

The role of EI in the well-being of students at the Jaume I University of Castelló

Resumen

El creciente interés de las últimas décadas por encontrar los factores que influyen en el bienestar y el desempeño académico y profesional del individuo, ha llevado al síndrome del burnout a estar en el punto de mira de muchos estudios.

Como respuesta a este problema se han estudiado diferentes factores protectores frente al estrés laboral y académico, entre ellos, los recientes estudios sobre la Inteligencia emocional han mostrado los resultados más prometedores, ya que esta, se define como una habilidad para percibir, asimilar, comprender y regular las emociones propias y las de otras personas (Mayer y Salovey, 1997)

Teniendo esto en consideración, el objetivo principal del estudio es comprobar la relación entre el nivel de inteligencia emocional de los estudiantes con sus niveles de burnout. Por tanto, la hipótesis principal del estudio propone que una mayor inteligencia emocional, disminuirá los niveles de burnout y mejorará su bienestar. Además se tendrán en cuenta variables como la facultad, el curso y el sexo.

El estudio se ha llevado a cabo mediante un cuestionario, donde se han evaluado tanto el burnout como la inteligencia emocional, en una muestra formada por 87 estudiantes de diferentes grados, facultades y cursos de la Universitat Jaume I de Castellón.

Los principales resultados mostraron que una IE más alta predice mayor bienestar y con ello, menor burnout. En cuanto al sexo, las mujeres obtuvieron mejores puntuaciones que los hombres en IE. Respecto a las facultades, las más centradas en las personas, como son la de Humanidades y Salud obtuvieron mejores puntuaciones en IE y menores en burnout. Por último en referente al curso, la tendencia de respuestas indicó mayores niveles de burnout a medida que el curso aumentaba. Estos resultados nos muestran la gran importancia que tiene una alta Inteligencia emocional en el bienestar de las personas.

Palabras clave: *Salud, Bienestar, Inteligencia emocional, Burnout, Estudiantes*

Abstract

The growing interest in recent decades to find the factors that influence the well-being and academic and professional performance of the individual, has led the burnout syndrome to be in the focus of many studies.

In response to this problem, different protective factors against work and academic stress have been studied, among them, recent studies on Emotional Intelligence have shown the most promising results, since it is defined as an ability to perceive, assimilate, understand and regulate one's own emotions and those of other people (Mayer & Salovey, 1997)

Taking this into account, the main objective of the study is to verify the relationship between the level of emotional intelligence of the students and their levels of burnout.

Therefore, the main hypothesis of the study proposes that greater emotional intelligence will decrease burnout levels and improve their well-being.

In addition, variables such as faculty, course and gender will be taken into account.

The study was carried out using a questionnaire, where both burnout and emotional intelligence were evaluated, in a sample made up of 87 students of different degrees, faculties and courses from the Jaume I University of Castellón.

The main results showed that a higher EI predicts greater well-being and with it, less burnout. Regarding gender, women scored better than men on IE. Regarding the faculties, those most focused on people, such as Humanities and Health, obtained better scores in IE and lower in burnout.

Finally, regarding the course, the response trend indicated higher levels of burnout as the course increased.

These results show us the great importance of high emotional intelligence in people's well-being.

Keywords: *Health, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence, Burnout, Students*

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Introduction

The growing interest in recent decades to find the factors that influence the well-being and academic and professional performance of the individual, has led the burnout syndrome to be in the focus of many studies.

This syndrome is characterized by three symptoms, **emotional exhaustion**, characterized by feelings of exhaustion and depletion of the emotional resources, **depersonalization**, that refers to the feeling of detachment, emotional hardening, loss of the contact capacity and the adoption of the negative attitudes, distant towards the recipients and finally **the lack of personal fulfillment**, which refers to the appearance of negative feelings of inadequacy, lack of professional competence and effectiveness, as well as the decrease in personal expectations.

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Results

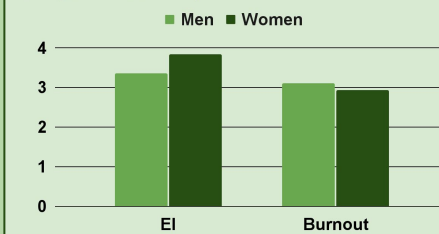
Table 1: Mean, standard deviation and intercorrelation of the variables (N=87)

	Media	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Attention	3,56	,80	,91							
2. Clarity	3,64	,59	,601**	,87						
3. Repair	3,75	,62	,410**	,488**	,83					
4. Efficacy	2,50	,92	-,479**	-,438**	-,472**	,89				
5. Exhaustion	3,93	1,09	,020	-,234*	-,199	,079	,88			
6. Cynicism	2,59	1,31	-,380**	-,322**	-,244*	,661**	,147	,94		
7. EI	3,65	,55	,858**	,834**	,750**	-,568**	-,148	-,393**	,92	
8. Burnout	3,01	,81	-,377**	-,444**	-,399**	,771**	,555**	,855**	-,493**	,88

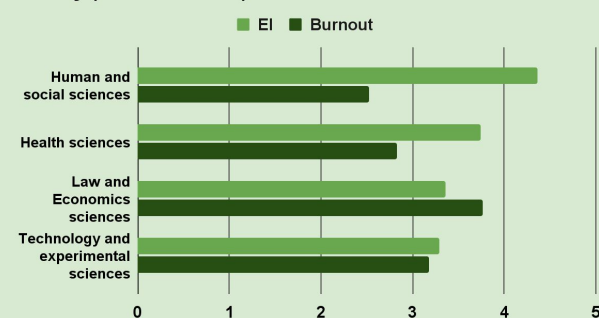
Note. *= $p < 0,05$; **= $p < 0,01$

Reliability coefficient on the diagonal

Sex (EI and Burnout)



Faculty (EI and Burnout)



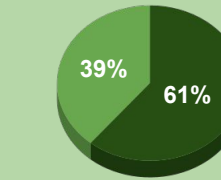
Course (Burnout)



Method

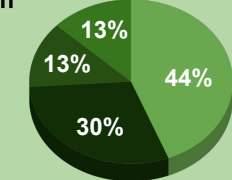
N=87

Sex distribution



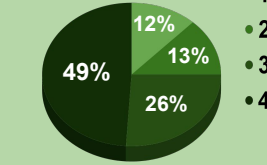
● Women
● Men

Faculty distribution



● Health sciences
● Technology and experimental sciences
● Law and economics sciences
● Human and social sciences

Course distribution



● 1°
● 2°
● 3°
● 4°

Instruments

-Maslach burnout inventory (Schaufeli et al., 2002): This inventory assesses burnout syndrome.
-TMMS (Salovey et al., 1995): This questionnaire assesses the metaknowledge of the different emotional states.

Discussion

Correlations between emotional intelligence and Burnout have been observed, thus, people who had higher scores in the Attention, Clarity and Repair dimensions tended to respond higher in efficacy and lower in exhaustion and cynicism, which is in line with previous studies. (Extremera et al., 2005)

-The influence of the **sex** variable on EI and burnout was analyzed to check if there were differences between men and women, the results obtained show that women were more aware of the importance and effect of emotions on their mood, in addition they redirected and controlled negative states in a better way.

These results, like previous studies, on the one hand show a tendency for women to have a higher EI than men, on the other hand, although the results lean towards a lower degree of burnout in women, they have not been found significant differences in the Burnout variable, this differs from the main hypothesis, since their burnout levels should be lower as they have a significantly higher EI.

-The results obtained by analyzing the variance of the different **faculties** show, as could be expected, the two faculties most related to the treatment of people, Health and Humanities, which are also the ones with a more social profile, have obtained significantly higher scores in Emotional Intelligence and lower in burnout compared to the faculties of Law and technology.

This may be due to the fact that the objective of their studies is more linked to the relationship, understanding and helping other individuals, where having a greater understanding of emotions, in addition to knowing how they affect the well-being of people, is something key, so this increased knowledge may have resulted in the greats between these faculties and the others.

-The differences obtained when analyzing the **course** variable are based on the increase in burnout as the course progresses, while the EI does not show significant differences from one course to another.

These differences may be related to the workload, responsibility and decision making that occur in each grade and which increase over time, making students feel more burdened and exhausted.

In addition to this, the closer they are to completing the degree, the clearer they are whether or not their expectations of the degree have been met, in the case in which they have not been met, their cynicism can increase and even decrease their academic effectiveness, causing them to feel frustrated and disappointed.

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