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Effectiveness of a Leadership Development Program that Incorporates Social and Emotional Intelligence for Aspiring School Leaders

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Abstract

Focus on social and emotional intelligence competencies to improve effective leadership has become commonplace in the corporate arena and is now considered by many a prerequisite to successful job performance and outcomes (Antonakis, Ashkanasy, & Dasborough, 2009; Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009; Spence & Grant, 2007; Kampa-Kokesch & Anderson, 2001; McGovern, Lindemann, Vergara, Murphy, Barker, & Warrenfeltz, 2001). Only recently has a similar trend become recognized and more accepted in the field of education (Patti, Senge, Madrazo, & Stern, 2015; Patti, Holzer, Brackett, & Stern, 2014). Few studies exist that study the role that educational leaders' social and emotional competencies in play in their job performance and effectiveness; none exist that explore such development with aspiring

school leaders. This quasi-experimental pilot study evaluated the effectiveness of a post-graduate development program for aspiring school leaders that incorporates social and emotional intelligence based on the Goleman-Boyatzis model (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2001) and inspired by the original concept of emotional intelligence (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The interrelated social and emotional competencies explored in this study form four core clusters that include: 1) self-awareness, 2) self-management, 3) relationship management, and 4) social awareness (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Goleman, 1996; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Zins & Elias, 2007). This study's sample consisted of 32 aspiring leaders who participated in a post-graduate educational leadership program at a university in New York. The study evaluated whether or not there were any effects of focused social and emotional intelligence content and skills on aspiring leaders' emotional intelligence (EI) and other related characteristics such as assertiveness, empathy, mental health, personality, and openness to experience. Post-tests on the various characteristics after one semester found no statistical significance in the tested variables. However, after two years, when the social and emotional intelligence competencies were post-tested (ESCI-U), there were significant findings in the student candidates' self-reported competencies directly related to leadership. Paired t-test comparisons of the means of Observer raters' scores did not find statistically significant differences in the competencies assessed. This article discusses these findings as well as the strengths and challenges of implementing social and emotional intelligence development within an aspiring school leaders program; finally, it provides recommendations for further program development and studies.

Keywords: Education, Leadership development, Training, Emotional intelligence, Social intelligence, Aspiring school leaders

1. Introduction

During the past twenty years, the study of emotional intelligence (EI) has experienced great growth both in terms of the number of empirical research studies as well as in the development of its theoretical base (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Weissberg & Durlak, 2005). EI, according to the ability model (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), “*involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions*” (p. 189). In this study, we build on the original concept of EI to explore a variety of social and emotional competencies that become explicit and important within the work environment (Boyatzis & Ratti, 2009; Boyatzis, Stubbs, & Taylor, 2002). These social and emotional competencies are interrelated and form the four core clusters of 1) self-awareness, 2) self-management, 3) relationship management, and 4) social awareness (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Goleman, 1996; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Zins & Elias, 2007).

Many studies have looked at the relationship between social and emotional intelligence in the corporate work place and effective performance and job-related outcomes (Boyatzis & Saaticioglu, 2008; Boyatzis & Ratti, 2009; Cherniss & Adler, 2000; Lombardo & Eichinger, 1989; O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011). Research conducted at Case

Western Reserve on a training program that prepares corporate leaders (McLelland & Boyatzis, 1982) provides us with an understanding of how social and emotional intelligence affects work performance: they enable a person “to demonstrate intelligent use of their emotions in managing themselves and working with others to be effective at work” (Boyatzis, Goleman, & Rhee, 2000: p. 2). The Consortium for Research in Emotional Intelligence (www.eiconsortium.org) has taken the lead in creating a database of studies in EI leadership development conducted in a variety of organizational settings.

Within the broad field of educational leadership development, the seminal focus remains on preparing educational leaders, both principals and teachers, to improve student literacy and math achievement, and to regain our ability to compete educationally with other high achieving countries. In recent years, we have begun to explore the relationship between effective principal leadership, effective teaching, and student achievement, with several studies showing positive correlations between effective leadership and teaching and higher student achievement (Goddard, W. K. Hoy, & A. W. Hoy, 2000; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). To succeed as leaders, principals are expected to have the ability to (1) shape a vision of academic success for all students (2) create a climate for learning; (3) cultivate leadership in others; (4) improve instruction; and, (5) manage people, data and school processes for improvement (Turnbull, Riley, & MacFarlane, 2013). The most important role for school leaders is to ensure the high performance of teachers who are directly responsible for instruction; to do this, school leaders need to possess high levels of social and emotional intelligence. We posit that school leaders need to regularly engage in reflective processes to gauge their own successes and challenges, as they create a culture that encourages the same for others. This requires that leaders demonstrate self-awareness, social awareness, and the ability to manage self and others’ behaviors.

What better place to begin this transformational developmental process than in the preparation of those who aspire to become school leaders? If we embed this skill set into preparation programs, we could begin to measure the extent to which new and aspiring school leaders utilize social and emotional competencies in their professional relationships. We can also measure the outcomes such behaviors have on school climate, culture, and student achievement. We could begin to identify the specific skills and competencies that make a difference in their leadership and in their teachers’ instructional performance (Comer, Darling-Hammond, Goleman, Shriver, & Buffett, 2015).

This paper reflects the work of one educational leadership program in a large urban city in New York State that integrates EI skill development and practice into courses for aspiring school leaders. Over the past decade, faculty members have been exploring ways to incorporate EI skill development into the preparation program to improve leadership potential through enhanced social and emotional intelligence in the four cluster areas of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management. It is hoped that this and future studies will elaborate on this discussion.

2. Emotional Intelligence and Educational Leadership

There is no direct link between the social and emotional competencies of leaders and student achievement, which is the ultimate goal of educational leadership. However, there is ample research on the importance of school leaders' effectiveness in creating safe and caring school cultures that foster exemplary teaching and learning (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Patti, Senge, & Madrazo, 2015). In recent years it has become increasingly known that school leaders' effectiveness involves the extent to which they build community and develop others to participate in and take responsibility for teaching and learning (Patti, Senge, & Madrazo, 2015; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2012; Senge, 1996, 1997). This requires that leaders extend beyond building relationships to focus on transforming others to assume these roles. The competencies and behaviors of transformational leaders may incorporate many of the same competencies inherent in EI. To pursue this line of research, Hackett and Hortman (2008) used the Emotional Competency University Inventory (ECSI-U) edition to measure EI competencies in school leaders and correlated it to the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to explore transformational leadership behaviors. They found relationships between several of the core competencies of EI and transformational leadership scales. This opens the door for further study regarding EI factors that might predict transformational leadership qualities in school leaders, desirable characteristics to be replicated.

Other studies have explored the relationship between the leader's perceptions of their social and emotional competencies with their leadership skills. Cook (2006) examined the relationship between 143 elementary school principals self-ratings on the Emotional Intelligence Appraisal scale that measured four of the five SEL core competencies (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management) and a locally developed leadership improvement tool that assessed leadership in nine areas (1) leadership attributes, (2) visionary leadership, (3) community leadership, (4) instructional leadership, (5) data-driven improvement, (6) organization to improve student learning, (7) organization to improve staff efficacy, (8) cultural competence, and (9) education management. All of these, except for cultural competence and community leadership, were significantly related to principals' self-assessments of their EI.

Finally, a study conducted in Ontario, Canada (Stone, Parker, & Wood, 2005) sought to identify key emotional and social competencies required by school administrators (principals and vice-principals) to successfully meet the demands and responsibilities of their positions. This study that involved 464 elementary through high school principals or vice-principals college principals found a conciliator between self-awareness (p. 20) and sound awareness (p. 18) – the more self-aware the leader is, the better he can lead others. Using Bar-On's EQ-i, a 125-item self-report instrument designed to measure the core features of EI, the study confirmed that EI was a significant predictor of successful school administration. Particular abilities recognized as key to the role of principal included self-awareness (the ability to recognize and understand one's feelings and emotions); self-actualization (ability to tap potential capacities and skills in order to improve oneself); empathy (ability to be attentive to, understand, and appreciate the feelings of others); interpersonal relationships (ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships); flexibility (ability to adjust one's emotions, thoughts, and behavior to changing situations and conditions); problem solving

(ability to identify and define problems as well as to generate potentially effective solutions); and impulse control (ability to resist or delay an emotional behavior).

The connection between social and emotional intelligence and leadership is increasingly being made. But what competencies exactly align and in what capacity is still uncertain. There is much yet to be learned about the role that social and emotional intelligence plays in school leaders' development and performance. We need to learn how to best define and identify the constructs of social and emotional intelligence within school leadership, measure them, and place an intentional focus on them in the development of school leaders.

3. Social and Emotional Development for Aspiring School Leaders

While incorporation of social and emotional intelligence knowledge, competencies, and dispositions exists in the preparation of current and future business executives, it is rare in an aspiring school leaders program. The two-year program in this study prepares candidates for certification as building or district administrators in New York State schools. The program consists of eight courses, two per semester, for students with at least three years of teaching experience and NY State Certification. Over two years, students participate in content-based and clinical practices in the standard areas of leadership development guided by the requirements of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (Canole & Young, 2013). Two of the faculty members utilized the guidelines for effective programs in EI provided by the Consortium for Research in Emotional Intelligence (See Table 1; Cherniss, Goleman, Emmerling, Cowan, & Adler, 1998) to incorporate emotional and social intelligence theory and skills into the program.

Table 1. EI consortium guidelines for best practices

1	Assess the organization's needs
2	Assess the individual
3	Deliver assessments with care
4	Maximize learner choice
5	Encourage people to participate
6	Link learning goals to personal values
7	Adjust expectations
8	Gauge readiness
9	Foster a positive relationship between the trainers and learners
10	Make change self-directed
11	Set clear goals
12	Break goals into manageable steps
13	Provide opportunities to practice
14	Give performance feedback
15	Rely on experiential methods
16	Build in support
17	Use models
18	Enhance insight (self-awareness)
19	Prevent relapse
20	Encourage use of skills on the job
21	Develop an organizational culture that supports learning
22	Evaluate

Two of the professors were previously trained in EI development by the Hay Group, Inc. and certified to administer the Emotional and Social Competency Inventory, University Edition (ESCI-U). This 360 assessment measures twelve social and emotional competencies within four cluster areas: 1) self-awareness, 2) social awareness, 3) self-management, and 4) relationship management. Faculty utilized this assessment because the competencies measured were considered to be essential for success in school leadership. They include:

Cluster 1: Self-awareness

1) Emotional self-awareness

Cluster 2: Self-management

2) Achievement orientation

3) Adaptability

4) Emotional self-control

5) Positive outlook

Cluster 3: Social Awareness

6) Empathy

7) Organizational awareness

Cluster 4: Relationship Management

8) Conflict management

9) Coach and mentor

10) Influence

11) Inspirational Leadership

12) Teamwork

The first course of the program, *Leadership to Enhance Human Resources*, focused on the ability of the prospective leader to identify and develop social and emotional competencies and to engage in a process of leading a team to identify, diagnose, envision and plan for needed climate/culture change. Required assignments and activities included:

- Taking the ESCI-U
- Building a personal growth plan for improvement in identified “challenged” competencies using their “strength” competencies as leverage for change
- Reflecting on self-behaviors and behaviors with others
- Identifying conflict style and conflict management skills
- Personal visioning and identification of core values
- Professional visioning and goal setting
- Empathy building
- Enhanced understanding of divergent points of view
- Developing team effectiveness

The second course, *Supervision of Instruction*, prepared aspiring leaders to coach and evaluate teachers to use expert conferencing skills. Candidates practiced coaching skills, such as active listening and reflection, open ended questions, empathy, and perspective taking, with two willing teachers. The goal was to teach aspiring school leaders how to use coaching strategies that build trust, allowing for teachers to take risks and improve instruction.

Throughout the course, aspiring leaders practiced skills like active listening, reflection, empathy, open-ended questioning, and perspective taking. They were required to audio or videotape their sessions so they could be provided feedback on their use of coaching skills and strategies.

When students completed their final course in the program, their field experience, they repeated the ESCI-U and compared their pre- and post-test scores, looking for areas of improvement or growth as well as a continued focus for development, upon graduation. They reflected on their learning, compared self and others data, and established a plan for self-directed learning beyond graduation.

4. Methods

4.1 Participants

Our population sample was originally comprised of aspiring leaders from three urban universities in New York City. The study originally employed two control groups, but neither groups' candidates remained in the study through its completion. The experimental group received development in social and emotional intelligence knowledge and skill-building strategies considered to be necessary for leadership, throughout the first two courses of its program.

The study employs a quasi-experimental design. The sample included 32 aspiring leaders, 10 men and 22 women between the ages of 26 and 63 years of age ($M = 32.74$, $SD = 7.46$), enrolled in an aspiring leaders program in an urban setting. The diverse sample population of aspiring leaders included 60% Caucasians with the rest distributed among Latinos (12%), African Americans (12%), Asians (3%), Black Americans (9%), and mixed classifications such as Irish/West Indians (4%).

4.2 Procedure

Candidates attended classes once weekly for a period of five hours. Participants completed a series of scales related to EI and leadership before starting the training program (August, 2010). Four months later (December, 2010), they completed post assessments on all but the ESCI-U, which they completed in June of 2011, during their final class. In compliance with the university's Institutional Review Board processes, participation in the study was voluntary. The subjects were informed of the right to refuse to participate in the study or to withdraw consent to participate at any time without reprisal. A consent letter was distributed in the beginning of the program and again at the end of the last class of the program. A manila envelope was distributed containing the in-class assessment materials. The rest of the assessments were completed online via Survey Monkey. The researchers explained the procedures for completion noted their availability by email and in person to answer questions. The information was collected through an identification code to protect the privacy of research subjects and the confidentiality of their personal information. The questionnaires did not collect information that could harm the mental or social integrity of the participants. Ethical approval of the study was approved by the Research and Ethics Committee, Institutional Review Board (IRB), of the university.

4.3 Measures

Participants supplied demographic information and completed a battery of eight interpersonal and intrapersonal measures assessing assertiveness, empathy, personality, mental health, EI self-report, EI executed, and leadership behavior in relationship with EI. The scales used, which have adequate psychometric properties of reliability and validity and an important historical tradition of scientific use for measuring the variables to which they relate, are briefly described in the following section:

4.3.1 (RAS) Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (Rathus, 1977)

The RAS is a 30-item, 6-point Likert-type (-3 = does not describe me well to 3 = describes me very well) scale that includes a wide range of situations involving assertiveness. The scale provides a single index of this variable. Higher total scores indicate higher assertiveness.

4.3.2 (IRI) Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983)

The IRI is a 28-item, 5-point Likert-type (0 = does not describe me well to 4 = describes me very well) scale that assesses four dimensions of empathy: Perspective-Taking, Fantasy, Empathic Concern, and Personal Distress. Each of these four subscales is comprised of 7 items. The Perspective-Taking subscale measures empathy in the form of individuals' tendency to spontaneously adopt others' points of view. The Fantasy subscale of the IRI taps respondents' ability to transpose themselves into the feelings and behaviors of fictional characters in movies, books, and plays. The Empathic Concern subscale assesses individuals' feelings of concern, warmth, and sympathy toward others. The Personal Distress subscale measures self-oriented feelings of anxiety and distress in response to extreme distress experienced by others. Higher scores in each domain correspond to greater levels of self-reported empathy.

4.3.3 (BFI) The Big Five Inventory -Versions 44, 4a and 54 (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991)

This scale includes 44 items and assesses five components of personality: extraversion (E), agreeableness (A), conscientiousness (C), neuroticism (N) and openness to experience (O). Participants indicate agreement with each item on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree). Higher scores indicate higher incidence of this personality trait.

4.3.4 (CES-D) The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale: A self-report depression scale (Radloff, 1977)

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale includes 20 items comprising six scales reflecting major dimensions of depression: depressed mood, feelings of guilt and worthlessness, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, psychomotor retardation, loss of appetite, and sleep disturbance in the past week. Response categories indicate the frequency of occurrence of each item, and are scored on a 4-point Likert scale from 0 (rarely or none of the time) to 3 (most or all of the time). Higher scores in total scores indicate more depressive symptoms.

4.3.5 (TMMS-30) Trait Meta Mood Scale (Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai, 1995)

The TMMS is a 30-item self-report measure and was designed to assess how people reflect upon their moods, and conceived thus an index of perceived EI. Participants indicate level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly

Agree). The scale has three factors that provide three subscale scores: Attention (relating to monitoring emotions); Clarity (relating to the ability to discriminate between emotions); and Repair (relating to the ability to regulate unpleasant moods or maintain pleasant moods) and a total index. Higher scores indicate higher self-report EI.

4.3.6 (MSCEIT v2) Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2002)

The MSCEIT v2 is an ability measure of EI designed to measure solving emotional problems objectively. MSCEIT has eight tasks (141-questions) that require problem solving about or with emotions. The MSCEIT yields a total EI score as well as two area scores (Experiential and Strategic EI). There are also four Branch scores, for Perceiving Emotion, Facilitating Thought, Understanding Emotion, and Managing Emotion. Finally, scores for eight individual Tasks are reported. Administration was via the internet using the MSCEIT Computer Program for Windows™. The test publishers completed all scoring using a consensus method whereby responses were compared for consistency with those from a normative sample. Higher scores indicate higher performance EI.

4.3.7 (ESCI-U) Emotional Social Competence Inventory (Boyatzis, 2007)

The ESCI-U is a multi-rater tool of 72 items designed to collect information regarding the EI competencies demonstrated in leadership behavior. Data are collected from the participants as well as other key individuals that observe their work life. Participants indicate level of agreement with each statement on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Consistently, 6 = Don't Know). The ESCI-U has both "self" and "others" versions. Others' evaluations can come from a variety of sources including: manager, peers, direct reports, clients, etc. This instrument evaluates twelve leadership competencies (Emotional Self-Awareness, Achievement orientation, Adaptability, Emotional Self-Control, Positive Outlook, Empathy, Organizational Awareness, Conflict Management, Coach and Mentor, Influence, Inspirational Leadership and Teamwork) and four cluster scores: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness and Relationship Management. Higher scores indicate higher performance in EI leadership behavior.

4.4 Statistical Analysis

SPSS version nineteen was used to carry out descriptive analysis and paired t-test intragroup analyses for the total sample to detect possible statistically significant differences between pre- and post-training scores.

5. Results

The sample satisfied the criteria for normality derived nonparametric analysis Kolmogorov-Smirnov. The descriptive statistics include the size of the sample, range, means, standard deviations and reliability of the different subscales used for the present students' sample (see Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

Measure	Subscale	N	Range	M ± SD pre	M ± SD post	Alpha
(IRI)	Perspective-Taking	31	0-4	2.66±.55	2.49±.58	.65
	Fantasy	31	0-4	2.45±.61	2.58±.63	.74
	Empathic Concern	31	0-4	3.04±.46	2.97±.51	.57
	Personal Distress	31	0-4	1.22±.62	1.43±.62	.79
(CES-D)		31	0-60	32.78±7.55	31.47±6.49	.87
(BFI)	Extraversion	31	1-5	3.61±.74	3.45±.78	.87
	Agreeableness	31	1-5	3.95±.45	3.81±.50	.68
	Neuroticism	31	1-5	2.76±.75	2.81±.55	.85
	Conscientiousness	31	1-5	4.05±.47	3.95±.50	.77
	Openness	31	1-5	3.87±.64	3.65±.69	.85
(RAS)		32	-90 - 90	17.68±20.23	10.88±27.32	.80
(TMMS-30)	Attention	32	1-5	4.05±.40	3.90±.47	.59
	Clarity	32	1-5	3.99±.56	3.82±.58	.85
	Repair	32	1-5	4.07±.69	3.95±.50	.85
	Total	32	1-5	4.04±.43	3.89±.42	.87
(MSCEIT v2)	Perception	26	50-150	93.40±11.55	97.00±11.12	.82
	Use	26	50-150	99.47±18.24	101.34±11.87	.67
	Knowledge	26	50-150	98.76±12.32	101±14.79	.60
	Management	26	50-150	99.25±13.99	101.46±14.91	.38
	Total	26	50-150	94.63±11.21	98.52±11.87	.78
(ESCI) SELF Ratings	Self-Awareness	29	1-5	4.03±.43	4.12±.42	.73
	Self-Management	29	1-5	3.99±.46	4.11±.43	.93
	Social Awareness	29	1-5	3.94±.51	4.21±.34	.88
	Relationship Management	29	1-5	3.86±.52	4.06±.47	.95
(ESCI) OTHER Ratings	Self-Awareness	103	1-5	4.25±.33	4.40±.29	.88
	Self-Management	103	1-5	4.42±.34	4.47±.25	.97
	Social Awareness	103	1-5	4.41±.35	4.47±.16	.95
	Relationship Management	103	1-5	4.33±.41	4.44±.20	.98

5.1 Impact of the Social and Emotional Competency Treatment

To identify significant change from pre-test to post-test for the two leadership courses that included social and emotional intelligence, we conducted paired sample t-tests for each of the outcome variables. There were no statistically significant differences found in the variables related to assertiveness (RAS), empathy (IRI), personality (Big-5), mental health (CSD), EI self-report (TIMMS), and EI executed (MSCEIT). Only significant differences existed between pre-and post-test for variables related to leadership were found as measured by the ESCI-U.

In relation to the ESCI-U Self Ratings, the subscales that related mostly to leadership showed statistically significant differences in the pair t-test (see Table 3): Organizational Awareness (under *Social Awareness*), Coach and Mentor, Influence, Inspirational Leadership, and Teamwork (under *Relationship Management*). Effect sizes for all these differences were moderate to large. There were not, however, any significant statistical differences in ESCI-U Observer scores from pre- to post-test.

Table 3. Impact of the aspiring leadership program in the 4 Cluster areas and 12 competences evaluated through the ESCI-U SELF Ratings

SCI-SELF Ratings	Pre-Test M	Pre-Test SD	Post-Test M	Post-Test SD	t	p	d
<i>Emotional Self-Awareness</i>	4.03	.43	4.12	.42	-.75	.460	-.21
<i>Self-Management</i>	3.99	.46	4.11	.43	-1.53	.141	-.27
Achievement Orientation	4.38	.35	4.54	.42	-1.53	.140	-.38
Adaptability	3.86	.52	4.00	.59	-1.18	.249	-.23
Emotional Self-Control	3.68	.58	3.83	.68	-1.55	.135	-.22
Positive Outlook	4.05	.42	4.06	.63	-.09	.928	-.01
<i>Social Awareness</i>	3.94	.51	4.21	.34	-3.30	.004**	-.79
Empathy	3.92	.55	4.08	.42	-1.61	.123	-.38
Organizational Awareness	3.95	.54	4.32	.42	-3.60	.002**	-.88
<i>Relationship Management</i>	3.86	.52	4.06	.47	-2.70	.014*	-.42
Conflict Management	3.66	.64	3.74	.66	-1.01	.324	-.12
Coach and Mentor	3.87	.64	4.08	.52	-2.16	.043*	-.40
Influence	3.82	.55	4.05	.52	-2.28	.033*	-.44
Inspirational Leadership	3.87	.55	4.08	.52	-2.22	.038*	-.40
Teamwork	4.10	.58	4.34	.48	-2.10	.048*	-.50

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$.

5.2 Pre-Test and Post-Test Differences between Self and Other Ratings in ESCI-U

To identify possible significant change from pre-test to post-test in the ESCI-U, we conducted paired sample t-tests for Self and Other Ratings. Finally we analyzed the differences of the means (pair t-test) between the self and other ratings before and after the program ended.

The pre-test's paired t-test ESCI-U Self-Rating and the Other Ratings showed statistically significant differences in most of the scales, except in Emotional Self-Awareness, Achievement Orientation and Influence. In the remaining subscales (see Table 4) the Other Ratings mean scores significantly exceeded the Self-Ratings.

Table 4. Differences between the self and observer ratings pre-test in the 4 clusters and 12 competences assessed by the ESCI-U

SCI Pre-test	Self M	Others SD	Self M	Others SD	t	p
Emotional Self-Awareness	4.08	.40	4.23	.33	-1.37	.183
Self-Management	4.08	.46	4.43	.32	-3.79	.001**
Achievement Orientation	4.44	.35	4.60	.26	-1.66	.111
Adaptability	3.94	.49	4.36	.30	-4.44	.000***
Emotional Self-Control	3.83	.66	4.41	.41	-4.32	.000***
Positive Outlook	4.10	.63	4.35	.38	-2.13	.044*
Social Awareness	4.02	.51	4.42	.33	-3.80	.001**
Empathy	4.00	.55	4.32	.37	-2.79	.011*
Organizational Awareness	4.03	.54	4.51	.30	-4.52	.000***
Relationship Management	3.95	.55	4.31	.38	-3.23	.004**
Conflict Management	3.72	.62	4.16	.41	-3.77	.001**
Coach and Mentor	3.96	.68	4.30	.44	-2.68	.014*
Influence	3.88	.55	4.13	.47	-1.87	.075
Inspirational Leadership	3.93	.59	4.30	.48	-2.75	.012*
Teamwork	4.15	.61	4.54	.32	-3.29	.003**

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .00$.

A comparison of Tables 4 and 5 demonstrates that Self and Other post-test paired t-tests showed a lesser amount of significance than Self and Other pre-test results. Post-test results did, however, demonstrate more statistical significance than pre-test results, except for Achievement Orientation.

Table 5. Differences between the self and observer ratings post-test in the 4 clusters and 12 competencies assessed by the ESCI-U

SCI Post-test	Self M	Others SD	Self M	Others SD	t	p
Emotional Self-Awareness	4.07	.43	4.38	.29	-2.61	.018*
<i>Self-Management</i>	4.15	.42	4.46	.24	-3.04	.007**
Achievement Orientation	4.50	.44	4.66	.21	-1.61	.126
Adaptability	4.07	.55	4.38	.25	-2.48	.024*
Emotional Self-Control	3.93	.63	4.36	.35	-2.60	.018*
Positive Outlook	4.12	.46	4.42	.29	-3.29	.004**
<i>Social Awareness</i>	4.19	.37	4.46	.16	-3.03	.007**
Empathy	4.05	.44	4.32	.21	-2.54	.021*
Organizational Awareness	4.34	.44	4.59	.16	-2.55	.020*
<i>Relationship Management</i>	4.11	.42	4.41	.20	-2.85	.022*
Conflict Management	3.84	.61	4.27	.21	-2.64	.017*
Coach and Mentor	4.14	.50	4.46	.22	-2.75	.013*
Influence	4.09	.49	4.36	.24	-2.10	.050*
Inspirational Leadership	4.10	.50	4.39	.31	-2.28	.036*
Teamwork	4.40	.34	4.56	.25	-2.39	.029*

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .00$.

6. Discussion

As the role of school leaders in improving student learning has become increasingly important, so, too, has the focus on school leaders' professional development. As we learn more about the competencies needed to best equip school leaders to effectively do their jobs, we have to be explicit about teaching them these competencies (Patti et al., 2015). It isn't enough to simply expect leaders to have social and emotional intelligence and know things like how to effectively coach others, build productive relationships, enable and facilitate meaningful conversations, and make effective decisions that greatly impact children's lives.

This study provides preliminary data about the effectiveness of an educational leadership program that incorporates social and emotional intelligence development into the first semester of a two-year program for aspiring school leaders. At the end of two years, results indicated that there was a significant change in the self-reported increase of the competency variables related to leadership, the most noteworthy being Inspirational Leadership, one of the *Relationship Management* cluster competencies. Furthermore, the aspiring school leaders perceived increased competencies in the *Social Awareness* and *Relationship Management* clusters evaluated by the ESCI-U, one and a half years after they entered the program. Within

the *Social Awareness* cluster, they perceived an increase in their Organizational Awareness, the ability to read a group's emotional currents and power relationships. In the *Relationship Management* cluster, they perceived changes in the Coach and Mentor competency, which is the ability to take an active interest in others' development needs and bolstering their abilities. Also within *Relationship Management*, they perceived an increase in the Influence competency, the ability to have a positive impact on others; Inspirational Leadership, the ability to inspire and guide individuals and groups; and, Teamwork the ability to work with others toward a shared goal.

As the purpose of the two-year aspiring leaders program is the acquisition of leadership skills, it appears that the students in the program recognize the importance of such competencies and perceive that they developed higher capacity in these competencies over time. These important findings demonstrate that the students experienced a *perceptual adjustment* regarding their own social and emotional intelligence competencies that was not experienced by the Observers (actual implementation or objective performance). It is also possible, as demonstrated by the consistently high student ratings by the Observers that the Observers may have recognized the aspiring leader's strengths all along, as Observers' scores were significantly higher before treatment than the scores reflected by the aspiring leaders in their Self Ratings. In fact, pretest Observer scores fell within the maximum range established, leaving little room for growth in post-test scores. Also, it is possible that the raters chosen by the aspiring leaders were biased in a positive direction at the onset of the study. Additionally, a study limitation is that raters selected by the students may have changed from pre- to post-test, due to such factors as changing positions within schools and mobility of school employees. These factors may have limited Observers' abilities to notice whether behavioral changes had occurred.

Finally, students' high self-report scores may have indicated that they changed their *perception* of themselves in these competencies, but are not yet able to implement these changes in their behaviors. For this reason, Observers may not have noticed a significant change in students' competencies by the end of the program. Since aspiring leaders are often teachers who are not in full leadership positions, their Observers may not have had ample occasions to observe them in leadership situations.

While the findings indicate an important perceptual adjustment of the aspiring leaders in social awareness and relationship management, faculty would hope to discover methods to increase self-awareness and self-management competencies as well. Furthermore, faculty would ideally hope that the Observers – the employers and employees who work with the aspiring leaders – would see demonstrated behavioral changes in social and emotional competencies identified as critical for effective school leadership.

Faculty members realize that several factors could have limited more positive outcomes in this study. First, the treatment time was short, one semester, or four months from September through December. Second, there was no continuous development in social and emotional intelligence throughout the length of the full program. This lack of continued focus throughout the program may have contributed to students' lack of motivation to continue their self-directed learning in the content and skills acquired, after the initial four months. Third, faculty recognized that they did not include sufficient activities in the social and

emotional development cluster areas of self-awareness and self-management within the first two courses. As the primary emphasis of the program is to meet the national standards imposed for school leadership, faculty placed more emphasis on competencies they thought to be directly related to school leadership: social awareness and relationship management. Finally, the small sample size and lack of control group limit our ability to determine if results were caused by the treatment and to generalize results, although other programs within urban environments using similar approaches could learn from this study.

Despite these study limitations, faculty are very interested in determining if competencies related to social and emotional intelligence do, in fact, improve leadership performance and, if so, which ones appear to make the greatest difference. Next, it would be helpful to distinguish which specific activities improve which competencies and to control for these variables. To validate the effectiveness of the treatment, future investigations would ideally include control groups and demonstrate behavioral changes measured by the Observers ratings. Such findings would greatly inform the field of leadership development of aspiring school leaders.

7. Conclusion

Within educational leadership development, the focus remains on preparing aspiring school leaders to improve student achievement and success. The growing interest in the development of social and emotional intelligence of educational leaders provides an opportunity to define and identify exactly what knowledge and skills would maximize the effectiveness of school leaders. This pilot of social and emotional intelligence development within a university program for aspiring leaders demonstrated promising practices for increasing several competencies in the Social Awareness and Relationship Management clusters of EI. Plans are already in progress to further this study with a much larger sample size of data collected since this initial study. Furthermore, as a result of lessons learned, modifications in program treatment have already occurred with a much stronger emphasis on knowledge and practice with the skills of emotional intelligence. Additionally, a more integrated approach to teaching and practicing social and emotional intelligence competencies needs to be embedded across all courses in the aspiring leaders' program (Boyatzis, Stubbs, & Taylor, 2002; Patti, Senge, & Madrazo, 2015). Finally, in the future, we hope to include a control group, as originally planned for this study, to gain a clearer understanding of the relationship between the program treatment results.

As research in social and emotional intelligence both within and outside of education continues to expand, we hope to understand how these “soft” skills relate to, and potentially cultivate, effective leadership (Goddard, W. K. Hoy, & A. W. Hoy, 2000; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003) and how we can best develop them in aspiring leaders. This study raises questions as to the role that institutions of higher education can play in preparing future school leaders with the skills for effective school leadership. We hope to be able to shed more light on this subject in the near future.

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