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What Does Emotional Intelligence and Gender

Have to Do with Leadership Effectiveness

....Or Does It?

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Abstract

The purpose of this descriptive study was to examine the relationship between the emotional intelligence and gender of the principal, and teacher's perceptions of the principal's leadership effectiveness. The researcher administered the Emotional IQ Test (Jerabek, 1998) to 32 randomly selected principals. One hundred and sixty randomly selected teachers in the buildings of these administrators then took the observer form of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (Kouzes & Posner's, 2001) to measure the leader's perceived effectiveness. The leadership practices and gender were correlated to the two aspects of emotional intelligence to determine possible relationships. Findings show that principals with higher emotional intelligence are perceived to be more effective. Overall, women have a higher EQ than their male counterparts and the building level assignment had a significant impact on how principals were perceived.

What Does Emotional Intelligence and Gender Have to Do with Leadership Effectiveness...Or Does It?

Research has suggested that aspects of emotional intelligence contribute to strong transformational leadership, which includes an emotional bond between leader and follower (Sosik & Megerian, 1999). It has been noted that emotionally intelligent leaders pay greater attention to interpersonal aspects of the organization as opposed to technical aspects (Sosik & Megerian, 1999), thus, it would stand to reason, that emotionally intelligent leaders would be seen as effective in the perceptions of their followers. Moreover, emotional intelligence competencies are manifested primarily in social interactions. Therefore, the best approach to measuring them usually involves ratings by those who interact with a person (Cherniss & Goleman, 1998, (22)).

Since research has shown that leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence are more successful (George, 2000; Sosik & Megerian, 1999), and since success and effectiveness go hand in hand, one might look at leadership effectiveness and its relationship to emotional intelligence as well. Few significant studies have been conducted that examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and principal's leadership effectiveness. Therefore, this study, using the principal as a unit of analysis, was intended to explore the strength and manner of these relationships. The answers to three research questions were explored in this study: (a) Is there a correlation between overall emotional intelligence and specific areas of leadership (i.e., challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart)?; (b) Is there a correlation between specific areas of emotional intelligence (i.e., behavioral and knowledge) and teacher's perceptions of leadership effectiveness?; and (c)Does gender play a role in the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness?

Theoretical Framework

Emotional intelligence. Much has been written in the area of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence involves being aware of emotions and how they can affect and interact with traditional intelligence (Kierstead, 1999). Bocialetti (1988) stated, "one can argue that because emotions are inevitably present and can affect productivity and the quality of work for better or for worse, emotions should be managed" (p. 63). When emotions are recognized and guided in a constructive manner, they enhance intellectual performance (Cooper & Sawaf, 1996).

Lambert (1998, \P 8) noted that "The higher you go in the organization, the more important these qualities are for success. When it comes to leadership, they are almost everything." Intellect and expertise may get a person in, but it is the "human qualities" that make a star (Lambert, 1998). Unlike IQ, which some argue does not change throughout life, emotional intelligence can be developed. In fact, emotional intelligence tends to increase through each decade of life (Lambert, 1998). Emotionally intelligent leaders pay greater attention to interpersonal aspects of the organization as opposed to technical aspects (Sosik & Megerian, 1999). Thus, it would stand to reason that emotionally intelligent leaders would be seen as effective in the perceptions of their followers. Moreover, emotional intelligence competencies are manifested primarily in social interactions, therefore, the best approach to measuring them usually involves ratings by those who interact with a person (Cherniss & Goleman, 1998, \P 22).

Leadership effectiveness. As leadership has evolved, the determination of effectiveness has changed as well. Transformational leaders "transform" organizations through articulation and communication of a clear vision, development of commitment and trust, empowering people to achieve, managing change, and inducing others to transcend their own self-interests for the sake of the organization (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986; Yukl, 1998). Yukl (1998) referred to this transcending as influence based on reason or emotions, stating that "only the emotional, value-based aspects of leadership influence can account for the exceptional achievements of groups and organizations. Leaders inspire followers to willingly sacrifice their selfish interests for a higher cause" (p. 4).

Kouzes and Posner (2002) described leadership with emphasis on the relationship between leaders and followers. They stated, "Without constituents to enlist, a prospective leader is all alone...Without leaders, constituents have no energizer to ignite their passions, no exemplar to follow, no compass by which to be guided" (p. 30). They added, "If there's a clear and distinguishing feature about the process of leading, it's in the distinction between mobilizing others to do and mobilizing others to want to do" (p. 31). Through their research, Kouzes and Posner (2002) identified the six highest ranked characteristics of leadership: (a) honesty, (b) forward-looking, (c) inspiring, (d) competent, (e) fair-minded, and (f) supportive. Based on that inquiry as well as numerous others, a framework for leadership effectiveness evolved, including five fundamental practices: (a) challenging the process, (b) inspiring a shared vision, (c) enabling others to act, (d) modeling the way, and (e) encouraging the heart.

Gender and emotional intelligence. Inquiries into the effect of gender on emotional intelligence have been limited. A study by Bar-On (1997) noted that although no differences appeared between males and females regarding overall emotional and social competence, there were significant differences for a few factoral components. Females appeared to have stronger interpersonal skills than males, but males had a higher intrapersonal capacity and were better at stress management and adaptability. More specifically, women were more aware of emotions and better able to relate interpersonally and act in a socially responsible manner. Men, on the other hand, appeared to have better self-regard, were more independent, coped better with stress, were more flexible, and were more optimistic.

Goleman (1995) attributes these differences to contrasts in the way in which boys and girls are taught to deal with emotions as children. Childre and Cryer (1999) further supported the belief of gender effects stating, "One reason many women have been extraordinarily successful in sales is that their innate ability to read people and respond to their needs has won them many clients" (p.143). It appears from the viewpoint of these authors that gender does in fact affect certain aspects of emotional intelligence. Whether or not it is enough to alter overall emotional intelligence scores remains to be seen. Therefore, examining the relationship between emotional intelligence and the effectiveness of the principal and looking at the role gender might play in that relationship was warranted.

Methods

Participants. A stratified random sampling of 32 of the approximately 455 principals and 160 randomly selected teachers in a Midwest state were used in this study. Participants (both principals and teachers) were also stratified so that the distribution of gender was equivalent. Males and females were evenly distributed and proportional by grade level, with 5 male and 5 female participants from each of middle and high school levels, and 6 male and 6 female participants from the elementary level.

Data collection and instrumentation. Data were obtained through administering QueenDom's Emotional Intelligence (EIQ) Test (Jerabek, 1998) instrument to the 32 principals. This instrument assesses aspects of emotional intelligence, yielding a general overall score as well as a behavioral score and a knowledge score. The second part of data collection involved administering the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), developed by Kouzes and Posner (2001), to five or six randomly selected faculty members from each of the principal's buildings. The LPI evaluates leadership effectiveness in the following five essential areas of leadership: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart.

Data analysis. The data from the principals' surveys and their faculty observation forms were analyzed. The Pearson Correlation matrices statistical process was used to determine if factors of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness were related. In addition, the Pearson Correlation matrices was used to determine if gender had an effect on this relationship. For this study, the independent variables were the two aspects of emotional intelligence: behavioral and knowledge as measured by Jerabek's (1998) Emotional Intelligence (EIQ) Test. The dependent variables were the five areas of leadership effectiveness from the teacher's LPI observation surveys: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart. Significance was determine at the 0.05 level.

During analysis, the five LPI areas of leadership were combined into one score to form the variable of overall leadership. This variable was then correlated to each of the emotional intelligence areas. No correlations were found to be statistically significant for any of the five leadership areas, though some relationships were noted. See Table 1 for the relationship of overall EQ and specific areas of leadership.

Further analysis of correlations between principals' specific areas of emotional intelligence (behavioral and knowledge) and teachers' perceptions of leadership effectiveness revealed again no statistically significant relationships. However, for EQ behavioral the following observations were made. The area of encouraging the heart (*r*=+.286; *p*=.112) was the most closely related, and the area of inspiring a vision (*r*=+.149; *p*=.416) was the least related. These correlations with behavioral EQ were positive in relation, meaning as EQ behavioral levels increased, so did the areas of leadership effectiveness (see Table 2).

For EQ knowledge, the observations were weak negative relationships, meaning as EQ knowledge levels increased, the following leadership effectiveness areas decreased. The area of inspiring a vision (r= -.112; p=.542) was the strongest negative relationship, followed closely by challenging the process (r= -.100; p=.586), and the area of modeling the way (r=-.024; p=.896) was the least related (see Table 2). Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Analysis of the role gender played in the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness revealed no statistical significance. However, for females, the closest relationships observed were positive relationships, meaning as their EQ levels increased, so did the following areas of leadership effectiveness: EQ general was closest to encouraging the heart (r=+.310; p =.243), EQ behavioral was closest to encouraging the heart (r=+.270; p =.312), and EQ knowledge, the strongest overall relationship, was closest to enabling others to act (r=+.411; p =.114) (see Table 3).

For males, the closest relationships observed were negative relationships, meaning as their EQ levels increased, the following leadership areas decreased: EQ general was closest to inspiring a vision (r = -.262; p = .327), EQ behavioral was closest to inspiring a vision (r = -.195; p = .470), and EQ knowledge, the closest overall relationship, was closest to enabling others to act (r = -.365; p = .165) (see Table 2). Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Based on the initial analysis, a secondary correlational analysis was performed. The five LPI areas of leadership were combined to give an overall leadership score (total LPI), and then this new variable was correlated to each of the emotional intelligence scores. Analysis of correlations between overall LPI and the three areas of EQ (general, behavioral, and knowledge) revealed no statistically significant relationships. However, for females, the relationships to overall LPI were positive, with the most closely related area being EQ knowledge (r=+.265; p=.321). For males, the relationships between overall LPI and the three areas of EQ were negative, with the most closely related area also being EQ knowledge (r=-.355; p=.177) (see Table 4). Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level of confidence.

When data were disaggregated by building level and gender, several significant correlations were apparent between EQ and the LPI. Analysis of correlations between overall LPI scores and the three areas of EQ (general, behavioral, and knowledge) revealed a strong positive relationship between overall LPI score and overall EQ score for female principals at the elementary level (r=+.773; p=.071), and a statistically significant positive relationship between overall LPI score and EQ knowledge score (r=+.837; p=.03). This means that as the overall EQ level went up, so did the overall LPI score, and as the EQ knowledge score went up, the overall LPI score did as well. Female principals at the middle school and high school levels, however, showed no statistically significant relationship between EQ and LPI scores (see Table 5).

The same analysis for male principals at the elementary level showed no statistically significant relationship between EQ and LPI scores. At the middle school level, however, male principals were found to have a statistically significant negative relationship between overall LPI scores and overall EQ scores (r=-.945; p=.015), as well as a statistically significant negative relationship between overall LPI scores and EQ behavioral scores (r=-.920; p=.027). This means that as the overall EQ level went up, the overall LPI score went down, and as the EQ behavioral level went up, the overall LPI score went down. High school males were found to have a statistically significant negative relationship as well, demonstrated between overall LPI scores and EQ knowledge scores (r= -.929; p=.022). This means that as the high school male's EQ knowledge level increased, their overall LPI score decreased (see Table 9). Statistical significance was determined at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of confidence.

Upon finding the role building level appeared to play, further analysis by the variables of gender and building level was performed. The resulting correlations are presented in the following narrative and Tables 6 and 7.

Factoring out gender and building level, analysis of correlations between principals' overall emotional intelligence and specific areas of leadership (challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart) revealed the following. For females at the elementary level, there was a strong relationship found between overall EQ and the areas of modeling the way (r=+.781; p=.067), and encouraging the heart (r=+.782; p=.066), and a statistically significant positive relationship between overall EQ and challenging the process (r=+.909; p=.012). This means that for elementary females, as the overall EQ level increased, so did the areas of modeling the way, encouraging the heart, and particularly challenging the process. Middle and high school females were not found to have any statistically significant relationships, however, the observation was made that at the middle school level, females were found to show a negative relationship between overall EQ and leadership areas of challenging the process and modeling the way. At the high school level, similar observations of negative relationships were noted between overall EQ and leadership areas of challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart (see Table 6). This means that for females at both the middle and high school levels, as overall EQ increased, the respective areas of leadership decreased. Statistical significance was determined at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of confidence.

The same analysis for males found no statistically significant relationship between overall EQ and specific areas of leadership (challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the heart) at the elementary level. However, observation was made that a negative relationship existed between overall EQ and the area of modeling the way. Middle

school males were found to have negative relationships between overall EQ and all areas of leadership, with statistically significant negative relationships revealed between the following areas: overall EQ and inspiring a vision (r= -.902; p=.036), overall EQ and challenging the process (r= -.934; p=.020), and overall EQ and encouraging the heart (r= -.882; p=.048). The relationship between overall EQ and modeling the way was strong (r= -.862; p=.061), but not statistically significant. High school males displayed negative relationships between overall EQ and all areas of leadership as well, however, none were statistically significant. The strongest relationship shown by males at the high school level was between overall EQ and encouraging the heart (r= -.837; p=.077) followed by modeling the way (r= -.810; p=.096) (see Table 6). Interpreted, this again means that as overall EQ increased for males, the leadership areas noted at the respective levels, declined. Statistical significance was determined at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of confidence.

Factoring out gender and building level, analysis of correlations between principals' specific areas of emotional intelligence (behavioral and knowledge) and teachers' perceptions of leadership effectiveness revealed the following. Females at the elementary level were found to have a statistically significant positive relationship between EQ behavioral level and challenging the process (r=+.805; p=.053), and their EQ knowledge level showed a statistically positive relationship with inspiring a vision (r=+.833; p=.039), challenging the process (r=+.887; p=.019), enabling others to act (r=+.818; p=.047), and encouraging the heart (r=+.806; p=.053). This means that as elementary females increased in EQ behaviors, their leadership area of challenging the process also increased, and as their EQ knowledge level increased, so did leadership areas of inspiring a vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Middle school and high school females had no statistically significant relationship between EQ behavioral scores and modeling the way, and also between EQ knowledge scores and areas of inspiring a vision and challenging the process. This means that as the respective area of EQ increased, its correlational partner decreased (see Table 6). Statistical significance was determined at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of confidence.

The same analysis for males found no statistically significant relationships between principals' specific areas of emotional intelligence (behavioral and knowledge) and teachers' perceptions of leadership effectiveness at the elementary level. It was observed, however, that the relationship between EQ behavioral and modeling the way was a negative one. Middle school males were found to have a strong negative relationship between EQ behavioral level and encouraging the heart (r= -.848; p=.070), statistically significant negative relationships between EQ behavioral level and inspiring a vision (r= -.938; p=.019), and challenging the process (r= -.940; p=.017). High school males were found to have negative relationships between both EQ behavioral knowledge levels and all areas of leadership. Those which were noteworthy included strong negative relationships between EQ knowledge level and inspiring a vision (r=-.845; p=.072) and enabling others to act (r=-.829; p=.083), and statistically significant negative relationships between EQ knowledge level and challenging the process (r=-.930; p=.022), modeling the way (r=-.918; p=.028), and encouraging the heart (r=-.912; p=.031) (see Table 11).

This again shows that for these males as the EQ levels increase, the leadership behavior levels decrease as noted above. Statistical significance was determined at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of confidence.

From this inquiry it is apparent that that males and females in equivalent jobs were judged differently in the area of effectiveness. According to the findings of this study, females were the group rated higher in effectiveness if their emotional intelligence levels were perceived as a strength, while males were rated lower in effectiveness if they showed the same strength in emotional intelligence. Perceptions of effectiveness, as viewed through the teachers', lens appeared to vary based on both gender and building level.

Implications for Practice

Since emotional intelligence (EQ) is considered an attribute for principals who are viewed as effective by their teachers, it stands to reason that EQ should become an important component of any leadership preparatory program. And since female principals tend to demonstrate that attribute more often than males, perhaps the training should be designed with the gender of the leader in mind. Also, it appears that the context of the organization might have some influence on how leaders are perceived to be effective, since when males have higher EQ they are perceived less effective than females with higher EQ's. The influence of the building level on the perceived effectiveness of the principal and his/her emotional intelligence are also factors to consider when designing leadership courses. Perhaps different types of emotional intelligences should be emphasized depending on the level where the individual is leading.

Additional studies need to be done to assist in solidifying the relationship of effectiveness and emotional intelligence which again could serve as a guide for administrative preparation programs, as well as guide practicing principals in the selection of professional development activities that would enhance their effectiveness and emotional intelligence. School district personnel recruiting new administrators might also utilize information on emotional intelligence in selection and placement of educational leaders. Effective principals need to continue to focus on the visioning process and to personally envision the future of the school. Furthermore, effective principals must behave in ways that demonstrate that they value individuals both personally and organizationally. They must create learning organizations that enhance collaboration and build teams. Celebration of accomplishments by faculty and students are essential for this learning environment to be sustained.

Emotional intelligence can be developed and strengthened. Principals must pay attention to other's emotions and the motivation behind individuals' behavior. The building of relationships is the cornerstone to effective practice. When school leaders begin to target weaknesses in leadership and develop emotional intelligence through professional development efforts, it stands to reason that they will be perceived as more effective leaders. As a result, schools should improve and grow to become true learning organizations.

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			Inspiring	Challenging	Modeling	Enabling	Encouraging
			a vision	the process	the way	others to	the heart
					5	act	
	EQ						
	general						
		Pearson (r)	.097	.127	.173	.220	.270
		р	.597	.490	.343	.227	.135
<i>Note.</i> * <i>p</i> < 0.	05, 2-tailed. **	p < 0.01, 2-tailed.					

Table 2

Relationship of specific areas of EQ and leadership effectiveness (N=32)

		Inspiring a	Challenging	Modeling	Enabling	Encouraging
		vision	the process	the way	others to act	the heart
EQ behavioral						
	Pearson (r)	.149	.180	.214	.247	.286
	р	.416	.325	.239	.172	.112
EQ knowled	lge					
	Pearson (r)	112	100	024	.038	.081
	р	.542	.586	.896	.837	.658
0.05 2 tailed **	n < 0.01 2 tails	d				

Note. * *p* < 0.05, 2-tailed. ** *p* < 0.01, 2-tailed.

Table 3

Role of gender on the relationship between EQ and leadership effectiveness

Gender		Inspiring	Challenging	Modeling	Enabling others	Encouraging
			the process	the way	to act	
Female (n=16) EQ general	Pearson (r)	.069	.102	.215	.202	.310
	р	.799	.706	.424	.453	.243
EQ behavioral	Pearson (r)	.101	.131	.212	.139	.270
	р	.710	.629	.430	.606	.312
EQ knowledge	Pearson (r)	.009	.026	.234	.411	.367
	р	.973	.925	.382	.114	.162
Male (n=16)						
EQ general	Pearson (r)	262	227	157	.062	040
	р	.327	.397	.562	.819	.884
EQ behavioral	Pearson (r)	195	155	074	.192	.032
	р	.470	.568	.786	.477	.907
EQ knowledge	Pearson (r)	324	317	331	365	265
	р	.221	.232	.211	.165	.322

Note. . * p < 0.05, 2-tailed. ** p < 0.01, 2-tailed

Table 4

Secondary correlational analysis: Relationship between overall LPI and EQ by gender

EQ	EQ	EQ

			General	Behavioral	Knowledge
Female (n=16)	LPI Total	Pearson (r)	.215	.198	.265
		p	.424	.463	.321
Male (n=16)	LPI Total	Pearson (r)	152	059	355
		p	.575	.827	.177
, 2-tailed. ** p < 0.01, 2-	tailed.				

Note. * *p* < 0.05, 2-tailed. ** *p* < 0.01, 2-tailed

Table 5

Secondary correlational analysis : Relationship between overall LPI and EQ by building level

Gender	School			EQ	EQ	EQ
		T DY TT I I		General	Benavioral	Knowledge
Female	Elem. (n=6)	LPI Total	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.775	.669	.837*
			Р	.071	.146	.038
	Middle (n=5)	LPI Total	Pearson (r)	.007	.037	.086
			D	001	052	800
			1	.991	.952	.090
		LPI Total	Pearson (r)	095	.073	576
			Р	.880	.907	.310
Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male	Male
	Elem (n=6)	LPI Total	Pearson (r)	.143	.216	179
			Р	.788	.680	.734
	Middle (n=5)	LPI Total	Pearson (r)	945**	920*	.077
			Р	.015	.027	.902
	High (n=6)	LPI Total	Pearson (r)	802	442	929*
			Р	.103	.457	.022

Note. * p < 0.05, 2-tailed. ** p < 0.01, 2-tailed.

Table 6

Relationship of overall EQ and specific areas of leadership by gender and building level

Gender	School			Inspiring a vision	Challenging the process	Modeling the way	Enabling others to act	Encouraging the heart
Female	Elem.(n=6)	EQ general	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.703	.909	.781	.573	.782

			P	.119	.012**	.067	.235	.066
	Middle (n=5)	EQ general	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.138	077	385	.081	.117
			P	.825	.902	.522	.897	.851
	High (n=5)	EQ general	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.213	228	.027	511	163
			Р	.730	.713	.966	.379	.793
Male	Elem. (n=6)	EQ general	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.190	.124	536	.386	.196
			P	.718	.814	.273	.450	.710
	Middle (n=5)	EQ general	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	902	934	862	763	882
			P	.036*	.020*	.061	.133	.048*
	High (n=5)	EQ general	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	687	780	810	734	837
			P	.200	.120	.096	.158	.077

Note. * *p* < 0.05, 2-tailed. ** *p* < 0.01, 2-tailed

Table 7

Relationship of specific areas of EQ and leadership effectiveness by gender and building level

Gender				Inspiring	Challenging	Modeling	Enabling	Encouraging
Gender				a vision	the process	the way	others	the heart
Female	Elem. (n=6)	EQ behavioral	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.589	.805	.731	.446	.680
			р	.219	.053*	.099	.376	.137
		EQ knowledge	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.833	.887	.686	.818	.806
			р	.039*	.019**	.133	.047*	.053*
	Middle(n=5)	EQ behavioral	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.199	.060	462	.045	.138
			р	.748	.923	.433	.943	.825
		EQ knowledge	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	122	335	.610	.311	.094
			р	.844	.582	.274	.610	.881
	High (n=5)	EQ behavioral	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.384	019	.168	361	072
			р	.523	.976	.787	.551	.908
		EQ knowledge	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	482	691	435	766	368
			р	.411	.196	.465	.131	.542
Male	Elem (n=6)	EQ behavioral	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	.257	.204	573	.568	.202
			р	.623	.698	.235	.240	.701
		EQ knowledge	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	131	183	192	336	002
			р	.804	.729	.716	.515	.996
	Middle(n=5)	EQ behavioral	Pearson (<i>r</i>)	938	940	816	649	848
			p	.019**	.017**	.092	.236	.070

	EQ know	Pearson ledge (<i>r</i>)	.390	.234	102	474	.074
		р	.517	.705	.871	.420	.906
High (n=5) <mark>EQ</mark> behav	Pearson vioral (<i>r</i>)	344	416	454	413	509
		р	.570	.486	.443	.490	.381
	EQ know	Pearson ledge (<i>r</i>)	845	930	918	829	912
		р	.072	.022*	.028*	.083	.031*

Note. * p < 0.05, 2-tailed. ** p < 0.01, 2-tailed.

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