Does Implementing an Emotional Intelligence Program Guarantee Student Achievement?

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Coral L. Wilkens
Elaine Wilmore, Dissertation Chair
Texas A&M University Commerce
NCPEA Editorial Advisor, Dr. John Shinsky

Being a 21st century learner may require a shift in the education paradigm. To be successful students may need to possess a different type of intelligence. Cherniss (2001), Goleman (1995), and O'Neil (1996), suggest that the key to positive life outcomes might consider emotional intelligence as more important than intellectual quotient (IQ). Emotional intelligence is associated with positive life outcomes, as seen in several studies conducted on emotional intelligence in business leadership, educational leadership, achievement, and life success. The purpose of this study was to compare the implementation of a positive behavior support (PBS)system (The Leader In Me [TLIM]) that embeds emotional competencies throughout an entire learning community with its affect on student achievement.

More than 1,200 schools across the United States use TLIM approach. The schools chosen for this study were located solely in the state of Texas. Data were obtained from the publicly available archival datasets from the Texas Education Association (TEA). A causal-comparative analysis using a one-way ANOVA was used to determine whether a significant correlation existed between schools that used TLIM and those that did not. Results indicated no statistically significant difference between the two school groups. Additional analysis was performed to examine the level of implementation. Schools that had reached Lighthouse status demonstrated a significantly higher achievement level in ELA and mathematics compared to schools that did not use TLIM.

Introduction

The 21st-century school is charged with serving a socio-culturally diverse group of students with varying needs and interests that require schools to prepare students for life successes through a balanced education that ensures both mastery of academic skills and the social competence required to be productive adults (Payton et al., 2008). Currently, academic curriculum is focused on four core content areas that include reading, math, social studies, and science. With the increased concentration of academic achievement focused on these areas, little time left to teach social and emotional skills. Schools are charged with the demands of academics, discipline, global participation, and social issues that include bullying and violence. With these added factors in mind, one might consider that infusing the core curriculum with social and emotional competencies might not only help with behavioral issues, but also improve student achievement.

While the push for academic excellence has surged upward, the focus on character education and emotional and social competencies has begun to wane (Covey, 2008). The current U.S. Chamber of Commerce (2012) report, *Leaders and Laggers,* is an annual state-by-state report that discusses the effectiveness of American education. The report admonishes the American education system for not preparing children for the intellectual demands of the modern workplace and 21st century society. Despite the call from business for educational innovation and college and career readiness, America continues to fall short in preparing its students with the skills necessary for postsecondary life.

Covey (2008) shared the "Top 10 Qualities and Skills Employers Seek" (p. 30) in his book *The Leader in Me*. These skills are not academic skills; rather, these are pre-requisite skills required for academic and future success. Employers seek the following skills, which might be correlated with emotional intelligence:

- Communication skills (verbal and written)
- Honesty/integrity
- Teamwork skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Self-motivation/initiative
- Strong work ethic
- Analytical skills
- Technology skills
- Organizational skills
- Creative minds (Covey, 2008, p. 30).

The Leader in Me is based on Covey's (1987) book, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, and is a paradigm shift that changes focus from teaching leadership skills as an isolated incidence to embedding those skills in the actions and beliefs of the community. Additionally, it like many other character programs, the tenets of The Leader in Me are aligned with the core concepts of PBS programs. However, different than a mere program, TLIM (2013a) website asserts, "*The Leader in Me is* not an event and it's not a curriculum, it's ubiquitous leadership development—meaning everywhere and all the time" (para. 4). Rather than teaching social skills every week for 30 minutes, leadership skills are embedded in an integrated approach with every lesson and subject in the school day. As such, "the model impacts everything—the traditions, events, organization, culture, instructional methodologies, and curriculum of the

school. However, as teachers often say, "It's not doing one more thing; it's doing what you're already doing in a better way." (TLIM, 2013a, para. 4).

Statement of the Problem

The Surgeon General's Report of 2000 indicated that, at the time, the current infrastructure of schools did not lend itself to universal instruction and intervention for the delivery of PBS (Sugai & Horner, 2007; United States Public Health Service [PHS], 2002). Since this report, PBS programs that focus on emotional and social competencies have emerged; however, little has changed in the way of infrastructure. Schools that serve kindergarten through grade 12 are providing initiatives such as "race to the top" with the purpose of sending more children to college, building data systems to track student growth and inform practice, recruit effective teachers, and turn around failing schools (U.S. Department of Education [DOE], 2009). However, these reforms have resulted in an inadvertent practice of teaching skills in isolation (Hayes-Jacobs, 2010).

These skills include academics and college readiness in specialized classes without a component that focuses on students' social and emotional competencies. Additionally, students are removed from physical education (PE) classes, music, recess, lunch, and other social situations for remediation in subjects in which they are underperforming. While reforms that focus on increased rigor and longer school days have led to more instructional time in reading, mathematics, social studies, and science, the focus of citizenship, creative arts, and athletic skills have been pushed aside in favor of accountability ratings. Yet in a time where the focus is on school reform and improved student performance, America appears to be missing the warning signs of high pressure education on students and their overall success in both the socioemotional and academic realm (Zhao, 2009).

High pressure education, without the emotional skills to manage that pressure has resulted in increased numbers of children being referred for and diagnosed with anxiety; a direct increase in ADHD as correlated with standardized testing; and, in some of the most severe cases, suicide (Wilkens, 2002; Zhao, 2009). Equally, high-pressure education does not measure success in the business world; rather, this system is measuring success on an isolated test on an isolated day, which means nothing to future employers.

Inadvertently, researchers have echoed employers concerns suggesting that school performance and high IQ are not necessarily true predictors of life success (Cherniss, 2001; Goleman, 1995; and Zhao, 2009). Rather, emotional intelligence, recognized as emotional quotient (EQ), may be the key (Goleman, 1995). Further, Zhao (2009) challenged one to consider whether the high academic success valued in schools is beneficial to what is valued in real life. With this notion in mind, one can assume that neither high academic success nor the need for social and emotional competence will be eliminated. Thus, it is important to consider the necessity of integrating these two skills during every lesson taught during the academic day.

Teachers may feel they lack the expertise to integrate academic courses and emotional competencies (Wilkens, 2011). In an unpublished study by Wilkens (2011), teachers indicated that they supported the need to teach social and emotional skills using PBS programs, but they did not feel competent to deliver those skills. Further, teachers have indicated that teaching simply for the sake of teaching is not what they wanted (Covey, 2008). Rather, teachers want what they teach to be relevant and help students succeed in and out of school (Covey, 2008).

Several curricular programs have been developed to teach emotional intelligence; however, few, if any, have provided a component that trains the teacher and administrator to implement these programs. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a program that focuses on an embedded culture, and teaches and reinforces the skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. Equally, instructional strategies that spur strong analytical skills, the ability to think, and foster social competencies are as necessary as the content taught. The purpose of this research was to investigate whether the focus on using TLIM as a means to teach social and emotional competence directly impacted academic success as measured by the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR).

The Evolution of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has been studied for several years and continues to be redefined in both theory and understanding (Goleman, 1995). In 1937, Thorndike wrote on the idea of *social intelligence* as "the ability to understand, men, women, boys, and girls, to act wisely in human relations" (Nelson, 2009, p.36). Using the term social intelligence, he associated overall success in life with acting wisely (Nelson, 200; Salovy & Mayer, 1990). Wechsler (1958) observed that not all abilities were related solely to cognitive factors. He believed that some abilities were noncognitive in nature. As a result, he proposed an addition to the verbal performance grouping on the Wechsler Scale of intelligence (Bar-On, 2006; Nelson, 2009), called social intelligence.

Gardner (1983) defined intelligence as "the bio-psychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in culture" (p. 33-34). In earlier research, Gardner (1983) developed theory of multiple intelligences, which included the following seven basic types of intelligence: logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal. His theory also included two forms of intelligence that paralleled emotional intelligence: intrapersonal (the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of others) and interpersonal intelligence (the capacity to understand one's self, and one's feelings, fears, and motivations). Both forms of intelligence contain tenets of emotional and social intelligence.

Goleman's (1995) definition of emotional intelligence parallels several different theorists including Aristotle, Plato, and Socrates. These men described an intelligence that encompasses an "array of noncognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures" (Nelson, 2009, p. 36). Goleman (1995) added a fifth competency to Salovoy and Mayer's work, "The ability to know one's own emotions, manage emotions, motivating oneself, recognize emotions in others, and handle relationships" (p. 223-224). Goleman further studied emotional intelligence in terms of leadership and organizational performance and found a correlation between the emotional strengths of the leader and overall productiveness of the organization.

Emotional Intelligence and Academic Success

Over the course of the 20th century, there was much debate as to what formal education should include in the United States (Cohen, 1999). During the 1800s, education was designed to develop the citizen (Tozer, Senese, Violas, 2009). Horace Mann expounded on the development of the citizen, and urged educators to mold student behaviors using empathy. His intent was to shape children emotionally as well as intellectually (Tozer et al., 2009). Dewey later called for

social change that would promote a social order. He felt that such change should develop the child for participation in a democratic life. Included in Dewey's educational reform was the belief that children not be passive receivers of information, but rather active participants who are able to construct their own learning (Tozer et al., 2009).

Other reforms replaced Dewey's call for constructivist learning. The aftermath of the Cold War caused Americans to rethink the curriculum and spawned a thrust for increased math and science instruction. During this era, James Bryant Conant sought to approach education and its structure through standardization selection (Tozer et al., 2009). Conant believed that the best students could be identified through standardized testing (Tozer et al., 2009). Thus, there was little to no focus on the emotional development of children during the post-Cold War era. Laden with discriminatory practices against females and children of minority decent, federal laws including *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) were enacted to provide equal education (Tozer et al., 2009).

Emotionally Intelligent Students

In his book, *Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman (1995) stated, "educators, long disturbed by school children's lagging scores in math and reading, are realizing there is a different more alarming deficiency: emotional illiteracy" (p. 231). Goleman referred to basic problems experienced by the young a crisis for youth. Indications of withdrawal and social problems, anxiety and depression, attention or thinking problems, and delinquent or aggressive behaviors steadily increased from 1970 to 1995. Wilkens (2002) compared two student cohorts and found that the 2002 cohort experienced greater stress and anxiety than did the 1980 cohorts. In fact, in 2002, children with emotional problems rated higher on stress indices than those who were institutionalized for those same problems in the 1980s.

However, hope is not gone. The theologian Desiderius Erasmus once said that "The main hope of a nation lies in the proper education of its youth." Programs designed to teach social and emotional intelligence have increased since the first publication of *Emotional Intelligence* (Goleman, 1995). These programs include skills in social and emotional competencies such as respect, integrity, conflict resolution, self-awareness, and empathy.

Recent research has shown that direct teaching of social and emotional competencies yielded increased emotional intelligence within 1 year of receiving instruction (Bar-On, 2006, p. 32). Nelson (2009) found a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and student achievement in at-risk populations. Additionally, Nelson's research yielded information relating the significance of each of the four branches of emotional intelligence on student achievement. Her study found that students' understanding of emotions was the greatest individual contributor to student achievement among at-risk students (Nelson, 2009).

Building Community Emotional Intelligence

Twenty-first century skills require that students gain leadership skills that focus on character, good judgment, principles, and interdependence on the organization as a whole. While researchers have examined leadership skills extensively, no one has applied them to all facets of the organization until recently (Covey, 2008; Bennis & Nanus, 2003; Bohlman and Deihl, 2004; Goleman, 1995; Spainhower, 2008). In 1998 DuFour and Eaker (1998) identified learning for both the student and the educational professional as a community of learners. Their researchers

suggested that to help students gain knowledge and skills in a given area, the educational community must study and develop the same competencies that are taught.

Covey (2008), demonstrated that emotional intelligence can and should be embraced and taught to the entire learning community. He found that teaching leadership skills builds the emotional competence of the learning organization. He found support for this growth when organizations applied concepts discussed in his work, *Seven Habits for Highly Effective People* (Covey, 1987). Using the *Seven Habits for Highly Effective People*, Covey (2008) developed The Leader in Me (TLIM) which focuses on the development of leadership skills for the entire community.

The Leader in Me

The Leader in Me is not a curriculum; rather, it is a philosophical approach to school culture and leadership. Developed by Covey (2008), TLIM is based on the book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (Covey, 1987). With the intent of directly teaching leadership principles, TLIM is designed to build the leadership capacity of every member of the school community.

As a transformational model, TLIM has been shown to produce higher academic achievement, fewer discipline problems, and increased engagement among teachers and parents (Covey, 2008). This program began in 1999 with the intention to transform the culture of the A. B. Combs Elementary School in North Carolina. After taking a course in the seven habits, Principal Muriel Summers began to using these habits to teach effective skills to students (Covey, 2008; Fonzie & Richie, 2011). As a result, A. B Combs Elementary School experienced improved test scores, decreased disciplinary infractions, and has sustained a culture of success for more than a decade.

This program purports that every child is capable, and every child is a leader. However, TLIM does not approach leadership skills from the typical top-down paradigm. Instead the program approaches these skills as a whole system reform that focuses as much on the relationships among adults who work in the school as it does the students. One might consider this approach to be system reform from the inside out. This program is based on three major beliefs, and it approaches leadership skills from a unique paradigm.

Underlying Beliefs of The Leader in Me

The Leader in Me is based on the belief that everyone is a leader and has the capacity to guide his or her own life. This belief contrasts the traditional hierarchical model in which leadership is a position or an appointment (The Leader in Me, 2012). Equally, Covey (2008) suggested that one can lead regardless of his or her socioeconomic status or position in life.

A second underlying belief suggests that the seven habits of highly effective people are not race, gender, class, or age specific. Rather these habits are universal and pertain to all (Covey, 2008). By embracing this belief, schools will see a long-term metamorphosis of its culture as it transforms from a top-down school to a school of leadership, accountability, adaptability and problem solving as a universal practice among students, teachers, and administrative staff. DuFour and Eaker (1998) referred to this type of transformation as a "non-linear" (p. 282) and "persistent endeavor" (p. 283), which suggests that the campus culture is not a factory that produces one specific standardized product. Thus, the cultural shift begins by

"fully integrating the habits into the curriculum, systems, and culture of the school"(Fonzie & Richie, 2011, p.4).

The third and final belief that underlies TLIM is the focus on a diffusion of innovation in which the seven habits are distributed into the surrounding community. After applying this program, highly impoverished schools have reported increased parent involvement and satisfaction (Fonzie & Richie, 2011). This finding is particularly interesting given that schools in highly impoverished areas often report low parental involvement. Moreover, business leaders from companies (e.g., Panda Express, Enersolv, and Criterion Catalysts and Technologies) and non-profits (e.g., United Way) have commented on the success they have seen from students and communities that have implemented TLIM.

The Leader in Me Process

The focus of TLIM is a cultural shift in teaching and learning. In this new paradigm, schools focus on developing the adults first. The program developers and those at the Covey Institute believe that educators cannot expect positive changes in their students until they have examined and developed their own goals for change. This approach is called the inside-out approach, and the process is rigorous and requires a commitment from everyone involved. When implemented effectively, the outcome is more than a simple structural change; it is a cultural shift in beliefs, attitudes, and school operation.

Continuous capacity building and learning for all is also built into the professional development plan. Professional development does not stop after the initial training. Three months into the program, a trainer returns to the school to provide staff with additional professional development. At this follow-up, professional development includes a continuation of the vision with the intent to integrate TLIM into the environment, traditions, curriculum, systems, and instructions of the campus (FranklinCovey, n.d.a). At the same time, a Lighthouse team and group of trainers is organized to continue the seven habits and ensure sustained training for new employees.

True system reform is the key component of effective implementation of any program (DuFour & Eaker, 1998, Fullan, 2003). However, the commitment to create a leadership community is not a simple endeavor. As a matter of fact, it is much more. Franklin Covey Education (TLIM, 2012) makes it very clear that this program is not an event or a curriculum, but an "ubiquitous leadership development" that focuses on teaching leadership and emotional and social competencies as an integrated approach. Specifically, this approach is embedded into every lesson, instructional method, the school organization. Teachers are TLIM school have reported, "it's not doing one more thing; it's doing what you're already doing in a better way" (Covey, 2008, p. 34).

Lighthouse Schools

Like any program, there exists varying levels of implementation of TLIM. The amount of exposure to the program, adherence to implementation methods, the quality of the process, and the adaptation of the program within the culture are all critical to the effectiveness of implementation (Dusenbury, Brannigan, Hansen, Walsh, & Falco, 2005). As such, Covey developed the Lighthouse school award to encouraging both implementation and program effectiveness (TLIM, 2013b).

Lighthouse status is more than a programmatic checklist. Selected schools that have been in the program for at least 3 years are eligible to achieve this status. The Leader in Me (2013b) symposium guide indicates that it typically takes a school 3 years to meet the criteria of Lighthouse status, which requires schools to prove sustained excellence in nine specific areas. These areas include the development of a lighthouse team, staff collaboration, community engagement, leadership environment, leadership instruction and curriculum, student leadership, leadership events, goal setting and tracking, and measureable results. As of the writing of this study, only 55 Lighthouse schools existed worldwide, and four were located.

Method of the Study

A causal-comparative approach was used for this study.   For this study, the researcher attempted to establish a causal relationship between schools that used TLIM and those that did not. According to Gall et al. (2007), "The critical feature of causal-comparative research is that the independent variable is measured in the form of categories" (p. 306). As such, this study used two categories as the independent variables: schools that used TLIM and schools that did not use TLIM.

It would be reasonable and preferable to test several grade levels and perform a cross section of similar demographic schools and school district types, such as rural, suburban, or inner city to increase the generalizability of the results. However, for the purpose of this study only grade 5 results were included.

Research Questions

The following research questions provided a focus for this study:

1. Is there a statistically significant difference between schools that use TLIM and those that do not in reading and English language arts (ELA) on the STAAR?
2. Is there a statistically significant difference between schools that use TLIM and those that do not in mathematics on the STAAR?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between schools that use TLIM and those that do not in disciplinary placements?

To test the hypotheses, one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were conducted with a 2-level factor. The factor was divided into groups that had implemented TLIM and those that did not. The four dependent variables examined were student achievement based on the 2011-2012 fifth-grade STAAR test results in ELA, mathematics, and student disciplinary placements. Quantitative data for the dependent variables were the mean score of each group.

Study Sample

The target population for this study included all public, traditional, and charter elementary schools in the state of Texas. From this population, the researcher collected all the elementary schools that used TLIM and sorted them to ensure that the campuses selected served fifth-grade students. This collection yielded 42 traditional and charter elementary schools across five regions. In addition to the schools that used TLIM, the researcher collected the total number of

traditional public elementary and charter schools, spanning EE (early elementary, ages 3-5 years) through eighth grade in the state of Texas. Data were collected from TLIM and Texas Education Agency (TEA) websites, respectively. A matching sample was developed to equate schools identified as TLIM users and non- users with corresponding demographics including, socioeconomic, racial, limited English proficiency (LEP), and mobility.

Data Analysis

Three specific data sources were used to analyze student achievement. The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports provide performance information about every public school and district in the state of Texas. Additionally the AEIS reports provide extensive profile information about staff, finances, programs, and student discipline. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) Snapshot provides an overview public education in Texas for each individual school year. The report includes state-level information as well as a profile of the characteristics of each public school in Texas. Finally, Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) results measured in the federal accountability provisions of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act were used to determine academic achievement rates.

Using the TEA snapshot and the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) for the 2011-2012 school year data were gathered to identify student and campus demographic and disciplinary data. Information from the AEIS provided the number of disciplinary placements for each campus. Student achievement information was gathered from the 2012 (AYP) results located on the TEA website. These data for ELA and mathematics scores were used to examine student achievement in each school included in the study. Student achievement is defined in the AYP data as a district's total student population that passes the STAAR test in ELA and mathematics across all grade levels tested.

Is there as Statistically Significant Difference Between the Schools?

For the 2011-2012 school year, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the amount of variance between group (TLIM and NTLIM) academic performance on the STAAR. For each of the 30 TLIM schools, there were 30 NTLIM schools matched for comparison. The mean ELA score for TLIM schools was $M = 88.4$ ($SD = 7.726$), which indicates that these schools yielded an average of 88% to 89% pass rate on the STAAR. The mean ELA score for NTLIM schools was $M = 89.8$ ($SD = 7.383$), which indicates that these schools yielded an average of 89% to 90% pass rate on the STAAR. Based on the descriptive statistic for ELA achievement, NTLIM schools had a higher ELA score than did TLIM schools. No statistically significant difference existed in STAAR ELA achievement scores between fifth-grade students at TLIM schools compared to those at NTLIM schools.

A second one-way ANOVA was used to compare the amount of variance between school group (TLIM and NTLIM) academic performance on the STAAR math for fifth-grade students. The mean score on the STAAR mathematics test for TLIM schools was $M = 85.3$ ($SD = 8.558$), which indicates that TLIM schools had an average of 85% to 86% passing rate on the STAAR. The mean score on the STAAR mathematics test for NTLIM schools was $M = 88.667$ ($SD = 8.523$), which indicates that NTLIM schools had an average of 87% to 89% passing rate on the STAAR. There was no statistically significant difference in STAAR mathematics achievement scores between fifth-grade students in TLIM schools compared to those in NTLIM schools.

Finally, a one-way ANOVA was used to compare the amount of variance between disciplinary placements in TLIM and NTLIM schools. Disciplinary removals are a primary concern that affects academic success. If students are not present in the classroom, their access to adequate instruction is limited. Data for question three was compiled using the AEIS reports available to the public on the TEA website. The discipline result for TLIM schools was $M = 1.733$ ($SD = 2.083$), which indicates that TLIM schools averaged 1.7 disciplinary removals per year. The discipline result for NTLIM schools was $M = 1.333$ ($SD = 2.643$, which indicates that NTLIM schools had an average of 1.33 disciplinary removals per year. Based on the descriptive statistic for disciplinary placements, NTLIM schools had a lower rate of disciplinary removals than did TLIM schools. Again, no statistically significant difference existed in disciplinary placement between fifth grade students in TLIM schools compared to those in NTLIM schools.

Additional Analysis

Because no statistically significant difference were found between TLIM and NTLIM schools, the researcher sought to analyze the differences between NTLIM schools and TLIM schools that had reached Lighthouse status. All Lighthouse schools are listed on TLIM website as well as in *The Leader in Me Symposium Guide* (2013b).

Using the original list of TLIM schools that served fifth-grade students and the original comparison reports, a convenience sample was obtained. All schools included in the new sample were in the original group of TLIM and non-TLIM schools. It is important to note that in the original random sample, two of the Lighthouse schools were eliminated. To ensure a similar comparison, the researcher used the AEIS comparison campus reports to find schools that had similar demographics as the Lighthouse schools. All schools used in the sample were included in the original group of TLIM schools and NTLIM schools prior to the random sampling. For the additional analysis, the researcher chose to examine the relationship between Lighthouse schools and non users of The Leader in Me in mathematics and reading/ELA.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between TLIM Lighthouse and NTLIM schools (IV) and passing rate of the STAAR ELA (DV). The analysis yielded a statistically significant difference between TLIM Lighthouse and NTLIM schools in ELA, $F(1,6) = 17.22$, $p = .006$. There was a statistically significant difference in achievement scores on the STAAR ELA between fifth-grade students at TLIM Lighthouse schools compared to those at NTLIM schools.

A second one-way ANOVA was conducted to evaluate the relationship between TLIM Lighthouse and NTLIM schools (IV) and passing rate of the STAAR mathematics test (DV). The results yielded a significant difference between TLIM Lighthouse and NTLIM schools in mathematics, $F(1,6) = 12.04$, $p = .013$.

No additional ANOVA's were conducted on disciplinary placements due to the format of the available data. Further research on disciplinary placements would have required added permissions for campus and student specific data as well as additional Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine an emotionally intelligent school culture that use TLIM and analyze student achievement and disciplinary (in-school and out of school suspension)

placements.   Analyzing student achievement and programs that promote emotional intelligence is important because millions of tax dollars are spent on educational initiatives each year. More importantly is the level of implementation of these programs. The typical cost for an elementary campus is between $25,000 and $50,000 for implementation of TLIM program. It could be argued that poor implementation is an ineffective use of tax dollars.

An examination of the findings for this data resulted in the conclusion that TLIM schools did not significantly differ in fifth-grade academic achievement from NTLIM schools. However, schools that had achieved TLIM Lighthouse status did statistically differ in fifth-grade academic achievement from NTLIM schools.   Further, the results of the data analysis indicated no significant difference in disciplinary placements between TLIM and NTLIM schools.   This finding means that, for the particular set of data used to compare the variables, the use of TLIM did not positively affect academic achievement or disciplinary removals.

Though the original aim of this study showed that there is no statistically significant difference between TLIM and NTLIM schools on STAAR reading/ ELA, math scores, and disciplinary placements, the researcher might suggest that implementation level is the key to the success of the program. Although the TLIM schools did not outperform NTLIM schools, the schools that achieved Lighthouse status did. Thus the researcher might conclude that TLIM Lighthouse schools demonstrate a statistically significant difference in achievement that did their NTLIM and TLIM counterparts.

The literature suggests that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in predicting life success (Cherniss, 2002; Goleman, 1995) and academic achievement (Hatch, 2012; Nelson, 2009; Rimm-Kaufman, 2006), as well as improving campus culture and discipline infractions (Ross & Laurenzano, 2012; Spainhower, 2008).   There are infinitely many programs that promote emotional intelligence.   With respect to those programs, effective implementation makes a significant difference in the outcome.   Further, emotional intelligence is equated to personal growth (Goleman, 1995; Goleman et al., 2002), which is not necessarily measured in linear terms.   Rather, personal growth requires trial and error and, in some instances, a reexamination of conclusions and decisions. Envisioning an outcome prior to acting is aligned with the habit, begin with the end in mind (Covey, 1987; 2008).   This habit provides for setting a clear path and set of objectives to reach a defined goal.   However, because there is no experimental control over variances in the path, the very existence of uncontrolled human variables can create a deviation along that path. Considering the 21st-century skills required for success in the greater global society, it is important to continue research on TLIM and other programs that promote emotional intelligence.

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