strong emotional control over perplexing situations. Nevertheless, it also shows how the respondents remain rooted with the Isapian Values which includes Godliness, Nationalism, trustworthiness, Industry, and Patience and use it as a motivation to strive and do their best to become a better version of themselves.

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study is to look into how the Social Work students manage and sustain their emotional intelligence. With that, the researchers concluded that despite experiencing a lot of stress and pressure, the respondents display emotionally intelligent behaviors and skills associated with emotional intelligence that are important for their success. Even helping professionals who are aware of and control their emotions may not be strong when faced with challenges. There may be variables that make it harder for them to overcome difficulties and challenges. Their ability to control their emotional aspect help them perform better academically.

RECOMMENDATION

From the findings of this research, the researchers are recommending the following:

1. For future researcher

Similar study should be conducted considering other aspects that has a possible impact to the emotional intelligence of Bachelor of Science in Social Work students of International School of Asia and the Pacific.

2. For the Social Work Department

To the department for this will be a contributory material in providing programs and services to the students that supports their emotional aspects.

3. For the Institution/School Administration

That this research paper can also be done by other courses to assess their emotional aspect

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