

Investigation of the Impact of Emotional Intelligence Efficacy on Teachers' Multicultural Attitudes

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Abstract

It is important to have a positive attitude and perceptions towards cultural values, one of the key characteristics students have. It is observed that having a positive attitude towards students with different cultural values contributes to achievement in terms of education. Much of the research has revealed that educators have been found to have a positive attitude towards multicultural education. This study, however, strives to measure and determine the extent and level of the impact of the emotional intelligence efficacy on teachers' multicultural attitudes. The working group is comprised of 315 teachers working in primary schools in two provinces in the Southeast and two in the Marmara Region in 2015 – 2016 academic year. "The Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS)", developed by Schutte et al. (1998) adapted into Turkish language by Cetinkaya and Alparslan (2011), and "Multicultural Attitude Scale", developed by Ponterotto et al. (1998) adapted into Turkish by Yazici et al. (2009), were used in this research to determine teachers' emotional intelligence efficacy and multicultural attitudes. The data were analyzed Using SPSS v.17.0 statistical software and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and Stepwise regression analyzes were performed. The results show that subscales of emotional intelligence have an impact on the teachers' multicultural attitudes at a significant level.

Keywords: Multiculturalism, attitude, emotional intelligence, cultural values, efficacy.

1. Introduction

Tayeb (1992) defines culture as '*a set of values, attitudes and meanings historically evolved, learned and shared by a community of people, which also affect material and non-material lifestyles*'. According to Ralph Linton, however, culture refers to learned behaviors and a construct composed of those behaviors (as cited in Tezcan, 1999, p.73). Rules, languages and roles, as the key elements of culture, are significant factors to understand a person and they have also significant impact on interpersonal communication (Dokmen, 2003, p.112). Miller (2008, p.553) similarly purports that cultural beliefs, knowledge, values, and the physical environment reshape people's interactions since they work as media to determine individuals' way of thinking, what they learn, how and what skills they acquire.

On the other hand, multiculturalism defined as 'celebration of diversity' suggests that people different from each other at a certain level should be in contact to do business with each other (Aydin, 2013; Fay, 2012). While it warns the majority to be respectful and tolerant to differences, multiculturalism also recommends us to develop an attitude open to what we do not know (Verkuyten, 2004, p.58). Multiculturalism is based on the ideals that cultural pluralism should be supported by democratic values and the school system should be rearranged from teaching methods to the curriculum and should also embrace all the students (Bennett, 2003; Lafer, 2014; Nieto, 2004).

Multiculturalism creates an equal society by taking all commonly shared values into account that creates a unity in the society (Aydin, 2012). This union and common reference points might be in schools or at cafés outside schools and circles of friends in the workplace (Parker, 1997, p.16). Multicultural education, known as the reflection of the multicultural approach to school settings, argues that all students should be protected and nurtured no matter what their social, cultural or economic level are (Gay, 1997, p.5). Multicultural education is an approach to ensure a fairer and more democratic redesign of the society (Banks & Banks, 2007, p. 24).

Gay (1994) explains the main objectives of multicultural education as follows (as cited in Cirik, 2008, pp.31 – 32): To ensure individuals recognize themselves and approach positively, to help individuals to respect various cultures, values and attitudes as well as acquiring knowledge of them, to help people learn their structures and different perspectives in order to have a healthy communication with those in other cultures, and to help people of different ethnic backgrounds acquire basic qualities such as reading, writing and problem solving (Gunay & Aydin, 2015; Kaya, 2015; Karatas & Oral, 2015).

Multicultural education approach is a multi-dimensional approach advocated to ensure harmony between cultures, to learn and know the specific and general characteristics of cultures (Aydin & Tonbuloglu, 2014), to have attitudes or personal qualities such as tolerance towards other cultures, openness, acceptance and friendliness, to acquire skills such as role flexibility, language skills, behavior management skills and the

convenience of speech, and to make judgments regarding the appropriateness-efficiency attributes of violations occurred while desired relational results are being obtained (Milhouse, 1996, p.72).

Multicultural education is important since it helps students appreciate diversity, learn to work with people having different experiences and perspectives and flourish their own self-esteem (Steele, 2002). Developing communication skills of people from different cultures and helping those individuals to have empathy and to be tolerant are among the fundamental principles of multicultural education (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C. Task Force, 1998).

In European Union that have also candidate countries like Turkey, there exists an orientation which aims to reduce social inequalities in education, avoid conflict, learn respect and tolerance and to acquire skills such as communication, problem solving and learning to protect Human Rights (Kaya & Aydin, 2014; Vogl, 2009). Janesick (2003) also argues that there is another tendency to include cultural characteristics such as race, class and gender in the curriculum, to focus on themes such as objectivity, equity, ethics and solidarity and to regard social justice as “critical”. The research in the literature also supports this notion. Au and Kawakami (1994), Foster (1995), Gay (2000), Hollins (1996), Kleinfeld (1975), Ladson-Billings (1994,1995) and Ware (2006) have carried out research that indicate an increase in academic achievement of students from different ethnic origins if provided an education sensitive to their experiences and culture they have (as cited in Demir & Basarir, 2013).

Multicultural education also deems teachers who have a certain level of knowledge, respect and understanding regarding diversity significant, as much as it highlights considering students’ cultural differences (Gay, 1997, p.10). It is sometimes unavoidable that students encounter with individuals from different cultures, enter a new environment or a school. The teacher support is of great importance in order to help students explore, learn and make appropriate judgments about the new cultures they encounter (White, 1998, p.107; Boyle-Baise, 1996, p.82). Multicultural education, considered ‘as a social transformation’, designates this in three steps. These include ‘the transformation of educators’, ‘the transformation of the school and education’ and ‘the transformation of the society’. The educators, as one of these basic factors, should be examined in order to make them aware of their own perceptions, thoughts and identities and to create a multicultural education atmosphere (Gorski, 2010).

A multicultural teacher's personality traits are predicted to be among the following five main points: To establish ‘*Cultural Empathy*’ to know and understand another's thoughts, feelings, and/or experience; to have ‘Openness’ to be unprejudiced against and communicate with people from different cultures; to be a ‘*Social adventurous*’ reflecting an active approach in social environments; to sustain ‘*Emotional Stability*’ in case of conflicts occur while being in the same environment with different cultures; and to be ‘Flexible’ which refers skills to adapt new and challenging situations (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven, 2000, 2002, 2003; as cited in Polat, 2009). Another researcher in his/her study identified the multicultural efficacy of teachers in three dimensions; namely attitudes, knowledge and skills. Attitude in that study was regarded as ‘to have a multicultural perspective and a positive approach to diversity’, and ‘to understand the significance of school reform movement’ (Sinagatullin, 2003).

The fact that teachers have a positive attitude towards multicultural education is an important factor in achieving the goal (Irwin, 1999, p.38). For example; Ladson-Billings (1994, p.58) in her study, revealed that having any negative attitudes towards students from different cultures resulted in a decrease in their success in teaching. Village and Lucas (2002, p.20) similarly observed that teachers create a more effective communication with their students in case they know their students' cultures, confront with their own prejudices and behave unbiased.

Teacher should be aware of students from different ethnicity and social class and have accurate beliefs, attitudes and knowledge about them (Banks, 2001). At the same time, according to Spiecker and Steutel (2001), this is one of the teacher characteristics of the 21st century. That is to say, teachers should adopt a liberal, pluralistic and multiculturalist approaches which are tolerant and flexible towards different ways of lives and believes where everybody have equal rights, and exhibits a strong stance against discrimination.

When the research carried out in countries other than Turkey are analyzed, it is found that prospective teachers (Bryan and Sprague, 1997; Capelle-Santana, 2003; Iwai, 2013), guidance teachers (Constantine & Gushune, 2003) and teachers (Barry & Lechner, 1995; Nadelsan, 2012) have mainly positive multicultural attitudes and knowledge. In another similar study, it was revealed that teachers having feelings of empathy and self-esteem at the required level exhibited a positive attitude towards students from different ethnicity in the classroom (Beynon, 1985). In a research carried out in Turkey, however, not only teachers (Kaya, 2015; Ozdemir and Dil, 2013; Sahin, Celik and Bilgen, 2013), but also prospective teachers (Coskun, 2012; Coban, Karaman and Dogan, 2010; Demircioglu and Ozdemir, 2014; Karacam and Koca 2012; Tortop, 2014; Unlu and Orten, 2013), academics (Dangaci and Aydin, 2013) and school principals (Polat, 2013) were found to have a positive attitude towards multicultural education. In addition, it was also observed that prospective teachers are inclined to multicultural education in terms of personality traits (Polat, 2009).

The studies which present contrary findings are rare in literature. The studies carried out on teachers, in this direction, presented findings such as ‘Participants have limited understanding in addition to their knowledge regarding the multicultural education (Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff and Pearson, 2001)’; ‘Teachers worry about division, their colleagues are biased against differences (Esen, 2009)’; ‘They have low levels of awareness and applications are insufficient (Yurtseven & Altun, 2015)’.

Positive attitudes, regarded as ‘our character we reflect on other people’, have important effects on our communication and interactions with other people (Chapman, 1999, p.9). Attitudes having a power routing our emotions and behaviors are one of the significant factors which affect interpersonal communication (Dokmen, 2003, p.110). As a professional achievement depends on the qualifications of business skills and human relations, it should not be forgotten that establishing good human relations also triggered by a positive attitude (Chapman, 1999, p.97).

Emotional reactions such as affect and commitment, one of the fundamental elements of attitude, are also reflected in the behaviors and cognitive structure (Arkonac, 2001, p.161). The concept of ‘*attitude*’, which has the meaning ‘prompt to move’ in its root, comes first and guides our behaviors, even the ones not being observed directly. In other words; attitudes are regarded as a tendency deduced from the behaviors and attributed to individual, even if they are now explicitly observed (Arkonac, 2001, p.158; Kagitcibasi, 2013, p.110). Attitudes play a critical role in the formation of behaviors. In particular, when attitudes are strong, stable and highly-correlated with behaviors, the attitude-behavior consistency is higher (Taylor, Peplau & Sears, 2013, p.175).

An attitude is defined as "a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive and dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related" (Allport, 1967, p.4). Katz (1967, p.457) defines attitude as "the predisposition of an individual to evaluate some symbol or object or aspect of his world in a favorable or unfavorable manner." Attitude has an impact that may take precedence over our physical and intellectual characteristics. A positive attitude makes us ‘charismatic’, while a negative attitude may push our attractive characteristics aside (Chapman, 1999, p.11).

Attitude is acquired by learning and it is effective to shape the behavior of individuals (Ulgen, 1994, p.74). In other words, responses to specific notions or objects developed based on an individual's thoughts and beliefs (Gardner, 1985, p.9) are also of paramount importance to be examined since they are one of the key factors that form human behaviors (Kagitcibasi, 2013, p.110).

It is observed that the Turkish equivalent of the word ‘emotion’ is ‘duygu’, a word meaning close ‘moving out’. In other words, *emotion* is a word which means to reflect what is inside (Tarhan, 2014, p.46). Emotions are indispensable guides for the movement of people (Tarhan, 2014, p.50). At the same time, emotions are said to be existed and genetically ‘inherited’ according to some researchers, stemming from socio-cultural notions to some, and structured entirely by means of learning and acculturation to some others (Lupton, 2002, p.32).

The individuals having emotional skills are revealed to be people who are aware of their own emotions, and people who can both have close relationships as they are able to read others’ feelings and have skills to comprehend how to use verbal rules (Goleman, 2009, p.65). These skills are called emotional intelligence overall. The term ‘Emotional intelligence’ appeared for the first time in 1920 when Thorndike used the phrase "social intelligence" to define ‘the ability to understand and manage people and be successful in human relations’. Then, it is known that the usage of the term has expanded by including the intelligence fields that Gardner (1983) defined as “individual-oriented intelligences” (Deniz, Ozer & Isik, 2013; Mayer & Geher, 1996; Titrek, 2011, p.37).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) who first used the term “*emotional intelligence*”, argued that emotional intelligence consists of three categories. These are appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion and utilization of emotions in problem solving. The first category consists of the appraisal and expression of emotion in the self and appraisal of emotion (empathy) in others. The second category is the regulation of emotions both in the self and in others. The third category includes utilization of emotions and is comprised of components such as flexible planning, creative thinking, redirected attention and motivation (Schutte et al. 1998, s.68). Mayer and Salovey (1997) later developed a model of emotional intelligence. According to this model encompassing four principal branches, emotional intelligence involves abilities to accurately perceive emotions in oneself and others, access emotions to facilitate thinking, understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and manage emotions to develop both emotionally and mentally (Mayer, 2000; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Empathy, located in the domain of emotional intelligence, is a key competence to understand others and to share someone else's feelings (Goleman, 2009, p.137). People with high level of empathy ability, which is a component of emotional intelligence, are observed to have higher social integration and social awareness (Dokmen, 2003, p.149). On the other hand, the incompetency to perceive their own emotions, inability in expressing their feelings and incapability in sharing others’ feelings have resulted in the spread of social problems such as violence and bullying (Konrad & Hendl, 2001, p.9).

It is known that emotional intelligence has fundamental stages such as self-consciousness, self-control, expressing feelings, empathy, persistence, motivation, adaptability, to be conciliatory, and to be open to new experiences (Tarhan, 2014, p.22). Emotional intelligence appeared to be associated with the ability to manage moods, as well as personality traits such as empathy and life satisfaction (Ciarrochi, Chen & Caputi, 2000). Petrides and Furnham (2001) argued that emotional intelligence incorporates individuals' personal differences regarding experiencing, defining, understanding, managing and using them in terms of both the person himself and others. Emotional intelligence was, at the same time, determined to be associated with various determinants such as parental love and support, life quality and the quest for entertainment and recreation (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999). As it allows us to evaluate and understand both others and our feelings, emotional intelligence also transfers them into our everyday lives and work in a positive way and enables us to respond others appropriately (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). In addition, individuals with higher emotional intelligence have some characteristics such as 'being sensitive to society's problems', 'creating a positive atmosphere in solving problems', 'confidence', 'trust', 'tolerant', and 'being consistent' (Somuncuoglu, 2005, p.274).

When the research are examined, high trait emotional intelligence individuals are found to be more accurate at identifying facial expressions and social clues, adequate in terms of encouraging social interactions, and easily accepted by others (Mavroveli, Petrides, Sangareau and Funham, 2009). Accordingly, it was revealed that higher scores on the managing emotions was positively related to the quality of interactions (Lopes, Brackett, Nezlek, Schütz, Sellin and Salovey, 2004). In a study conducted on undergraduate students, however, it was observed that there exists an increase in perceptions of problem-solving skills as the emotional intelligence level of students increases (Ismen, 2001).

The above-mentioned two variables, 'Emotional Intelligence' and 'Multicultural Attitude', seem to be similar with regard to some basic characteristics. Especially due to the fact that the words 'attitude' and 'emotional' contain and refer to similar connotations, it is expected that 'Emotional Intelligence' and 'Multicultural Attitude' impact each other. In the same way, 'Emotional Intelligence' and 'Multicultural Attitude' intercept in many other concepts they referred to such as 'social interaction', 'empathy', 'communication', 'awareness', 'sharing feelings', and 'influencing behaviors'. This research aims to reveal the impact of the emotional intelligence, one of teachers' personal characteristics, on their multicultural attitudes.

In the study, the following hypotheses were developed based on the Emotional Intelligence subscales and multicultural attitudes:

- 1- Teachers' empathic sensitivity positively affects their multicultural attitudes.
- 2- Teachers' emotional management positively affects their multicultural attitudes.
- 3- Teachers' use of their emotions positively affects their multicultural attitudes.
- 4- Teachers' emotional awareness positively affects their multicultural attitudes.

2. Method

This study utilizes a correlational survey model since it intends to determine the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence levels and their multicultural attitudes. Correlational survey models are research designs which allow to determine the level of common deviations between two or more variables (Karasar, 2009). It is intended to identify the presence or degree of common change estimated to be between the two variables in the research by the use of the correlational survey model used (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Karasar, 2009).

2.1. Population and Sample

The research population is constituted by W and X cities in the Marmara Region and Y and Z cities in the Southeastern Anatolia region, all of which present different characteristics in terms of language and cultural values. The sample of the study is comprised of a total of 315 teachers, 71 in W, 83 in X, 81 in Y and 79 in Z, working in primary schools in 2015-2016 academic year. In addition, 143 participants (45.4%) are female and 172 (54.6%) were male teachers. In terms of tenure, 130 participants (41.1%) have a tenure of 0-5 years, 106 (33.7%) are between 6-10 years, 42 (13.3%) have 11-15 years and 37 (11.7%) participants have a tenure of 16 years and above. Data were collected through survey carried out with the participating teachers.

2.2. Data Collection Tools

Data of the study were collected by means of "The Emotional Intelligence Scale" and "Multicultural Attitude Scale".

Multicultural Attitude Scale: In order to determine the teachers' attitudes regarding multicultural education, Teacher Multicultural Attitudes Survey (TMAS) is used in this study. The scale developed by Ponterotto, Baluch, Greig and Rivera (1998) is a one-dimensional scale comprised of a total of 20 items, 13 positive and 7 negative items. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency for TMAS was found to be .86 and Theta value was calculated as .89. TMAS was adapted to Turkish language by Yazici et al. (2009), but some items on the scale were excluded based on Yazici et al.'s (2009) study and a scale comprised of 17 items –

12 positive and 5 negative items– was administered to participants (2009). Cronbach's alpha value of Turkish version of the scale was found to be .74 in Yazici et al. (2009), while other similar studies presented that value as .72 (Coskun, 2012) and .75 (Ozdemir & Dil, 2013). In this research, Cronbach alpha value was calculated as .78; accordingly TMAS can be considered as a data collection tool with reliability at a level to serve for the purposes of this research.

Emotional Intelligence Scale: The scale used in this study was developed by Schutte et al. (1998) and its theoretical background was inspired by Salovey and Mayer's theoretical model of emotional intelligence. The scale included 62 items. The factor analysis performed on the data obtained resulted in a four-factorial structure including 33 items having factor loading over 0.40. These factors were determined to be emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency for this scale was calculated to be between 0.84 – 0.90 in other relevant studies (Schutte et al., 1998; Chan, 2004; Austin et al., 2004; as cited in Cetinkaya & Alparlan, 2011). In this scale, items 4, 13, 14, 24, 30 and 33 are about empathic sensitivity; items 7, 8, 10, 11, 20, 26, 27 and 31 are for utilizing emotions; items 5, 15, 18, 25, 29 and 32 are about emotional awareness and evaluation; and items 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 12, 16, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23, 28 focus on regulation/management of emotions. Cetinkaya and Alparlan (2011), researchers who adapted this scale to Turkish, also reported that this scale similarly has a four-factorial structure. In addition, these researchers calculated the significance value as 0.369 in Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and found out that data exhibited a normal distribution. Thus, it seems that this scale is appropriate to be used in line with our hypotheses in this study.

2.3. Data Analysis

The data obtained in this study were analyzed in SPSS. First, the data were tested in terms of conditions to meet multicollinearity, normality and singularity hypotheses regarding the multiple regression analysis (Akbulut, 2010; Buyukozturk, 2010; Pallant, 2005). In this regard, the normal distribution of the subscales of emotional intelligence, namely emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions, and Multicultural Attitude Scale were examined. Later, a linear correlation was found to be between the predictor variables (emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions) and the predicted variable (multicultural attitude) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation, indicating the relationship between variables, was performed. After observing that the data obtained met the hypotheses for multiple regression analysis, the power of the emotional intelligence subscales to predict multicultural attitude was examined by stepwise regression analysis.

3. Findings

The findings obtained in the study are presented below. First, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was utilized to examine the relationship between the subscales of emotional intelligence, namely emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions, and Multicultural Attitude Scale. The findings obtained are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Correlation Analysis Results indicating relationships between emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions subscales and Multicultural Attitude

Factors	Emotional Awareness and Evaluation	Regulation/ Management of Emotions	Empathic Sensitivity	Utilizing Emotions	Multicultural Attitude
Emotional Awareness and Evaluation	1				
Regulation/ Management of Emotions	,585 **	1			
Empathic Sensitivity	,573 **	,695 **	1		
Utilizing Emotions	,541 **	,608 **	,640 **	1	
Multicultural Attitude	,461 **	,477 **	,477 **	,486 **	1

**p< 0.01

When Table 1 is examined, it is observed that there exist a positive and statistically significant relationship between emotional awareness and evaluation subscale and multicultural attitude [$r = -0.46, p < 0.01$]; a positive and statistically significant relationship between regulation/management of emotions subscale and multicultural attitude [$r = -0.48, p < 0.01$]; a positive and statistically significant relationship between empathic sensitivity subscale and multicultural attitude [$r = -0.48, p < 0.01$]; and a positive and statistically significant relationship between utilizing emotions subscale and multicultural attitude [$r = -0.49, p < 0.01$]. According to these findings, as teachers' emotional intelligence capabilities increase, their multicultural attitude also seems to be increasing.

When the relationships between variables are examined, it is revealed that there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between emotional awareness and evaluation and regulation/management of emotions [$r = -0.58, p < 0.01$]; a statistically significant relationship between emotional awareness and evaluation empathic sensitivity [$r = 0.57, p < 0.01$]; and a positive and statistically significant relationship between emotional awareness and evaluation and utilizing emotions [$r = -0.54, p < 0.01$], respectively. In addition, it is observed that there exist a positive and statistically significant relationship between regulation/management of emotions and empathic sensitivity [$r = -0.69, p < 0.01$]; a positive and statistically significant relationship between regulation/management of emotions and utilizing emotions [$r = 0.61, p < 0.01$] and a positive and statistically significant relationship between utilizing emotions and empathic sensitivity [$r = -0.64, p < 0.01$]. A hypothesis that must be met to perform a multiple regression analysis is that there shouldn't be multicollinearity (high correlation coefficients) between predictor variables. The fact that the correlation coefficients between the predictor variables are 0.80 or above indicates there may be multicollinearity between these variables, the correlations 0.90 and above mean that there is a serious problem of multicollinearity (Buyukozturk, 2010).

In this regard, it is observed that the relationship found between the emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions meets the condition that there shouldn't be high correlation coefficients between the predictor variables. In addition, a stepwise regression analysis was performed to determine the role of the emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions and empathic sensitivity. Findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The role of Emotional Awareness and Evaluation, Regulation/Management of Emotions, Empathic Sensitivity and Utilizing Emotions Subscales of Emotional Intelligence to Predict Multicultural Attitude

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	R	R ²
	β	Std error	Beta			
1.(Constant)	2.06	0.18		11.67**	0.49	0.24
Utilizing Emotions	0.45	0.05	0.49	9.83**		
2.(Constant)	1.60	0.19		8.24**	0.54	0.29
Utilizing Emotions	0.31	0.05	0.33	5.90**		
Emotional Awareness	0.27	0.06	0.28	4.94**		
3.(Constant)	1.35	0.21		6.57**	0.56	0.31
Utilizing Emotions	0.23	0.06	0.25	4.04**		
Emotional Awareness	0.20	0.06	0.21	3.40**		
Regulation/Management of Emotions	0.21	0.06	0.20	3.20**		
F Utilizing Emotions =96.56**						
F Utilizing Emotions, Emotional Awareness =64.11**						
F Utilizing Emotions, Emotional Awareness, Regulation/Management of Emotions =47.42**						

Dependent Variable: Multicultural Attitude, * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

According to Table 2, the regression model developed to determine the role of Emotional Awareness and Evaluation, Regulation/Management of Emotions, Empathic Sensitivity and Utilizing Emotions Subscales of Emotional Intelligence to predict Multicultural Attitude is statistically significant [$F = 47.42, p < 0.05$]. Stepwise regression analysis included three steps. The predictor variable in the first step of the regression analysis, Utilizing Emotions, can explain 24% of the variance of the multicultural attitude [$RR = 0.49, R^2 = 0.24$].

In the second step of regression analysis, another variable, Emotional Awareness, was also processed along with Utilizing Emotions. The Utilizing Emotions and Emotional Awareness variables together explain 29% of the variance of the multicultural attitude variable [$RR = 0.54, R^2 = 0.29$]. In this case, it is revealed that Emotional Awareness variable seems to offer a contribution of 5% to the multicultural attitude. In case other variables are constant, the Beta coefficients were found to be 0.33 for the Utilizing Emotions variable and 0.28 for the Emotional Awareness variable. In addition, t values for both variables are significant [respectively $t = -5.90, t = 4.94, p < 0.01$].

In the third step of the stepwise regression analysis, Regulation/Management of Emotions variable was also included in the model along with Utilizing Emotions and Emotional Awareness variables. Utilizing Emotions, Emotional Awareness and Regulation/Management of Emotions variables altogether can explain 31% of the total variance of multicultural attitude [$R = 0.56, R^2 = 0.31$]. According to this finding, Regulation/Management of Emotions variable can be said to provide a contribution of 2% to the regression equation. In this step, the Beta coefficients were found to be 0.25 for the Utilizing Emotions variable, 0.21 for the Emotional Awareness variable and 0.20 for the Regulation/Management of Emotions variable, respectively. T values for these three variables were found to be statistically significant [respectively $t = 4.04, t = 3.40, t = -3.20, p < 0.01$].

In accordance with the analyses performed, the Utilizing Emotions, Emotional Awareness and Regulation/Management of Emotions variables were respectively determined to be effective in predicting the multicultural attitude. It is also revealed that all three variables are statistically significant predictors of the multicultural attitude.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study tried to predict the relationship between teachers' emotional intelligence and their multicultural attitudes. The first step was to determine relationship between the subscales of emotional intelligence –emotional awareness and evaluation, regulation/management of emotions, empathic sensitivity and utilizing emotions– and multicultural attitude. As the correlation analysis results showed, it was revealed that there exists a positive and significant relationship between the four subscales of emotional intelligence and the multicultural attitude. Additionally, as presented in Table 1, the correlation coefficients are positive and high overall. According to this finding, it may be inferred that emotional intelligence positively or negatively affects teachers' multicultural attitudes.

In another study, Szabo and Anderson (2009) emphasized that candidate teachers should be developed in terms of awareness to acquire positive attitudes towards multicultural education. The fact that “awareness mentioned” is found to be significant within the framework of emotional intelligence in our study supports our hypothesis we developed. In other studies regarding the emotional intelligence; the researchers suggested that there is a positive relationship between self-efficacy belief and emotional intelligence (Chan, 2004), a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and communication skills (Cetinkaya & Alparslan, 2011), a positive relationship between the emotional intelligence and problem-solving (Ismen, 2001) and a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence management and social interaction (Lopes et al., 2004). Thus, the emotional intelligence or its subscales can be regarded as imperative elements which can influence individuals' perceptions, attitudes and behaviors.

As for the regression analysis results, regarding the prediction of multicultural attitudes of participants, 24% of the total variance for multicultural attitude is explained by Emotional Awareness. Considering that Emotional Awareness constitutes only one dimension of emotional intelligence, the ratio (24%) would be considered a high percentage. In the second step in stepwise regression analysis, it was observed that the Utilizing Emotions and Emotional Awareness subscales together can explain 29% of teachers' multicultural attitudes. The percentage measured (29%) may also be considered as a high percentage. In the third step of regression analysis, Regulation/Management of Emotions was also included in the model, as well as the Utilizing Emotions and Emotional Awareness factors, and it was observed that three factors can collectively explain 31% of the multicultural attitudes. Accordingly, this finding may be interpreted that a model comprising all three factors contributes more to explain the multicultural attitudes of the participants. Additionally, bearing this finding in mind, teachers' multicultural attitudes can be raised to a positive level in case their emotional intelligence characteristics are supported.

After looking at the correlation and regression statistics, it is observed that the subscales of emotional intelligence influence teachers' multicultural attitudes at a significant level. Referring also to similar studies, it is revealed that perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of the individuals are directed by emotions or emotional intelligence.

Since those who know how to perceive their own emotions are spiritually strong and generally have a positive life flows (Konrad & Hendl, 2001:78), teachers and students should be provided opportunities to communicate with differences and taught how to manage their emotions against different people in order to make them develop multicultural attitudes at a positive level (Garcia & Lopez, 2005) because the school has a responsibility to provide individuals with a habit to live peacefully together, one of the important functions of the school. In this regard, teachers' contribution is considered valuable (Tezcan, 1999, p. 314). For teachers' contribution, however, the attitudes must be as positive or at the desired level as knowledge and skills.

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