Enhancing the Emotional Intelligence of Hong Kong College Students Through a General Education Course

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Background and Rationale
To prepare college students with ‘EI’ knowledge and skills to become mature, capable and competent service leaders in the community

Service Leadership and Emotional intelligence (EI) – General Education Course
- Introduce concepts of service leadership and EI
- Develop emotional abilities relating to self and social awareness and management
- Based on Daniel Goleman’s EI model
- Lectures, workshops, role-plays, small group discussion and reflections, simulation exercises

Training Guideline
- Preparation Phase
  - Assess personal strengths and limits
  - Give feedback (setting pre-training baseline): EISA
- Training Phase
  - Lecture-skills workshop mode
  - In-class activities to improve self/social awareness
  - Learning techniques to manage emotions and emotion mentoring
- Transfer Phase
  - Support students to integrate a service leadership project proposal, integrating EI concepts
  - Reflect on the application of EI skills in real life situations
- Evaluation Phase
  - Follow up assessment of EI (post-test of EISA)
  - Evaluation and integration of learning
  - Collect feedback about the course and their learning from students

Efficacy of EI training on college students
Pre-Post Comparison on EISA (N=155)

Feedback from focus group & Individual Interviews
- “This course enables me to uplift my EI and understand the knowhow to help others in overcoming emotional difficulties.”
- “I have become more cheerful and open-minded, taken the initiative to make friends in the university, as well as being more embracing and forgiving.”
- “I subconsciously show more concern for others’ feelings, find ways to compromise, respect others’ will and build good interpersonal relationships.”

Research Objectives
- Evaluate efficacy of EI training on college students
- Examine gender difference
- Difference on ‘Year of study’
- Difference on ‘Programs of study’

Methodology
- Quantitative measures:
  1. Pre-test and post-test analysis of EQ Knowledge and Skill Evaluation
  2. Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment (EISA)
- Qualitative measures:
  Focus group and individual interviews

Discussion and Conclusions
- EI can be enhanced through learning and training
- EI can be improved among college students in a relatively short time
- Programs/GE courses related to the development of EI skills should be supported & encouraged in the college community

Implication
- To add a new element to the course in order to further enhance EI especially on the factor of ‘Achieving’ which is related to setting realistic goals on service planning
- To promote and encourage more students to participate in this kind of GE courses to promote their EI