

Teaching positive psychology concepts and emotional intelligence to undergraduate healthcare students

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Abstract

Statement of Problem: The intense demands of the healthcare work environment create distinctive challenges for healthcare professionals. The importance of emotional intelligence (EI), well-being (WB), positive psychology and the practice of coaching on enhancing quality of life and reducing burnout is well documented. Building skills related to these areas among healthcare students is critical, but little is known of how well such education works in practice. The purpose of the study is to examine methods of including positive psychology themes into a course on EI and leadership hypothesized to result in increased EI and WB scores. This study relied on a pretest posttest design using the MHS EQi-2.0 assessment to obtain EI competency and WB indicator values at the beginning of a 10-week term, and nine-12 months later. All students were exposed to various teaching and coaching methods designed to increase knowledge of EI and WB. An experiential learning framework was employed to examine the role students' experiences had on their overall learning processes related to EI and WB competencies.

Findings: There was a statically significant ($p < .05$) increase for overall EI scores and three of the four WB subscales, indicating that the course and coaching were effective in improving the EI and WB of healthcare students. These findings demonstrate that EI and WB can be enhanced through a multifaceted course emphasizing positive psychology and professional coaching. Such training can be incorporated into the education of healthcare students to build stress management skills and decrease burnout in the workplace.

Keywords:

Emotional intelligence, Positive psychology, Building skills



Biography:

Laura Alipoon is the Chair of the Department of Radiation Technology in the School of Allied Health Professions

(SAHP) at Loma Linda University located in Southern California in the U.S.A. Dr. Alipoon has taken point on over 10 program development endeavors, two of which were in the international arena. In addition to program development, Dr. Alipoon is one of the assessment specialists for the SAHP. Dr. Alipoon's interests in emotional intelligence and leadership led her to obtain a certificate in Executive Coaching and to become a board-certified coach. Her coaching focus is on leadership development, fostering emotional intelligence and nurturing wellbeing. Her research interests include positive psychology, emotional intelligence, leadership, stress management and resiliency

Speaker Publications:

Radiography Goes Digital in Belize

1. ASRT Scanner, 47 (1), 20Oct 2014

2. Teaching Essentials: Keys to a Successful Course Assessment: Spectrum Vol 25, #2May 2014

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4. Brain Based Learning Applications for Radiation Sciences: Radiologic Science and Education, 8, (1), 5-12.2003

5. Experience is the Network to the Mind: Brain-Based Learning Applications in Higher Education: Journal of Adventist Education, 63, (2), 29-342001

6. Teaching Essentials: Keys to a Successful Course Assessment: Spectrum Vol 25, #2May 2014

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