

The Relation of Instructor Emotional Intelligence with Classroom Climate
In Evening Masters' Programs for Adults

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ABSTRACT

With the increase of adult students on college campuses in masters' level programs, instructors and administrators need to respond sensitively to a diverse, blended population of students. The study explored if there was a relationship between instructor Emotional Intelligence (EI) and adult evening masters students' perception of classroom climate, using the subscales of the Adult Classroom Environment Scale (ACES) and the instructor's total emotional intelligence (TEI) as measured by the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT). Associations between instructors' TEI and the following five variables were also explored: program type (cohort or non-cohort), student age, course content, class size, and student gender. The classroom was the unit of analysis. Only two of the seven ACES subscales had statistically significant relationships with TEI: Organization and Clarity, and Affiliation.

This study rests on three foundations: the construct of emotional intelligence (EI), the idea of the connecting classroom, and the construct of a supportive adult classroom climate. The EI framework is based on the work of Mayer and Salovey (1990). This study was also based on the theoretical framework of Donald et al. (2000), whose research offers evidence that the connecting classroom is the center state of the collegiate experience for adults. The third framework, classroom climate/environment, is based on

works by Moos (1979), Knowles (1980), Darkenwald (1987), Donaldson and Graham (1999), and Graham, Donaldson, Kasworm, and Dirx (2000).