The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Iranian EFL Learners' Listening Proficiency

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Abstract- The current investigation attempts to determine the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) components on listening proficiency as well as gender differences in some of the significant emotional competencies of EI. To this end, 168 intermediate learners (including 75 male and 93 female) were chosen randomly from among English students of Rodaki and Shafagh University, Tonekabon. The data was analyzed through SPSS, using ANOVA, MANOVA and F-test. The results confirmed the significant impact of EI components on listening in male and female. Additionally, by considering gender through the influence of EI components, it showed that this impact on female learners is greater than male. The other case is investigating the effect of each EI component on listening comprehension and gender separately. The findings revealed that Stress Tolerance, Interpersonal Relationship and Flexibility have great impact on listening in male and female; instead male ought to be stronger to enhance 'Stress Tolerance'.

Key Words: Emotional Intelligence, Listening Comprehension, Gender, Self-awareness, Empathy, Stress Tolerance, Flexibility, Optimism**.**

1 INTRODUCTION

The concept of emotional intelligence (EQ or EI) has been offered to supplement general intelligence (i.e., IQ), because IQ does not seem to adequately explain individual difference in academic success or as in Gardner's view, fail to fully explain cognitive ability (Smith, 2002). Thereby EI may be more important than IQ for promoting academic, personal and occupational success. Even though the names given to the concept varied, there was a common belief that traditional definitions of intelligence are lacking in ability to fully explain performance outcomes. Accordingly, researchers (Salovey & Mayer, 1990 as cited in Pishghadam & Fahim, 2007) have recently promoted the idea that our notion of intelligence should be expanded to include 'emotional intelligence' (EI), which has generally been designed as the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one's emotions.

The ability to manage one's emotions, to be able to validate one's feelings and to solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature are important for being academically successful; additionally, academic performance appears to be facilitated by being able to set personal goals as well as to be sufficiently optimistic and self-motivated to accomplish them.

EI is defined by Goleman (1998) as " the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships." According to this definition, emotional intelligence provides the bedrock for the development of a large number of competencies that help learners perform more effectively. Among the many factors contributing to second language learning, it could be that emotional intelligence plays a critical role in language learning and teaching. EQ/EI is about the intelligent use of emotions and utilizing the power or information contained in emotion to make effective decisions (Ciarrochi/Mayer, 2007).

On the other hand, as Rost (1994) points out: "Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply can not happen. Listening thus fundamental to speaking"(pp. 141-142). He also believes that successful listening is an integration of the perception skills, analysis skills that we call a person's listening ability.

Statement of Problem

Empathy and foreign language anxiety, which are two important affective factors involved in the process of second/foreign language learning. Foreign language anxiety is a situation-specific type of anxiety arising form the uniqueness of foreign language learning in the classroom or academic settings. It is associated with a fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety and communication apprehension which are experienced by some foreign language learners (Horwitz et al. 1986). Also, as quoted in Rouhani, 2008, empathy is considered as the ability or capacity to understand or feel what others understand of feel (Brown

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1994). It is a significant skill for people who experience a new setting such as second or foreign language context (Brown 2000).

Emotional Intelligence can play a more significant role in learning receptive skills such as listening comprehension that can be enhanced and developed by environment and experience. The use of emotional intelligence in classroom would thus ease the task of the difficult teaching of a foreign language in a non-native environment and students will have the capacity to enhance the thinking ability of the learner that facilitates the teacher in imparting language skills. The higher the EI score, the more the prediction for general success in meeting environmental demands and pressures. That is why; this study seeks to shed some light on the impact of emotional intelligence components on EFL learners' academic performance in listening proficiency, together with gender differences in some of the significant emotional competencies of EI such as: Self-awareness, Stress Tolerance, Empathy, Flexibility and Optimism.

The study is designed to address the following specific questions:

- Do EI components influence the listening comprehension proficiency of EFL learners?

Which of EI components have stronger impact on Iranian EFL learners' listening proficiency?-

- Do EI components influence gender differences? If so, which one outperforms the other?

To answer the mentioned research questions, the following null hypotheses have been formulated:

H0.1. EI components do not have significant impact on Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension.

H0.2. Each EI component have no stronger impact on EFL learners' listening comprehension.

H0.3. EI components do not influence gender differences.

The Key Components of EI in the Bar-On Model

Based on Bar-On (2006)'s studies, from Darwin to the present, most descriptions, definitions and conceptualizations of emotional-social intelligence have included one or more of the following key components, all of which are included in the Bar-On conceptual model: (i) the ability to understand emotions as well as express our feelings and ourselves; (ii) the ability to understand others' feelings and relate with people; (iii) the ability to manage and control our emotions; (iv) the ability to manage change and solve problems of an intrapersonal and interpersonal nature; (v) the ability to generate positive mood and be self-motivated. These meta-factors of the conceptual model of emotional-social intelligence are referred to as follows in the Bar-On measures of this model:

- Intrapersonal: (*self-awareness and self-expression*)
- Interpersonal: (*social awareness and interaction*)
- Stress Management: (*emotional management and control*)
- Adaptability: (*change management*)
- General Mood: (*self-motivation*)

Each of these 5 meta-factors comprises a number of closely related competencies, skills and facilitators (15 in all), which only those competencies that believed to be emotional for the purpose of the study are chosen by the researchers and briefly defined below. (Bar-On, 2007)

Emotional Self-Awareness

This *intrapersonal* sub-factor is defined as 'the ability to be aware of and understand our emotions'. The Emotional Self-Awareness scale is seen as one of the most important elements of emotional intelligence, as it forms a foundation for all remaining emotional skills. It is not only the ability to be aware of our emotions, but also to differentiate between them, to know what we are feeling and why, and to know what caused those feelings. Your emotional awareness is critical to your success when interacting with others in personal, academic, or future workplace settings. Maintaining a keen awareness will help to produce a higher level of trust and cooperation within your relationships, as well as a more efficient work environment when collaborating with fellow students.

The results for this scale are at the population norm and indicate an individual who is in touch with her feelings and emotions. The responses also indicate that the individual is comfortable expressing feelings to others.

Empathy

This *interpersonal* sub-factor is defined as 'the ability to be aware of and understand how others feel'. It is defined as the ability to be aware of, to understand, and to appreciate the feelings and thoughts of others. Empathetic people care about other people and show interest in and concern for them.

The responses indicate an individual with a good awareness, understanding, and appreciation of the feelings of others. Those who display a high level of empathy towards friends, family, and fellow students instills in others the confidence to be able to share their personal or academic concerns and ideas without feeling threatened. Having this skill enhances your interpersonal relationships, as well as increasing the effectiveness of the groups to which you belong.

Interpersonal Relationship

This *interpersonal* sub-factor is defined as 'the ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships and relate well with others'. Mutual satisfaction describes meaningful social interactions that are potentially rewarding and enjoyable for those involved. Being adept in

interpersonal relationship skills is characterized by giving and receiving warmth and affection and conveying intimacy. This component of emotional-social intelligence is not only associated with the desirability of cultivating friendly relations with others, but with the ability to feel at ease and comfortable in such relationships and to possess positive expectations concerning social interaction.

Establishing strong interpersonal relationships at school can enhance your personal and academic performance, as well as create an enriching academic experience. Your results portray an individual who has very good interpersonal skills. You are able to establish mutually satisfying relationships through communication that include a balance of listening, empathy, and sharing of information.

Stress Tolerance

This *stress management* sub-factor is defined as 'the ability to effectively and constructively manage emotions'. In essence, stress tolerance is the ability to withstand and deal with adverse events and stressful situations without getting overwhelmed by actively and positively coping with stress and is slightly higher than average. This is based on: (i) choosing a course of action for coping with stress, which means being resourceful and effective, being able to come up with suitable solutions and knowing what to do and how to do it; (ii) an optimistic disposition toward new experiences and change in general as well as towards our ability to successfully overcome the specific problem at hand, which assumes a belief in our ability to face and handle these situations; and (iii) a feeling that we can control or influence the stressful situation. People who have a well-developed capacity for stress tolerance tend to face crises and problems rather than surrendering to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. Anxiety often results when this component of emotional-social intelligence is not functioning adequately.

Individuals who use their emotional skills (e.g., Optimism, Emotional Self-Awareness) to their advantage feel more controlled when under stress than others do because of their ability to view a stressor as a challenge rather than a threat.

Flexibility

This *adaptability* sub-factor represents 'the ability to adapt and adjust our feelings, thinking and behavior to new situations'. This entails adjusting our feelings, thoughts and behavior to changing situations and conditions. Success in an academic environment requires an agile and adaptive approach. These people are able to change their minds when evidence suggests that they are mistaken. They are generally open to and tolerant of different ideas, orientations, ways and practices. More importantly, flexibility is not a product of fleeting thoughts and values, but rather the result of rational and substantiated logic. Students who lack this ability tend to be rigid and demonstrate difficulty adapting to new situations.

Optimism

This *general mood* sub-factor is defined as 'the ability to maintain a positive and hopeful attitude toward life even in the face of adversity'. It is represents a positive approach to daily living and a very important motivating factor in whatever we do. Optimism is a critical skill to have, as it often separates top students from others. Optimism gives people the power to tackle challenges head on, as their mindset allows them to focus on possibilities and not consequences.

The results obtained reveal that you have an optimistic outlook towards your studies and life in general. Maintaining an optimistic outlook is often contagious and it could have a positive impact on the motivation and performance of fellow students. By showing a passion and optimism for your activities, you demonstrate your resilience towards challenges. This attitude will consequently support your motivation and facilitate perseverance in the face of adversity. Your optimism may provide the underlying energy necessary to find creative ways to address challenges.

Review of Literature

The earliest roots of emotional intelligence can be traced to Darwin's work on the importance of emotional expression for survival and second adaptation (Bar-on, 2006). In the 1900s, even though traditional definitions of intelligence emphasized cognitive aspects such as memory and problem-solving, several influential researchers in the intelligence field of study had begun to recognize the importance of the non-cognitive aspects. For instance, as early as 1920, Thorndike used the term social intelligence to describe the skill of understanding and managing other people.

Similarly, in 1940 Wechsler described the influence of non-intellective factors on intelligent behavior, and further argued that our models of intelligence would not be complete until we can adequately describe these factors (Bar-on, 2006). In 1983, Gardner's 'Frames of Mind: Theory of Multiple Intelligences introduced the idea of multiple intelligences which included both 'Interpersonal intelligence' (the capacity to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people) and 'Intrapersonal intelligence' (the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations) that paved the way for uncovering other intelligences such as 'emotional intelligence', which is interchangeably known as EI or EQ.

The first use of the term 'emotional intelligence' is usually attributed to Payne's doctoral thesis, *A Study of Emotion: Developing Emotional Intelligence* since 1985 (Payne, 1986). However, prior to this, the term 'emotional intelligence' had appeared in Leuner (1966). Greenspan (1989) also put forward an EI model, followed by Salovey and Mayer (1990), and Goleman (1995). The concept of emotional intelligence formally developed out of growing emphasis on research on the interaction of emotion and thought in the field of psychology in 1990s (Grewal/Salovey, 2006). Since 1990, Salovey and Mayer have been the leading researchers that coined the term 'emotional intelligence'.

Granted that cognitive ability seems to play a rather limited role in accounting for why some people are more successful than others, in doing the research for his first book, Goleman became aware of Salovey and Mayer's work in the early 1990s wrote the popular bestseller "Emotional Intelligence" (1995), in which he offered the first 'proof' that emotional and social factors are important.

By 1997 and 1999, Mayer and Salovey, together with Caruso, expanded on this ability-based definition while keeping its two-part form and defined emotional intelligence as (Mayer et al. 1999: 267):

"An ability to recognize the meaning of emotions and their relationships and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them [...] the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion related feelings, and understand the information of those emotions and manage them."

Emotional intelligence, which reveals synthesis between cognitive and affective processes, has stimulated some research, mostly in the fields other than second language acquisition/learning. For instance, in the field of education, Stottlemayer (2002) in a study of EQ and its relation to student achievement among 200 eleventh and twelfth grade American students in Texas found that EI skills were significantly predictor of academic achievement. Also, in the field of psychology, Besharat et al. (2005 as cited in Rouhani, 2008) examined the impact of emotional intelligence on mental health and academic success in a sample of 220 Iranian university students in Isfahan. They reported that EQ was negatively correlated with psychological stress and positively with academic success.

As cited in Rouhani (2008), Elias et al. (2003) point out that although different competing and sometimes conflicting components have been integrated into emotional intelligence, this construct has offered the potential to integrate the reasoning of a person's cognition and emotion. Recently more attention has been paid to the effect of emotional intelligence on academic success in education (Elias et al. 2003). However, as Brackett/Katulak (2007) state, quite a few studies have been conducted to explore this concept in contexts where English is spoken as a second or foreign Language (ESL/EFL), given the idea that the emotional intelligence serves both internal mechanisms and external environment in the process of language learning (Goleman 2001).

In a second/foreign language (SL/FL) context, Pishghadam (2007) examined the relationship between EQ and second language success among 528 Iranian university students in Tehran.

Emotional intelligence scores were correlated with the students' Grade Point Average (GPA) and the scores that they obtained at the end of second year at the university in listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The results indicated that second language skills and GPA strongly correlated with stress management and intrapersonal skills in the EQ test.

Research on gender differences in emotional intelligence has been limited. Although Goleman (1995) considered males and females to have their own personal profiles of strengths and weaknesses for emotional intelligence capacities, studies conducted by Mayer, Caruso and Salovey in 1999 and Mayer and Geher in 1996 indicate that women score higher on measures of emotional intelligence than men.

The obtained results from S. Katyal and E. Awasthi's study (2005) are in line with the findings of studies reported by Bhosle (1999), King (1999), Sutarso (1999), Wing and Love (2001) and Singh (2002). They all found females to have higher emotional intelligence than that of males. However, study by Chu (2002) revealed that males have higher level of emotional intelligence than that of females.

It has been affirmed that women tend to be more emotionally expressive than men, that they understand emotions better and they have a greater ability as regards certain interpersonal skills. Women, for instance, recognize other people's emotions better, are more perceptive and have greater empathy (Aquino, 2003; Argyle, 1990; Hargie et al. 1995; Lafferty, 2004; Tapia & Marsh II, 2006; Trobst et al. 1994). In addition, some evidence exists that certain areas of the brain dedicated to processing emotions could be larger in women than in men (Baron-Cohen,2003, 2005; Gur, Gunning-Dixon, Biker & Gur, 2002) and there is a difference in cerebral activity based on sex (JauŠovec & JauŠovec, 2005).

With respect to gender, no differences have been revealed between males and females regarding overall ESI. However, statistically significant gender differences do exist for a few of the factors measured by the EQ-i, but the effects are small for the most part. Based on the North American normative sample (Bar-On, 1997 as quoted in Bar-On, 2006), females appear to have stronger interpersonal skills than males, but the latter have a higher intrapersonal capacity, are better at managing emotions and are more adaptable than the former. More specifically, the

Bar-On model reveals that women are more aware of emotions, demonstrate more empathy, relate better interpersonally and are more socially responsible than men. On the other hand, men appear to have better self-regard, are more self-reliant, cope better with stress, are more flexible, solve problems better, and are more optimistic than women. Similar gender patterns have been observed in almost every other population sample that has been examined with the EQ-i. Men's deficiencies in interpersonal skills, when compared with women, could explain why psychopathy is diagnosed much more frequently in men than in women; and significantly lower stress tolerance amongst women may explain why women suffer more from anxiety-related disturbances than men (American Psychiatric Association, 1994 as cited in Bar-On, 2006).

In this paper, as it is expected from the literature review, we will argue that emotionally competent learners will succeed in education and from the standpoint of EI female students have higher EI than male ones. We will present data that support the assumption.

Emotional-Social Intelligence (ESI) Model of Bar-On

Bar-On (2006) defines emotional intelligence as 'being concerned with effectively understanding oneself and others, relating well to people, and adapting to and coping with the immediate surroundings to be more successful in dealing with environmental demands'. Bar-On posits that EI develops over time and that it can be improved through training, programming, and therapy. Bar-On hypothesizes that those individuals with higher than average EQs are in general more successful in meeting environmental demands and pressures. He also notes that a deficiency in EI can mean a lack of success and the existence of emotional problems. Problems in coping with one's environment are thought, by Bar-On, to be especially common among those individuals lacking in the subscales of reality testing, problem solving, stress tolerance, and impulse control. In general, Bar-On considers emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence to contribute equally to a person's general intelligence, which then offers an indication of one's potential to succeed in life (Kluemper, 2008) .

Reflecting the mixed model of emotional intelligence, Bar-On (1996 as quoted in Pishghadam & Fahim, 2007) developed an instrument to measure a more comprehensive concept of emotional intelligence, which he labeled emotional quotient (EQ). The most popularly used measure of this concept is the *Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (the EQ-i)*. The instrument has 133 items that are categorized into 5 main components and 15 factorial components that are mentioned above. Bar-On (1996) described the first component, Intra-personal, as a scale that assesses the inner self. Individuals who score high on this scale are considered to be in touch with their feelings, they feel good about themselves, and they feel positive about the way things move in their lives. He identified the second component, Inter-personal, to be characteristic of responsible and dependable individuals who have good people skills. Individuals who score high on this scale understand, interact and relate well with others. The third component, Adaptability, is a sign of how well individuals are able to cope with environmental demands and pressures. Furthermore, he stated that the fourth component, Stress Management, reflects how people handle stress. The fifth and final component, General Mood, is an indicator of an individual's ability to enjoy life.

Bar-On (1997) model is a self-report instrument to assess those personal qualities that enable some people to possess better emotional well-being than others. The Bar-On conceptual model of emotional-social intelligence provides the theoretical basis for the Bar-On psychometric model and approach to measuring this construct.

Applying Emotional Intelligence to Higher Education Emotional Intelligence and Learning

Golman's 'Emotional Intelligence' is persuasive in placing emotion at the seat of intellectual functioning. The management of even a handful of core emotions- anger, fear, enjoyment, love, disgust, shame and others- drives and controls efficient mental or cognitive processing. Even more to the point, Goleman argued that "the emotional mind is far quicker than the rational mind, springing into action without even pausing to consider what it is doing. Its quickness precludes the deliberate, analytic reflection that is the hallmark of the thinking mind" (Golman, 1995:291). Gardner's sixth and seventh types of intelligence (inter- and intrapersonal) are of course laden with emotional processing, but Goleman would place emotion at the highest level of a hierarchy of human abilities (Brown, 2000 as cited in Rouhani, 2008).

Emotional Quotient (EQ) is defined by Goleman (1995, p. 34 as quoted in Bar-On, 2006) as "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustration, to control impulses and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swapping the ability to think; to emphasize and to hope". He, furthermore, argues that human competencies like Self Awareness, Self-Discipline, Persistence and Empathy are of much greater consequence than IQ in much of life. Goleman (1998) describes an Emotional Competence as a "Learned capability, based on EQ that focuses on Qualities such as Initiative, Empathy, Adaptability & Persuasiveness and Results in outstanding performance at work."

Based on Vaidhyanathan's study (2010), the concept of Emotional intelligence deals with controlling emotions that

facilitates the learner to perform better while learning any skill. The same when applied to language learning will have the capacity to enhance the thinking ability of the learner that facilitates the teacher in imparting language skills like listening, reading, thinking, speaking and writing. The various elements of Emotional Intelligence like Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social skills forming the five basic emotional and social competencies are widely used in the corporate world for personality development and enhancing administrative skills and of late have been a subject of interest in the academic performance. This concept should have the capacity to eliminate the emotion of fear that retards in a learner the learning potential and causing a negative impact in ones learning.

The emotional regulation in relation to speech activities is discussed under the division "Speech and emotion" by Vitt in his article (1985) where he concludes that the results of his experiments confirm the possibility for a study of practical and effective aspects of emotional regulation. Learning a language in a non-native environment also involves the same elements of emotional intelligence: motivation, self confidence, self-regulation and empathy. Intellectual abilities like verbal fluency the ultimate goal when learning a foreign language is one of the components of IQ. Emotional intelligence on the other hand measured by EQ enhances the verbal fluency and so it's a value which is an indirect factor influencing IQ.

Method

168 intermediate EFL learners- including 75 male and 93 females- the ages of 20 and 25 were chosen randomly from among English undergraduate university students of *Rodaki Institute of Higher Education* in Tonekabon and *Private University of Shafagh* in Nashtarud, Iran and participated the study.

Material

The Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I; Bar-On) -for ages 16 and older-, originally designed in 1980 by Bar-On, is used to obtain the emotional intelligence scores of learners of the study that is described above. Participants are then examined in a TOEFL listening comprehension test.

Procedure

6 out of 15 components of EQ-I; Bar-On such as: Self-awareness, Stress Tolerance, Empathy, Flexibility and Optimism that believed to form the five basic emotional competencies and areas that are critical to achieving optimal academic success are determined by the researchers in the study for personality development and enhancing academic performance. So, the final format included 52 items with the total reliability of 89% at the $p<0.0001$ for both male and female students.

The ratings are made on a five-point scale ranging from "Very Seldom True of Him/Her" to "Very Often True of Him/Her." The average time to complete the test is 25 minutes. In order to avoid confusion and misunderstanding for intermediate students the Bar-On EQ-i was translated into learners' native language and it was scored based on Interpretation Guide for EQ-i Composite and Content Subscale Scores provided by Bar-On (2003). And raw scores are used only for research purpose.

Bar-On (1996) focused on two aspects of reliability, internal consistency and test-retest reliability. The test-retest reliability for the EQ-I (Bar-On, 1996) after 1 month was .85, and .75 after 4 months. That is why we chose this type of test rather than others.

Students, then, had 35 minutes to listen and answer 30 short conversations between two people in the form of multiple-choice questions from Longman pbt TOEFL.

Result

One-Way ANOVA

Table1 (a)
One-Way ANOVA of EI Components' Impact on Listening

ANOVA

EIComponents

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	29936.155	5	5987.231	348.097	.000
Within Groups	17234.274	1002	17.200		
Total	47170.429	1007			

Table 1(a) presents the results for the first research question and the null hypothesis. It illustrates the main ANOVA result. It shows that the F (5, 1002) =348.097 and significance value comparing the groups (EI Components) is <.05 (P=0.000), which indicates the difference in the mean score of the EI Components and listening comprehension that is statistically significant enough to reject the null hypothesis of the study. So, it can be concluded that the EI components have significant impact on EFL learners' listening comprehension. Thus, increase in one variable predicts increase in another one and vice-versa.

Table1 (b)
Post Hoc Tests of each EI Component's Impact on Listening

Multiple Comparisons

EIComponents _ Games-Howell

(I) Variables	(J) Variables	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Emotional Self-Awareness	Empathy	.077	.399	1.000	-1.07	1.22
	Interpersonal relationship	-11.756*	.506	.000	-13.21	-10.30
	Stress Tolerance	2.369*	.406	.000	1.21	3.53
	Flexibility	5.887*	.413	.000	4.70	7.07
	Optimism	.887	.425	.297	-.33	2.11
Empathy	Emotional Self-Awareness	-.077	.399	1.000	-1.22	1.07
	Interpersonal relationship	-11.833*	.507	.000	-13.29	-10.38
	Stress Tolerance	2.292*	.407	.000	1.13	3.46
	Flexibility	5.810*	.414	.000	4.62	7.00
	Optimism	.810	.426	.405	-.41	2.03
Interpersonal relationship	Emotional Self-Awareness	11.756*	.506	.000	10.30	13.21
	Empathy	11.833*	.507	.000	10.38	13.29
	Stress Tolerance	14.125*	.512	.000	12.66	15.59
	Flexibility	17.643*	.518	.000	16.16	19.13
	Optimism	12.643*	.528	.000	11.13	14.16
Stress Tolerance	Emotional Self-Awareness	-2.369*	.406	.000	-3.53	-1.21
	Empathy	-2.292*	.407	.000	-3.46	-1.13
	Interpersonal relationship	-14.125*	.512	.000	-15.59	-12.66
	Flexibility	3.518*	.420	.000	2.31	4.72
	Optimism	-1.482*	.433	.009	-2.72	-.24
Flexibility	Emotional Self-Awareness	-5.887*	.413	.000	-7.07	-4.70
	Empathy	-5.810*	.414	.000	-7.00	-4.62
	Interpersonal relationship	-17.643*	.518	.000	-19.13	-16.16
	Stress Tolerance	-3.518*	.420	.000	-4.72	-2.31
	Optimism	-5.000*	.439	.000	-6.26	-3.74
Optimism	Emotional Self-Awareness	-.887	.425	.297	-2.11	.33
	Empathy	-.810	.426	.405	-2.03	.41
	Interpersonal relationship	-12.643*	.528	.000	-14.16	-11.13
	Stress Tolerance	1.482*	.433	.009	.24	2.72
	Flexibility	5.000*	.439	.000	3.74	6.26

**. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.*

To address the second research question the Post Hoc tests in Table 1 (b) show which EI components have significant impact on EFL learners' listening comprehension over others. Based on statistical data in this table, the second null hypothesis is also rejected and it is proved that 'Interpersonal Relationship', 'Stress Tolerance' and 'Flexibility' have significantly more impact on listening comprehension proficiency rather than the other three components tested, because P-value< α, α=0.05, P=0.000. On the other hand, in the case of Emotional Self-awareness, Empathy and Optimism, because P-value is more than α=0.05, it is concluded that they have no/less impact on listening comprehension.

General Linear Model (MANOVA)

Table 2 (a)
MANOVA of EI Components with Gender Difference

Multivariate Tests[c]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.994	4711.614[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.994	28269.687	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.006	4711.614[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.994	28269.687	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	175.588	4711.614[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.994	28269.687	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	175.588	4711.614[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.994	28269.687	1.000
Gender	Pillai's Trace	.795	104.251[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.795	625.506	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.205	104.251[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.795	625.506	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	3.885	104.251[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.795	625.506	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	3.885	104.251[a]	6.000	161.000	.000	.795	625.506	1.000

a. Exact statistic

b. Computed using alpha = .05

c. Design: Intercept + Gender

Table 2 (b)
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects of each EI Component's Impact on Gender

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power[b]
Corrected Model	Emotional Self-awareness	314.495[a]	1	314.495	27.400	.000	.142	27.400	.999
	Empathy	310.087[c]	1	310.087	26.543	.000	.138	26.543	.999
	Interpersonal Relationship	6.139[d]	1	6.139	.206	.651	.001	.206	.074
	Stress Tolerance	277.882[e]	1	277.882	21.758	.000	.116	21.758	.996
	Flexibility	85.989[f]	1	85.989	5.780	.017	.034	5.780	.667
	Optimism	67.021[g]	1	67.021	3.996	.047	.024	3.996	.511
Intercept	Emotional Self-awareness	87771.304	1	87771.304	7646.882	.000	.979	7646.882	1.000
	Empathy	87189.325	1	87189.325	7463.154	.000	.978	7463.154	1.000
	Interpersonal Relationship	201955.210	1	201955.210	6767.263	.000	.976	6767.263	1.000
	Stress Tolerance	72586.453	1	72586.453	5683.483	.000	.972	5683.483	1.000
	Flexibility	48975.893	1	48975.893	3292.149	.000	.952	3292.149	1.000
	Optimism	81713.497	1	81713.497	4871.446	.000	.967	4871.446	1.000
Gender	Emotional Self-awareness	314.495	1	314.495	27.400	.000	.142	27.400	.999
	Empathy	310.087	1	310.087	26.543	.000	.138	26.543	.999
	Interpersonal Relationship	6.139	1	6.139	.206	.651	.001	.206	.074
	Stress Tolerance	277.882	1	277.882	21.758	.000	.116	21.758	.996
	Flexibility	85.989	1	85.989	5.780	.017	.034	5.780	.667
	Optimism	67.021	1	67.021	3.996	.047	.024	3.996	.511
Error	Emotional Self-awareness	1905.357	166	11.478					
	Empathy	1939.318	166	11.683					
	Interpersonal Relationship	4953.933	166	29.843					
	Stress Tolerance	2120.065	166	12.771					
	Flexibility	2469.511	166	14.877					
	Optimism	2784.479	166	16.774					
Total	Emotional Self-awareness	92153.000	168						
	Empathy	91582.000	168						
	Interpersonal Relationship	209502.000	168						
	Stress Tolerance	74857.000	168						
	Flexibility	52546.000	168						
	Optimism	86022.000	168						
Corrected Total	Emotional Self-awareness	2219.851	167						
	Empathy	2249.405	167						
	Interpersonal Relationship	4960.071	167						
	Stress Tolerance	2397.946	167						
	Flexibility	2555.500	167						
	Optimism	2851.500	167						

a. R Squared = .142 (Adjusted R Squared = .137)
b. Computed using alpha = .05
c. R Squared = .138 (Adjusted R Squared = .133)
d. R Squared = .001 (Adjusted R Squared = -.005)
e. R Squared = .116 (Adjusted R Squared = .111)
f. R Squared = .034 (Adjusted R Squared = .028)
g. R Squared = .024 (Adjusted R Squared = .018)

A MANOVA test is calculated to support the validity of the impact of one or some of the EI components on gender. Multivariate Tests are calculated to address the third null hypothesis. As it is proved in Table 2 (a) the main effect of all EI components on gender is significant by any of the four leading multivariate tests of group differences which imply the great impact of EI on gender. So, it is concluded that EI components have a meaningful impact on gender and therefore some of EI components will be greater in male and female. But, this does not tell us which EI components are stronger, so we need to look at the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects.

Table 2 (b) presents that the main effect of all factors and covariates are significant except for the effect of gender on 'Interpersonal Relationship', and for that effect there is insufficient power to do more than fail to reject the null hypothesis that among the all tested components the impact of general Interpersonal Relationship on gender is not significant implying that there is not much difference in mean score of this component in male and female.

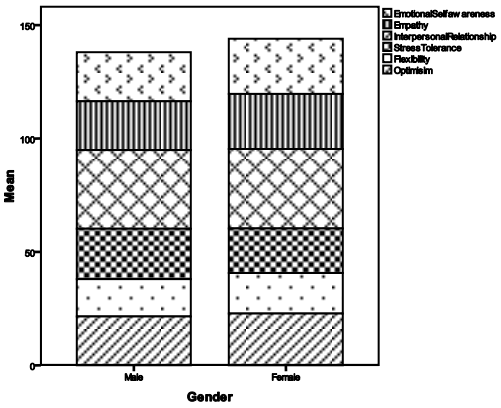

Figure1. Mean Score of each EI Component/Gender Diagram

Figure1, also, points that there is a significant difference between the total mean score of male/female EI components that can be concluded female score higher on measures of Emotional Intelligence in all components but 'Stress

Tolerance' that is greater in male than female. It is also proved that among all of the components 'Interpersonal Relationship' has the highest mean score in both groups but the difference in mean score of this component between male and female is not significant implying less impact of general Interpersonal Relationship on gender.

Discussion

Emotional Intelligence plays a more significant role in learning receptive skills such as listening comprehension and individuals with higher EI are always successful. Based on the statistical analyses we can conclude the following. Determining the impact of emotional intelligence on academic achievement of EFL learners' listening comprehension proficiency and gender produced divergent results depending on how the variables and different tests were applied. All the null hypotheses of the study were rejected and proved that EI components have statistically significant impact on the both listening comprehension and gender. So, researchers concluded that intermediate learners with a high degree of Emotional Intelligence achieve greater listening comprehension proficiency. It was also shown in the data analysis P=0.000. According to this assumption, if we consider α=0.005, P<0.05. Thus, EI components have a great impact on both listening and gender. By increasing one variable, we can expect that the other one increases too. The next hypothesis investigated the degree of meaningfulness of each of tested EI components on listening comprehension as well as gender. By considering listening and gender in this process, it is illustrated that 'Interpersonal Relationship', 'Stress Tolerance' and 'Flexibility' have significantly more impact on listening comprehension proficiency in male and female rather than the other three components.

When the effect of each EI components was examined on male/female it illustrated that despite female generally have higher EI than male, their 'Stress Tolerance' tend to be lower than that of male among all of the components. Based on this evidence, women are perceived to be more skillful at not only dealing with their emotions but also understanding them, while men are more skillful at tolerating stress. In addition, this finding is consistent, to some extent, with those of American Psychiatric Association (1994). The probable reason for these findings might be due to the fact that emotional intelligence primarily deals with managing attend expressing ones' emotions as well as social skills. So, female's Emotional intelligence ought to be higher than that of males that is proved in various studies by Bhosle (1999), King (1999), Sutarso (1999), Wing & Love (2001) and Singh (2002) as quoted by Katyal & Awasthi (2005). This is perhaps because of society, which socializes the two genders differently as has been found in studies by Duckelt and Raffalli (1989's) and Sandura and Mahrotra (1999) as quoted by Katyal & Awasthi (2005).

Moreover, higher EI of female can also be explained in terms of their personality characteristics. Similar findings were reported in Dunn (2002) and Tapia (1999 cited by Katyal & Awasthi 2005)'s studies. They observed that girls score higher with regard to empathy, social responsibilities and interpersonal relationships than boys. They are more sensitive towards their relationships with parents, friends and siblings.

Furthermore, the results indicated that in both male and female Interpersonal Relationship and Flexibility have significant impact, but considering the impact of gender on each EI component, proves that all tested EI components have significant impact on gender but Interpersonal Relationship because there is not much difference in the mean score of this component in male and female. Bar-on (1997) noted that people high in interpersonal intelligence constrain emotions whilst discussing a certain sensitive issue and know how to deal with the feelings that arise in difficult situations instead of being overwhelmed by it. People who are more in tune with their views and emotions as well as others' views and emotions will be more equipped to set up boundaries in their lives.

Conclusion

The study attempts to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence components on Iranian EFL learners' academic performance in listening proficiency, together with gender differences in some of the significant emotional competencies. Emotional Intelligence is the capacity to perceive emotion to enhance thinking. To achieve better performance in an academic setting, students should foster a good relationship with their peers and to cope with stressful and threatening classroom situations. Therefore, it seems to be natural that emotional intelligence can play a pivotal role in academic achievement of university students.

The differences found in the study tend towards female placing greater attention on their emotions than male. Despite the fact that female tend to be more emotional and intimate in relationships as compared to males, they have weakness in Stress Tolerance. It is also illustrated that 'Interpersonal Relationship' and 'Flexibility' is stronger in female; while male has greater 'Interpersonal Relationship', 'Stress Tolerance' and 'Flexibility'. Since all these variables affect listening comprehension.

Implications

Listening involves making sense of spoken language, normally accompanied by other sounds and visual input, with the help of our relevant prior knowledge and the context in which we are listening. Today we recognize that

listening is an 'active' process and used to be thought of as the exact decoding of the message and we rely on what we already know to help make sense of what we hear (Schmitt, 2002: p. 193). So, we need to enhance thinking through using EI in listening classes. The task of building up emotional quotient in a foreign language classroom can be merged along with the language exercises needed for the foreign language learning. Thus the learner learns to recognize, understand, use emotions to facilitate thinking and manage it along with the language rules eliminating the fear and the foreign language anxiety for a better performance.

Fostering Emotional Intelligence can assist students in adapting to the environmental demands and pressures of the college environment. Investing in the emotional development of students also impacts leadership effectiveness, both on campus and in the future. Finally, emotional competency development benefits the career development process, promoting a successful transition from college into the workplace.

What is to be seen in further research is to find an apt tool to measure the emotional intelligence quotient at the start of the language course and after using the mixed model to train the learner to raise the emotional quotient as well as the language skills. This can benefit both the teacher to reduce the strain of teaching different learners with different aptitudes and also the performance of the classroom at large would be enhanced in a non-threatening situation. Materials developers are also required to design materials that pay more attention to emotional competencies, leading learners to more self-and-other-discovery.

Parents and educators can benefit from EI by raising and educating children to be more emotionally and socially intelligent, effective and productive from an early age onward. Human resources personnel in organizations could also make more widespread use of this model and measure in hiring, training and succession planning in order to increase individual effectiveness and organizational productivity.

As such, a future challenge in this field is to explore how best to create a multidimensional model that captures both the potential (or ability) for emotionally and socially intelligent behavior as well as a self-report and multi-rater assessment of this type of behavior. Our ability to more fully describe ESI will be incomplete until we succeed in creating such a multi-dimensional and multi-modal approach. By applying an expanded model of ESI, we will eventually be more effective in mapping out this construct, evaluating its importance and understanding how best to apply it. Encouraging such an approach is also the best way to discourage the proliferation of ungrounded theorizing that abets misconceptions and false claims of what emotional-social intelligence is and is not and what it can and cannot predict. In order to provide a more complete and comprehensive description of the capacity for this type of behavior, we should consider creating an expanded model that incorporates the best conceptual and psychometric aspects of existing ESI models. Theories and measurement tools will evolve over time.

EI will be increasingly important- more need for team-based collaboration across organizations, geography and cultures, etc to improve different social and emotional competencies. Another direction for further research is into how EI competencies relate to and enhance one another.

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