



**HOLCOMBE INSTITUTE FOR TEACHING & LEARNING EXCELLENCE
CLASSROOM RESEARCH AWARD EVALUATION**

Human Resources – Holcombe Institute • 225 East Las Olas Boulevard • Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33301 • 954-201-7339

Please complete this form for the research project that you conducted for the Classroom Research Award. This information will be reviewed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of your research. Your evaluation and supporting documentation will be posted on the HI Website. Use additional paper where necessary.

Note: Please submit this form and supporting documentation within 30 days of the completion of your project to Office of Professional Development & Training, B31 - R605, WHC. In addition, you will need to attach an electronic copy of the evaluation to an EMAIL and forward to ProfDevTrng@broward.edu.

MUST BE WORD PROCESSED

Name:	Joyce Walsh Portillo	Date:	May 31, 2009
Signature:			
Title of Research Project:	The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Introduction to Business Students		
Project Completion Date:	May 6, 2009		

1. State the problem to be researched.

Research Question:

Does exposure to Emotional Intelligence literature and related learning activities in an Introduction to Business class have a significant impact on students' own emotional intelligence?

2. Summarize the research findings/results. If applicable, attach copies of evaluation forms and a summary of those forms.

Research Findings and Results:

This was a quasi-experimental design using a pre and post test on two Introduction to Business sections. Students self-selected and did not know if they were registered in the Experimental group (T/TH 9:30-10:45) or the Control group (T/TH 11:00-12:15). Students were traditional age students with an average age of 21 in the Experimental group and 19.4 in the Control group. Both groups signed an informed consent to participate in the research and were given the option not to participate if they were uncomfortable with their inclusion. (All students who registered participated initially; although we did have some withdrawals during the semester.) Students did not receive any compensation or other special consideration. All students, in both groups, received a detailed report of their results from the first assessment from MHS. The payment for all the assessments was covered through my Endowed Chair Teaching funds.

Participant make-up in the Experimental group was 31 students; 17 males with an average age of 20.2 years and 14 females with an average age of 21.9 years.

In the Control group, there were 23 students; 15 males with an average age of 19.8 years and 8 females with an average age of 18.8 years.

Both groups took the EQ-i, a 133-question inventory with answers on a Likert scale to determine overall Emotional Intelligence scores, within the first two weeks of the semester in January. Both groups came back and took the exact assessment during the final two weeks of the semester in April. The assessments are normed for age and gender. These assessments are scored by MHS (Multi-Health Systems), the licensed firm for the delivery of the EQ-i, and results were delivered electronically to me. All students received a complete report regarding their results on the first assessment, which is deemed the “Pre-Test” for this research. Every student in both groups had the opportunity to meet with me, during my office hours, individually to receive the feedback and the “counselor’s” interpretation. (I was trained and certified by MHS in June, 2008). Approximately 75% of the students took advantage of this opportunity. (On a personal note, this was very rewarding because it provided an excellent opportunity to provide additional guidance to all students, whether they were in the Experimental or Control group).

The Experimental group was exposed to literature and discussion in a business atmosphere that included the 15 competencies assessed in the EQ-i during the semester. The Control group received traditional homework assignments and discussions which did not include any element of emotional intelligence competencies as such. (Competencies such as *Interpersonal Relationships*, for example, were not identified as part of the EQ [EI] assessment skill set, although the concept is discussed and included in the curriculum.)

Both groups took the same course tests, had the same number of class meetings and same number of assignments. The only difference was the Emotional Intelligence theme which was included in reflective summaries, HW assignments and class discussion (along with all other Introduction to Business themes and topics) in the Experimental group. The Control group received the traditional course. I was the instructor for both groups and the course delivery which is a combination of lecture, group work and interactive participation was exactly the same.

Findings

The overall group comparison of change in post scores for the Control and Experimental groups in Total EQ showed an increase in both groups. In terms of scores, 100 being the average, the Experimental group increased from an average pre-test score of 105.8 to a post-score average of 111.3. The Control group’s average also increased from 100.9 to 104.8. See Excel spreadsheets with comparative data for both groups and all fifteen competencies (2 pages entitled: **The Impact of Emotional Intelligence-Infused Curriculum in Introduction to Business Students**)

3. Describe the methods you used to evaluate the effectiveness of your project. Include quantitative and/or qualitative evidence.

Using SPSS, I also conducted a paired samples t-test examining the pre and post test scores for the Experimental group; and for the Control group. The paired samples result for the experimental group was significant at .004, while the control group result was not significant at .060, considering $p < .05$. (See SPSS output sheet entitled “Paired samples t-Test. Pre vs. Post Control and Experimental.”)

Also, using SPSS, I used an Independent Samples t-test. The Experimental group was deemed Group 2 and the Control group was deemed Group 1. The post EQ-i score for all participants was the dependent variable. The results showed a significant difference in the Experimental group with a result of .048 with equal variances assumed; with equal variances not assumed, the result is .039. In either case, $p < .05$. (See SPSS output sheet entitled “Independent Samples t-Test EQ Post). The exposure to the Emotional Intelligence readings and class activities did increase, in a statistically significant way, the overall Emotional Intelligence scores for the Experimental group.

5. If applicable, identify what prevented you from achieving your original, expected findings.

The only obstacle I found while doing this research was making sure students stayed engaged in both groups. The experimental group had more students from the beginning (N=35) while the Control group had fewer (N=28). I ended up with 31 and 23 students respectively who completed both the Pre-Test and Post-Test.

My expectation was that students who have knowledge of Emotional Intelligence and are engaged in the awareness of its impact will increase their own emotional intelligence, and while the time from the pre-test to the post test was relatively short at three months, it was still long enough to have an impact.

6. Explain in detail how you intend to share the results of this research with the Broward College community.

I think the question, “How does an increase in emotional intelligence help our students?” is worth discussing. Looking at the five main groupings of competencies (Intrapersonal, Interpersonal, Stress Management, Adaptability and General Mood) in much more detail may help pinpoint specific areas where our students need greater support.

Once of the competencies that is measured is “Problem-Solving,” and in my discussions with students (from both groups) on their results from the first assessment, it was clear to me that many of them lacked skills in this area. Their critical thinking and creativity were challenged and they were often not engaged in the process of problem solving. That seemingly apathetic attitude was frustrating to me initially, but as I spoke to them, I realized that with some prompting and mentoring, it often allowed them to see alternate ways to problem solve and tackle challenging issues. The experimental group average in problem-solving went up 7.9 points, while the Control group average in problem-solving only went up 0.8 points. That result seems to indicate that just “talking about it” is not enough to effect change; students need to be more engaged in the developing the skills through hands-on group work and discussion, feedback and specific reading assignments.

The one-on-one feedback sessions provided for much greater student-faculty connection and that was very satisfying. Even some students who were not successful in the course material wanted to finish with the Emotional Intelligence research. Being involved in this research motivated some of them in a way that surprised me. I found the male and female students to be equally engaged in the entire process and that also surprised me. (I thought that perhaps the female students would find this more appealing, but that turned out not to be the case.)

I am willing to share the findings of this research with the faculty, counselors or administrators at any time. Those advising students might benefit from the awareness of this research, but the concern will be the cost of the assessment and training faculty and/or advisors. Training runs approximately \$1,000 per participant; the assessments for higher education run about \$15.00 each. It may be worthwhile to work with at-risk populations such as our developmental students to help them develop greater awareness and increase their emotional intelligence.

7. Describe ways in which faculty from other disciplines could apply your research and its results in classroom practices, in future studies, and/or for student success?

Workshops on the basics of Emotional Intelligence, such as the ones we have given internally, are a starting point. It might be a good idea to include an emotional intelligence component for students in all SLS courses and continue to train faculty delivering the SLS courses on the significance of emotional intelligence.

Submit this evaluation via EMAIL to ProfDevTrng@broward.edu

Send the ORIGINAL (HARD COPY with signatures) to

Holcombe Institute for Teaching & Learning Excellence: HR - Office of Professional Development & Training - Bldg. 31/605 WHC - Phone 954-201-7339