

Executive Summary

Defense Data

March 27th, 2020

Title An investigation of behaviors associated with emotional intelligence skills: A cross-sectional survey of athletic training students using the Genos Emotional Intelligence Inventory.

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a unique aspect of human intelligence that involves recognizing, understanding, and using emotions to understand, influence, and manage social situations. Millennial and IGen college-aged students experience an emotional and social development delay as they prepare to transition to adulthood. As a result, college-students may not demonstrate behaviors associated with EI compared to previous generations. Healthcare students that demonstrate behaviors associated with EI also demonstrate a higher degree of empathy, interpersonal communication, professionalism, experience less stress, and perform better in academic and clinical settings.

Problem of Practice

Today's college-aged students demonstrate less empathy and social skills, while experiencing higher levels of stress, anxiousness, and focus on self. As a result, athletic training students may not demonstrate the necessary EI skills to navigate the emotional and social burden of delivering patient care.

Research Method

A cross-sectional survey design was used to examine the frequency that athletic training students demonstrate behaviors associated with EI skills using the Genos Emotional Intelligence Inventory. An anonymous online survey was distributed to undergraduate and graduate athletic

training students between the ages of 18-30 who were currently enrolled in an accredited athletic training program.

Summary of Findings

There was no difference in EI skills between undergraduate and graduate athletic training students. Females demonstrate higher EI skills compared to their male peers. EI skills were inconsistent with normative data, with athletic training students frequently demonstrating lower EI skills compared to the normative data. Higher EI skills were found in students with more than 501 clinical experience hours compared to peers with fewer than 500 hours. Athletic training students demonstrate less EI skills directly associated with emotional self-awareness, emotional reasoning, emotional management of others, and interpersonal behaviors.

Limitations of Study

There are inherent limitations with self-reported instruments that may influence the validity and reliability of the results. Although the GEII accounts for these limitations, to fully capture an individual's EI skills a 360-assessment would be required. Due to the sample being limited to athletic training students, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other disciplines.

Implications

This study was the first to measure how often athletic training students demonstrate behaviors associated with emotional intelligence. The results of this study provide important insight into the emotional and social development of undergraduate and graduate athletic training students. Athletic training students demonstrated lower emotional intelligences scores in areas associated with empathy and social interactions. The results of this study also provide educators important data regarding the emotional and social development of their students. Younger

students with less clinical experiences demonstrate fewer EI skills than their peers with more hours. These findings indicate that educators and program administrators should consider strategic EI skill development early in the professional development of a student. The outcomes found on the GEII may serve as benchmarking for educators interested in improving EI skills in their students over time.

