

English Teachers in Vietnam and the Relationship Between their Resilience and Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract: - Various studies have demonstrated the importance of emotional intelligence (EI) and resilience as abilities that teachers should possess in order to be effective. It has even been shown that there is a significant positive connection between EI and resilience. This study aimed to investigate the levels of emotional intelligence and resilience of English teachers in Vietnam. It further sought to confirm the connection between EI and resilience. Through snowball sampling, 11 Filipino and 16 Vietnamese English teachers were selected to be the respondents of this study. The Schutte emotional intelligence test was used to measure the respondents' EI while the Brief Resiliency Scale was utilized to measure their resilience. The findings showed that 40.74% of all the respondents had moderate EI scores while 59.26% had high EI scores. In addition, the results found that the Vietnamese, the females and those without a romantic partner had higher EI. However, these differences were not statistically significant. In terms of resilience, 7.4% of all the respondents had low resilience scores, 70.27% had moderate resilience scores while 22.22% had high resilience scores. The results showed further that the Vietnamese, the males and the respondents with a romantic partner had higher resilience. However, these differences were not statistically significant. A low positive relationship between the respondents' EI and resilience scale scores was found but this relationship was not statistically significant. The findings of this study were unable to confirm the connection between EI and resilience among the respondents.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, Brief Resiliency Scale, English teachers, Vietnam

I. Introduction

Over 43,000 died from COVID-19 in Vietnam¹. In addition, the shutdown of schools created disruptions in Vietnamese education². The Culture and Education Committee of the National Assembly of Vietnam reported that the pandemic had a severe impact on the education sector. Students could not physically go to school for several months. Many schools had to close. And teaching had to undergo measures to maintain the quality of learning activities³.

But as the situation is slowly reverting back to pre-pandemic conditions, the interrupted education and increased use of online and distance learning has amplified educational inequalities among Vietnamese students. 93% of teachers in remote provinces of Vietnam did not have access to modern technology in their schools prior to the pandemic. Teachers were therefore frequently left to implement the unprecedented shift to online learning with almost no experience or skill in using technology such as video conferencing and social media for teaching⁴.

One way by which Vietnamese hope to enhance career prospects and thereby improve their economic lives is to learn English. This is consistent with the country's end goal of achieving progressive globalization and integration⁵. Knowing English has become an advantageous job qualification especially for the current young generation⁶. And due to this demand, language schools across the country are aggressively hiring English teachers. One reason for this is that numerous foreign teachers left Vietnam when schools closed due to the pandemic. And to quickly address the shortage of English teachers, many schools offer large salaries⁷.

However, as with any profession, teaching has its own challenges. In addition to their work responsibilities, teachers will inevitably face incidents with problematic student groups as well as the ever-present cases of bullying. The emotional management of problematic groups starts with the management of the teacher's own emotions⁸. This is where a teacher's emotional intelligence enters the picture. Many studies have shown several benefits when teachers possess emotional intelligence such as improved professional performance, more effective teaching and learning process, better students' academic performance, higher job satisfaction, decrease in stress and burnout and enhanced interpersonal relationships at school⁹.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) includes the capacity to identify one's own emotions; the ability to harness those emotions and to apply them productively and the skill to manage emotions¹⁰. It is believed that the emotional bond between the teacher and the student is significant as it stays forever. Teachers with high EI have been shown to demonstrate the ability to motivate their students better and recognize their students' behavioral and psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, they are more sensitive towards their students' aberrant behaviors and are better able to handle various issues young students are facing¹¹.

However, teachers also experienced a variety of challenges during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic such as rapidly shifting policies, online teaching, aggravated learning gaps, and disproportionate social pressure, which necessitated them to develop resilience as well¹². Resilience has been described as the ability to adapt to stressful situations or recover from challenging experiences and bounce back positively¹³. The classroom is a demanding environment because students have varying motivations to learn and effective teaching requires cognitive, social and emotional investment. Resilience helps the teacher respond to the challenges encountered in the classroom¹⁴.

It has been asserted that there is a direct connection between EI and resilience. And one of the most effective means of promoting resilience is by developing EI¹⁵. Furthermore, the EI and resilience of the teacher have been found to be crucial in their capacity to face the educational challenges created by the COVID-19 outbreak. In one study, a significant high positive relationship was established between EI and resilience of teachers¹⁶.

Based on the foregoing, this study aimed to investigate the levels of EI and resilience of selected English teachers in Vietnam and sought to verify the connection between EI and resilience. In particular, this study sought to address the following research questions:

1. What are the emotional intelligence scores of the respondents when grouped according to
 - 1.1 Nationality;
 - 1.2 Sex;
 - 1.3 Romantic status (with or without a romantic partner/spouse)?
2. What are the resiliency scores of the respondents when grouped according to
 - 2.1 Nationality;
 - 2.2 Sex;
 - 2.3 Romantic status (with or without a romantic partner/spouse)?
3. Is there a significant difference between the emotional intelligence scores of the respondents when compared according to
 - 3.1 Nationality;
 - 3.2 Sex;
 - 3.3 Romantic status (with or without a romantic partner/spouse)?
4. Is there a significant difference between the resiliency scores of the respondents when compared according to
 - 4.1 Nationality;
 - 4.2 Sex;
 - 4.3 Romantic status (with or without a romantic partner/spouse)?
5. Is there a relationship between the emotional intelligence scores and resiliency scores of the respondents?

II. Methodology

Through snowball sampling, 27 English teachers in Vietnam were selected as the respondents of this study. The mean age of the respondents was 38.89. The EI test by Schutte¹⁷ was used to measure the respondents’ EI scores while the Brief Resiliency Scale¹⁸ was utilized to measure their resilience.

III. Results

The following tables present the data gathered and the statistical treatments used.

Table 1: Respondents grouped according to Nationality

	Filipino	Vietnamese
Frequency	11	16
Percentage	40.74	59.26

Table 2: Respondents grouped according to Sex

	Male	Female
Frequency	8	19
Percentage	29.63	70.37

Table 3: Respondents grouped according to Romantic Status

	No romantic partner	With a romantic partner
Frequency	17	10
Percentage	62.96	37.04

Table 4: Educational Background of the Respondents

	Bachelor's Degree	Bachelor's Degree with Master's units	Master's Degree
Frequency	18	4	5
Percentage	66.67	14.81	18.51

Table 5: Respondents' Years of Teaching Experience

	Total years of Teaching Experience							
	5 and below	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40
Frequency	5	7	7	2	3	2	0	1
Percentage	18.52	25.93	25.93	7.4	11.11	7.4	0	3.7

Table 6: Emotional Intelligence Item Weighted Means compared according to Nationality

Statement	Filipino <i>N=11</i>	Vietnamese <i>N=16</i>
1. I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.	3.636	4.000
2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.	3.818	3.875
3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	3.364	4.186
4. Other people find it easy to confide in me.	3.273	3.500
5. I find it hard to understand the nonverbal messages of other people.	2.909	3.063
6. Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	3.909	4.375
7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	3.636	3.813
8. Emotions are some of the things that make my life worth living.	4.182	4.188
9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	3.455	4.125
10. I expect good things to happen.	4.455	4.063
11. I like to share my emotions with others.	3.189	3.188
12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.	3.091	3.375
13. I arrange events others enjoy.	4.000	3.500
14. I seek out activities that make me happy.	4.000	4.125

15. I am aware of the nonverbal messages I send to others.	3.364	3.438
16. I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	3.182	3.750
17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	4.091	3.938
18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.	4.000	4.000
19. I know why my emotions change.	4.182	4.188
20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.	3.909	3.875
21. I have control over my emotions.	3.909	3.188
22. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	4.273	4.063
23. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.	4.273	3.563
24. I compliment others when they have done something well.	4.273	4.813
25. I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	3.455	3.500
26. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.	3.818	4.125
27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.	3.636	3.438
28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.	3.636	3.688
29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	3.182	3.438
30. I help other people feel better when they are down.	4.364	4.000
31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.	3.818	3.875
32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	3.364	3.500
33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	3.364	3.125
Total weighted means	3.727	3.784

Table 7: Difference in Emotional Intelligence according to Nationality

Welch's t-test		
Group	Filipino	Vietnamese
Mean	3.72727272718	3.78409090913
SD	0.49903488132	0.48141142864
SEM	0.15046467806	0.12035285716
N	11	16
Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 0.2949 df = 21		
The two-tailed P value equals 0.7710 Not statistically significant.		

Table 8: Emotional Intelligence Item Weighted Means compared according to Sex

Statement	Male <i>N</i> =8	Female <i>N</i> =19
1. I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.	3.000	4.211
2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.	3.000	4.211
3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	3.250	4.1051
4. Other people find it easy to confide in me.	3.250	3.474
5. I find it hard to understand the nonverbal messages of other people.	3.125	2.947
6. Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	3.875	4.316
7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	3.625	3.790
8. Emotions are some of the things that make my life worth living.	4.375	4.105
9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	3.500	4.000
10. I expect good things to happen.	4.125	4.263
11. I like to share my emotions with others.	2.500	3.474
12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.	2.875	3.421
13. I arrange events others enjoy.	3.750	3.684
14. I seek out activities that make me happy.	3.875	4.158
15. I am aware of the nonverbal messages I send to others.	3.750	3.263
16. I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	3.125	3.684
17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	4.000	4.000
18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.	4.250	3.895
19. I know why my emotions change.	4.250	4.158
20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.	3.625	4.000
21. I have control over my emotions.	3.250	3.579
22. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	4.000	4.211
23. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.	4.000	3.790
24. I compliment others when they have done something well.	4.250	4.737
25. I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	3.875	3.316
26. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.	3.875	4.053
27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.	3.250	3.632
28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.	3.500	3.737
29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	3.625	3.211

30. I help other people feel better when they are down.	4.125	4.158
31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.	3.375	4.053
32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	3.375	3.474
33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	3.375	3.158
Total weighted means	3.606	3.826

Table 9: Difference in Emotional Intelligence according to Sex

Welch's t-test		
Group	Male	Female
Mean	3.60606060600	3.82615629984
SD	0.52661052122	0.45788248753
SEM	0.18618493530	0.10504544690
N	8	19
Intermediate values used in calculations:		
t = 1.0296		
df = 11		
The two-tailed P value equals 0.3253		
Not statistically significant.		

Table 10: Emotional Intelligence Item Weighted Means compared according to Romantic Status

Statement	Without Romantic Partner <i>N=17</i>	With Romantic Partner <i>N=10</i>
1. I know when to speak about my personal problems to others.	4.059	3.500
2. When I am faced with obstacles, I remember times I faced similar obstacles and overcame them.	4.177	3.300
3. I expect that I will do well on most things I try.	3.941	3.700
4. Other people find it easy to confide in me.	3.294	3.600
5. I find it hard to understand the nonverbal messages of other people.	3.118	2.800
6. Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important.	4.294	4.000
7. When my mood changes, I see new possibilities.	3.882	3.500
8. Emotions are some of the things that make my life worth living.	4.235	4.100
9. I am aware of my emotions as I experience them.	4.118	3.400
10. I expect good things to happen.	4.118	4.400
11. I like to share my emotions with others.	3.059	3.400

12. When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last.	3.353	3.100
13. I arrange events others enjoy.	3.588	3.900
14. I seek out activities that make me happy.	3.882	4.400
15. I am aware of the nonverbal messages I send to others.	3.529	3.200
16. I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others.	3.412	3.700
17. When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me.	3.941	4.100
18. By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing.	4.059	3.900
19. I know why my emotions change.	4.235	4.100
20. When I am in a positive mood, I am able to come up with new ideas.	3.882	3.900
21. I have control over my emotions.	3.353	3.700
22. I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them.	4.294	3.900
23. I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on.	3.941	3.700
24. I compliment others when they have done something well.	4.647	4.500
25. I am aware of the nonverbal messages other people send.	3.529	3.400
26. When another person tells me about an important event in his or her life, I almost feel as though I have experienced this event myself.	4.118	3.800
27. When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas.	3.706	3.200
28. When I am faced with a challenge, I give up because I believe I will fail.	3.235	4.400
29. I know what other people are feeling just by looking at them.	3.647	2.800
30. I help other people feel better when they are down.	4.059	4.300
31. I use good moods to help myself keep trying in the face of obstacles.	3.942	3.700
32. I can tell how people are feeling by listening to the tone of their voice.	3.647	3.100
33. It is difficult for me to understand why people feel the way they do.	3.176	3.300
Total weighted means	3.802	3.691

Table 11: Difference in Emotional Intelligence according to Romantic Status

Welch's t-test		
Group	Without a romantic partner	With a romantic partner
Mean	3.80213903741	3.69090909090
SD	0.42018045217	0.58547531890
SEM	0.10190872859	0.18514355215
N	17	10
Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 0.5263 df = 14		
The two-tailed P value equals 0.6069 Not statistically significant.		

Table 12: Emotional Intelligence Overall Distribution

Score Range	Low 1.000 – 2.333	Moderate 2.334 – 3.666	High 3.667 – 5.000
Frequency	0	11	16
Percentage	0	40.74	59.26

Table 13: Resiliency Item Weighted Means compared according to Nationality

Statement	Filipino <i>N=11</i>	Vietnamese <i>N=16</i>
1. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	3.910	3.750
2. I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	3.000	2.686
3. It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	3.000	3.313
4. It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	2.818	3.063
5. I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	2.727	3.250
6. I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.	3.000	3.188
Total weighted means	3.076	3.208

Table 14: Difference in Resiliency according to Nationality

Welch's t-test		
Group	Filipino	Vietnamese
Mean	3.07575757582	3.20833333337
SD	0.41071506998	0.70841502792
SEM	0.12383525299	0.17710375698
N	11	16
Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 0.6135 df = 24		
The two-tailed P value equals 0.5453 Not statistically significant.		

Table 15: Resiliency Item Weighted Means compared according to Sex

Statement	Male <i>N=8</i>	Female <i>N=19</i>
1. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	3.750	3.842
2. I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	3.000	2.737
3. It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	3.375	3.105
4. It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	2.625	3.105
5. I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	3.625	2.789
6. I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.	2.750	3.263
Total weighted means	3.188	3.140

Table 16: Difference in Resiliency according to Sex

Welch's t-test		
Group	Male	Female
Mean	3.18750000000	3.14035087726
SD	0.60708449771	0.61177529026
SEM	0.21463678254	0.14035087718
N	8	19
Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 0.1839 df = 13		
The two-tailed P value equals 0.8570 Not statistically significant.		

Table 17: Resiliency Item Weighted Means compared according to Romantic Status

Statement	Without Romantic Partner <i>N=17</i>	With Romantic Partner <i>N=10</i>
1. I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times	3.765	3.900
2. I have a hard time making it through stressful events.	2.706	3.000
3. It does not take me long to recover from a stressful event.	3.118	3.300
4. It is hard for me to snap back when something bad happens.	2.882	3.100
5. I usually come through difficult times with little trouble.	2.824	3.400
6. I tend to take a long time to get over set-backs in my life.	3.000	3.300
Total weighted means	3.049	3.333

Table 18: Difference in Resiliency according to Romantic Status

Welch's t-test		
Group	Without a romantic partner	With a romantic partner
Mean	3.04901960788	3.33333333340
SD	0.44395908954	0.79349204757
SEM	0.10767589527	0.25092421755
N	17	10
Intermediate values used in calculations: t = 1.0412 df = 12		
The two-tailed P value equals 0.3183 Not statistically significant.		

Table 19: Resiliency Overall Distribution

Score Range	Low 1.000 – 2.333	Moderate 2.334 – 3.666	High 3.667 – 5.000
Frequency	2	19	6
Percentage	7.4	70.37	22.22

Table 20: Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Resiliency

Pearson – r computation	
<p>X Values</p> <p>$\sum = 101.545$</p> <p>Mean = 3.761</p> <p>$\sum(X - Mx)^2 = SSx = 5.988$</p>	<p>X and Y Combined</p> <p>N = 27</p> <p>$\sum(X - Mx)(Y - My) = 2.102$</p> <p>R Calculation</p> <p>$r = \frac{\sum(X - Mx)(Y - My)}{\sqrt{(SSx)(SSy)}}$</p> <p>$r = 2.102 / \sqrt{(5.988)(9.329)} = 0.2813$</p> <p>Meta Numerics (cross-check)</p> <p>r = 0.2813</p>
<p>Y Values</p> <p>$\sum = 85.167$</p> <p>Mean = 3.154</p> <p>$\sum(Y - My)^2 = SSy = 9.329$</p>	
<p>r = 0.2813</p> <p>The P-Value is .1552. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.</p>	

IV. Discussion

A total of 27 respondents took part in this study. There were 11 Filipino and 16 Vietnamese English teachers. 8 were males and 19 were females. 17 had no romantic partner while 10 had romantic partners. 18 had a bachelor’s degree, 4 had earned master’s units and 5 had master’s degrees. More than 50% possessed over 10 years of teaching experience.

Table 6 shows the item weighted means of the EI test results when compared according to nationality. The Vietnamese respondents had a slightly higher EI weighted mean. But the Welch’s t-test in Table 7 revealed that this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 8 presents the item weighted means of the EI test results when compared according to sex. The females had a higher EI weighted mean. But the Welch’s t-test in Table 9 revealed that this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 10 displays the item weighted means of the EI test results when compared according to romantic status. Those without a romantic partner had a higher EI weighted mean. But the Welch’s t-test in Table 11 revealed that this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 12 presents the distribution of the EI scores of all the respondents. 40.74% had moderate EI scores while 59.26% had high EI scores.

Table 13 shows the item weighted means of the resilience scale results when compared according to nationality. The Vietnamese respondents had a higher resilience weighted mean. But the Welch’s t-test in Table 14 revealed that this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 15 displays the item weighted means of the resilience scale results when compared according to sex. The males had a higher resilience weighted mean. But the Welch's t-test in Table 16 revealed that this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 17 shows the item weighted means of the resilience scale results when compared according to romantic status. The respondents with a romantic partner had a higher resilience weighted mean. But the Welch's t-test in Table 18 revealed that this difference was not statistically significant.

Table 19 presents the distribution of the resilience scale scores of all the respondents. 7.4% had low resilience scores, 70.27% had moderate resilience scores while 22.22% had high resilience scores.

Table 20 displays the Pearson – r computation between the EI scores and resilience scores of the respondents. The r value revealed that there is a low positive relationship between the respondents' EI and resilience scale scores but this was found to be not statistically significant.

V. Conclusions

In terms of the EI total weighted means, the Vietnamese, the females and those without a romantic partner had higher EI total weighted means as compared to Filipinos, males and those with romantic partners, respectively. However, these differences were not statistically significant. None of the respondents showed low EI scores with a majority having high EI scores.

Based on the results, it would indeed appear that EI is an inherent trait possessed by the respondents, which studies assert to be an essential ability in the teaching profession.

In terms of the resilience scale total weighted means, the Vietnamese, the males and the respondents with a romantic partner had a higher total resilience weighted means as compared to Filipinos, females and those without a romantic partner, respectively. However, these differences were not statistically significant. A few of the respondents had low resilience scores, a great majority had moderate resilience scores while a minority had high resilience scores.

A low positive relationship between the respondents' EI and resilience scale scores was found but this relationship was not statistically significant. This finding contradicts what the literature has shown.

As resilience has been established to be an important characteristic of being a teacher, the results imply that resilience need to be developed among the respondents of this study. And since there is no significant relationship between the respondents' EI and resilience, other means must be discovered to improve the respondents' resilience. This study is however, limited by the size of the sample and the sampling technique utilized. The authors recommend further study to confirm the findings of this study among other individuals and groups.

Declaration By Authors

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest in the conduct of this study.

Ethical Standards

The authors further state that the ethical standards of research were strictly followed, the informed consent of all the research participants was obtained, their responses were acquired anonymously and the data gathered was used purely for the purpose of making this study.

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