



A Study on the Relationship between Social Emotional Ability and Well-being of Vocational College Teachers

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Abstract. With the rapid development of vocational education, teachers' social emotional ability should be improved accordingly, which had a great influence on their well-being. After surveying 424 vocational college teachers, it was found that the social emotional ability of vocational college teachers was significantly positively related to well-being. The overall level of social emotional ability of vocational college teachers was good, but there were significant differences in gender and education. The scores for management by others were low, and educational background exerted influence on management by others to some extent. Awareness of others had a negative impact on physical health. Therefore, social emotional abilities should be promoted by improving their governance capabilities, enhancing their sense of participation, stimulating their motivation, and establishing teaching groups.

Keywords: Vocational college; Social emotional ability; Well-being

1 INTRODUCTION

Social intelligence was first proposed by Thorndike in 1920, which meant the ability to understand and interact wisely with others. Mayer and Salovey constructed the emotional intelligence model in 1990. In 1997, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) in the United States combined social ability and emotional learning, and put forward the Social Emotional Learning model. Education and teaching are emotional activities that involve various emotional experiences, which are related to the job burnout, job satisfaction, physical health, and work engagement. As for the influential importance, many researchers have explored the relations among them.^[1] Scholars such as Jennings and Tom have constructed teachers' social emotional ability based on the CASEL framework, which is consisted of teacher self-awareness, teacher self-management, teacher social awareness, teacher interpersonal skills, and teachers' responsibility for decision-making.^[2]

In 1969, Bradburn proposed that well-being was a sense of balance between positive and negative emotions. In 1980, Andrews and McKennell believed that life satisfaction was a positive emotional experience that generates positive functions.^[3] Keyes believed

that well-being is a multidimensional concept, which was consisted of three variables: physical health, interpersonal relationship, and job satisfaction.^[4] Well-being is a kind of balance between individuals' expectations and living environment, when a comfortable emotional experience originate from heart. It is a state of physical and mental harmony.

Teachers' social emotional ability not only affects students' performance and academic achievement, but also is an antecedent of teachers' well-being.^[5] Therefore, promoting teachers' social emotional abilities can reduce their psychological anxiety and enhance the well-being. However, most teachers seldom experience emotional education, and thus lack skills in regulating their well-being. Besides, teachers in higher education bear the pressure from teaching, research, management, and social services, which severely affect the well-being. Thus, it is necessary to carry out research on the effect of vocational college teachers' social emotional ability on well-being.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Participants

This study randomly selected 428 teachers from a vocational college in Shandong province in China. After deleting invalid questionnaires, a total of 424 questionnaires were valid, with an effective rate of 99.07%. The demographic information of the teachers was shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic information (N=424)

Variables	Option	Number (people)	Propotion
Gender	Male	140	33
	Female	284	67
Age	Below 26 years old	31	7.3
	26-35 years old	225	53.1
	36-45 years old	111	26.2
	Above 45 years old	57	13.4
	Below 3 years	153	36.1
Teaching experience	4-7 years	104	24.5
	8-15years	101	23.8
	16-30years	48	11.3
Education background	Above 30 years	18	4.2
	Undergraduate	112	26.4
	Master's degree or above	312	73.6
Promotion	Tutors	198	46.7
	Lecturers	152	35.8
	Associate professors or professors	74	17.5

2.2 Measures

Vocational College Teachers' Social Emotional Ability Scale (VCTSEAS). The scale was modified on the basis of Li's Social Emotional Power Scale,^[6] and teachers' social emotional ability constructed by Jennings et al. from the Pennsylvania State University.^[2] VCTSEAS was consisted of six variables, including self-awareness, self-management, awareness of others, management by others, collective awareness, and collective management. There were 25 items in the questionnaire which used the Five-likert scoring method, ranging from 1 (very inconsistent) to 5 (very consistent). The higher the scores were, the better the individual's social emotional abilities were. Cronbach's alpha of the entire questionnaire was 0.94, showing an adequate reliability. This study used exploratory factor analysis (EFA) for validity analysis. The cumulative variance contribution rate for each variable of the questionnaire was 69.08%, $KMO > 0.9$, $p < 0.05$, indicating good validity of the questionnaire.

Vocational College Teachers' Well-being Scale (VCTWBS). The scale was constructed based on Primary School Teachers' Professional Well-being Scale formulated by Jiangyan to make it more suitable for the study.^[7] The scale was consisted of 12 items which were classified into 3 variables: physical health, interpersonal relationship, and job satisfaction. Five-likert scoring method was used with items in interpersonal relationship and job satisfaction variables ranging from 1 (very inconsistent) to 5 (very consistent). Physical health was consisted of reversed scoring questions, and the reverse assignment processing had been completed before the analysis. Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire was 0.77 with good reliability. After exploratory factor analysis (EFA), the cumulative variance contribution rate for each variable of the questionnaire was 66.46%. $KMO > 0.8$, $p < 0.05$, indicating the validity was good.

2.3 Analytical Procedures

In the present study, SPSS25.0 was applied to process and analyze the data. Firstly, descriptive statistical analysis was used to obtain the frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation of each variable. Secondly, reliability and validity of the questionnaire were tested. Finally, multiple linear regression analysis was used to explore the relationship between the social emotional ability and well-being of vocational college teachers, as well as the relations between the six variables in social emotional ability scale and the three variables in vocational college teachers' well-being scale.

3 RESULTS

3.1 The Overall Level of Social Emotional Ability of Teachers in Vocational Colleges

The mean and standard deviation of variables in VCTSEAS reflected the state of vocational college teachers' social emotional ability. As shown in Table 2, the average

social emotional ability of vocational college teachers was 4.17, with standard deviation 0.60. As for the sub dimensions, except for the variable of management by others, the average values of the other five variables were above 4, indicating that the overall level of vocational college teachers’ social emotional ability was good.

Table 2. The means and standard deviations of VCTSEAS and its variables

Variables	Means	Standard deviations
Social emotional ability	4.17	0.60
Self-awareness	4.09	0.79
Self-management	4.06	0.79
Awareness of others	4.15	0.71
Management by others	3.69	0.82
Collective awareness	4.40	0.69
Collective management	4.20	0.72

3.2 The Differentials between Demographic Variables and Variables in VCTSEAS

Gender and educational background were two important demographic variables, and therefore the differentials between gender and the six variables in VCTSEAS (self-awareness, self-management, awareness of others, management by others, collective awareness, and collective management) were tested, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. The differential analysis of VCTSEAS

Variables	Options	Numbers	Means	T	P
Self-awareness	Male	140	4.07	-0.43	0.67
	Female	284	4.10		
	Bachelor degree	112	4.05	-0.66	0.51
Postgraduates or above	312	4.11			
Self-management	Male	140	4.07	0.34	0.73
	Female	284	4.05		
	Bachelor degree	112	4.19	2.07	0.04*
Awareness of others	Master degree or above	312	4.01	1.88	0.06
	Male	140	4.19		
	Female	284	4.12	0.98	0.33
Management by others	Bachelor degree	112	4.25	1.88	0.06
	Master degree or above	312	4.11		
	Male	140	3.84	2.64	0.01*
Management by others	Female	284	3.62	1.58	0.11
	Bachelor degree	112	3.80		

Collective awareness	Master degree or above	312	3.66		
	Male	140	4.48		
	Female	284	4.37	1.55	0.12
	Bachelor degree	112	4.48		
Collective Management	Master degree or above	312	4.38	1.38	0.17
	Male	140	4.24		
	Female	284	4.19	0.68	0.50
	Bachelor degree	112	4.22		
	Master degree or above	312	4.20	0.31	0.76

Note: ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05

The differentials between genders and management by others. The T-test showed that gender had a significant effect on management by others among vocational college teachers ($t=2.64$, $sig=0.01$), with means of 3.84 for male teachers and 3.62 for female teachers, indicating that male teachers had higher social emotional abilities in management by others than that of female teachers. However, there was no significant influence of genders on the other five variables.

The differentials between educational backgrounds and self-management. As shown in Table 3 above, educational background was significantly positively related to self-management among vocational college teachers. In detail, the level of self-management among vocational college teachers with bachelor’s degree was higher than that of those teachers with master degree or above, which meant that educational background with master degree or above exerted less influence on self-management ability among vocational college teachers. The causes of that phenomena were complicated and could be further explored in the future study. Besides, there was no significant relation between educational background and the other five variables.

3.3 The Logistic Multiple Regression between Variables in Social Emotional Ability and Variables in Well-being

Multiple linear regression was applied to test the relations between variables of social emotional ability (self-awareness, self-management, awareness of others, management by others, collective awareness, and collective management) and variables of well-being (physical health, interpersonal relationship, and job satisfaction) among vocational college teachers.

Table 4. The results of multiple regression analysis

B	Unstandard- ized coeffi- cient	Standardized coefficient		Regression model
	Standard error	Beta	t	Adjusted R2 F

	(constant)	0.978	0.191		5.119***		
Interpersonal relationship	Collective management	0.313	0.055	0.317	5.743***	0.381	87.922***
	Awareness of others	0.197	0.052	0.195	3.813***		
	Collective awareness	0.203	0.059	0.198	3.47**		
	(constant)	0.962	0.278		3.454**		
Job satisfaction	Management by others	0.339	0.055	0.296	6.117***	0.181	47.732***
	Collective awareness	0.286	0.066	0.211	4.364***		
	(constant)	2.085	0.365		5.706***		
Physical health	Collective awareness	0.475	0.099	0.293	4.821***	0.049	11.821***
	Awareness of others	-0.244	0.096	-0.154	-2.528**		

As shown in Table 4, the explanatory rate of interpersonal relationship in the model was 38.1%, which meant that collective management, awareness of others, and collective awareness were all positively related to interpersonal relationship. The explanatory rate of job satisfaction in the model was 18.1%, indicating that management by others and collective awareness positively predicted job satisfaction. The explanatory rate of physical health in the model was 4.9%, which showed that collective awareness and awareness of others were positively related to physical health. However, self-awareness and self-management at the individual level did not show any significant influence on interpersonal relationship, job satisfaction and physical health.

4 DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Management by Others should be Promoted Among Vocational College Teachers

The scores for management by others were lower than those of the other variables, which indicated that vocational college teachers were lack of skills in communicating with their leaders. Therefore, principals of vocational colleges need to transform the leadership so as to guide teachers to actively participate in school management, enhancing their sense of responsibility and belonging.^[8] Besides, leaders were expected to create more chances for teachers to interact with each other. Teachers may share teaching experiences and insights into teaching, which was beneficial for improving their teaching capability, the understanding of vocational education in practice as well as scientific research ability.

4.2 Motivation should be Stimulated among Vocational College Teachers

Gender and educational background had an obvious influence on social emotional ability. Male teachers had higher social emotional ability than females. The reason may be that there were so less male teachers that they were more welcomed than females

during the work and more willing to communicate with the leaders. Actually females made great contribution to vocational education and should deserve more attention, and their identity and roles should be enhanced. As for educational background, vocational teachers with lower degree had to work hard and strive for improving the teaching skills and self-development. Thus, training programs should be well designed on the basis of individual characteristics and demands to make them more suitable for vocational education.

4.3 Social Emotional Ability should be Enhanced among Vocational College Teachers

The study showed that social emotional ability was positively related to well-being among vocational education teachers. With the rapid development of vocational education, teachers were faced with a multitude of tasks and tedious things. Therefore, the teachers' structure should be stressed to make the division of work more reasonable and acceptable.^[9] Besides, teachers' resilience in work should be promoted to avoid emotional, mental or physical problems. When vocational college teachers get high qualified development, their social emotional ability and well-being were both enhanced.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Social emotional ability among vocational college teachers was affected by the level of participation in vocational affair management, communicative and cooperative skills, and identity recognition. In order to enhance vocational college teachers' well-being, they should be provided more chances to take part in the promotion of the vocational education development. Vocational colleges also need to empower teachers' development and make the most of teachers' initiative role in the process of high qualified vocational education. Teachers get a more understanding of the colleges affairs and their social emotional ability improved. They feel more valued and the well-being enhanced.

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