

2018-02-25

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Recommended Citation

Phillips, Patrick F. and Chen, Helen (2018) "Emotional Intelligence and the Role of Motivation Within the Context of Career Guidance Counselling for Those Experiencing Unemployment," *Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies*: Vol. 18: Iss. 1, Article 1.

doi:10.21427/D7HH82

Available at: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/ijass/vol18/iss1/1>

Emotional Intelligence and the Role of Motivation Within the Context of Career Guidance Counselling for Those Experiencing Unemployment

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Vol. 18(1), 2018, 2-14.

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the impact of emotional intelligence (EI) on motivation, and consequently to address the question of how to help motivate those experiencing unemployment to engage in the job search process by improving their EI. Presently, there is little existing research on the examination of EI and motivation, not to mention a more specific exploration on how EI impacts an individual's capacity to engage in a sustained job search. In order to examine the motivation component for this paper the BIS/BAS scale developed by Carver and White (1994) was adopted. The BIS (behavioural inhibition system) function causes the individual to have feelings of fear, anxiety, and agitation in the face of possible negative outcomes. Conversely, the BAS (behavioural approach system) function creates feelings of joy, excitement, and elation at the prospect of potential outcomes. Questionnaires were supplied to clients of a government funded organisation (Northside Partnership) which provides support to unemployed clients of the service in north county Dublin, Ireland. The findings demonstrated that the more clients are aware of their own emotions, or the better able they are at managing others emotions, the more likely they are to be motivated by the Behavioural Activation System (BAS). The findings also indicated that the greater awareness clients have of other people's emotions, the more they are motivated by the Behavioural Inhibition System (BIS).

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, career guidance counselling, motivation, unemployment, job seeker.

Introduction

As unemployment in Ireland has spiked in recent years as a consequence of the economic downturn, there is an urgent call to study the role of motivation for those experiencing unemployment, and whether their own emotions contribute to motivation. Presently, there is very little research studying this relationship (Plaude and Rascevska, 2011). The benefit of such an investigation could be to identify the key components of emotional intelligence (EI) that stimulate motivation, and in turn, foster them at the various stages of the education system. "EI even provides the medium by which educational reform can, and finally will, reach its full potential, across primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of schooling" (Zeidner, Matthews and Roberts, 2004: 372). McPhail (2003: 630) argues that emotions must be given greater emphasis in process of making decisions, "Conventional dichotomy between reason and emotion cannot

be sustained under close analysis and that contrary to the prevailing view, emotions are central in all rational decision making processes”.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between EI and motivation in the process of an individual endeavouring to return to the workforce after a period of unemployment. The research was conducted via the Northside Partnership which is a government funded organisation that specialises in providing career guidance to its' clients in the North Dublin area. Questionnaires were issued to clients of the service via the Career Guidance Counsellors as part of a typical guidance meeting. For the purpose of this study, the research question is to determine to what extent EI impacts motivation of job seekers in Ireland.

The Role of EI in Career Guidance

Assessing the role that EI plays in the process of a client securing employment may well provide valuable information for career guidance counsellors, and/or researchers alike, and yet little research has been conducted in this field – “Sparse emotional data in career theory and counselling disadvantages the field” (Puffer, 201: 131).

If clients do have the skills to manage their own emotions, they can potentially improve their opportunities in the jobs market. However, we know little of emotions in career guidance counselling, “There remains a pressing need for research to directly evaluate the wellbeing outcomes of career guidance with a view to informing our understanding of the ways in which practice can contribute to the promotion of health and well-being.” (Robertson, 2013: 261). Cooper (1997:32) notes “Research suggests that people with high levels of emotional intelligence experience more career success, build stronger personal relationships, lead more effectively, and enjoy better health.” However, the emotional aspect in career development is often marginalised, “the often personal, uncertain, ambiguous, and challenging undertaking of constructing career (in our culture, schools, and families) has become “objectified” and “reduced” to both an individual and a cognitive phenomenon characterised by information gathering, decision making, problem solving, and evaluation” (Young et al. 1997: 76).

As previously stated, the primary research will be to conduct a specific study via clients who are currently engaged with an employment service. Clients will be requested to complete a detailed questionnaire as part of the overall service the Northside Partnership provides, with the objective of understanding the role EI plays in motivating clients. Ultimately, it is hoped that this paper will provide some insight to relevant professionals in the provision of career guidance, and a potentially act as a basis for further research.

Origin of EI

EI is defined as the ability to understand and empathise with the thoughts and feelings of others (Salovey and Mayer, 1990), or “the appraisal and expression of emotions, assimilation of emotions in thoughts, understanding emotion, and the regulation and management of emotions” (Matthews, Roberts and Zeidner, 2004: 372). EI was developed during the 1990s, and is classed within the context of social intelligence which in turn was developed through the work of Thorndike (1921), Guildford (1956) and Gardner (1983). McPhail (2003: 630)

argues that “a developed emotional intelligence is crucial for critically engaging with the world” and Goleman (1995: 105) posits that “market forces that are reshaping our work life are putting an unprecedented premium on emotional intelligence for on-the-job success”.

The Measurability of EI

EI is proving to be an elusive form of intelligence to measure and has led to much debate. Schutte et al's (2002: 770) research is one of the few studies that argues that clear evidence exists that EI can be conceptualised and measured. Matthews, Roberts and Zeidner (2004: 180) argue that a thorough examination of existing literature suggests little in the way of clear evidence of the existence of EI. Robertson and Smith (2001) posit that there is no satisfactory proof of the existence of EI in the academic literature. Goleman (1995) provides a broad definition of EI in which EI should be viewed as all positive qualities that are not IQ. The most interesting definition within the context of this study is that of Bar-On (1997) who suggests EI is “an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures”. This study is interested in measuring how clients cope with the environmental pressure of unemployment. Interestingly, little agreement exists over whether EI represents a cognitive ability for processing emotional stimuli, attributes of personality, such as integrity and character, or some facility for adapting to challenging situations (Matthews, Roberts and Zeidner, 2004). This debate is important in the context of this study. Davies, Stankov and Roberts (1998) argue that EI is not intelligence in the same sense as IQ and that it should be studied as a group of personality traits.

The main models of EI in the existing literature include: the multifactor EI scale (MEIS) (Mayer, Caruso and Salovey, 1999); the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso EI test (MSCEIT) (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2000); the emotional competency inventory (ECI) (Goleman, 1998); the emotional-quotient inventory (EQ-I) (Bar-On, 1997); the EI quotient (EIQ) (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2000); the EI test (SREIT) (Schutte et al., 1998); the Swinburne EI test (SUEIT-Genos EI Assessment) (Palmer and Stough, 2001); the trait meta mood scale (TMMS) (Salovey et al., 1995); and the workgroup EI profile (WEIP) (Jordan et al., 2002). In an effort to provide the reader with a guide to the, at times, bewildering range of EI components, a summary of the components of each model is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Components of EI in Different Models

Model	Components	References
Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attention * Clarity * Repair 	Salovey et al, 1995.
Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Intra-personal components * Inter-personal component * Adaptability * Stress management * General mood 	Bar-On, 1997.
Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI 360)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Awareness of emotions in self * Awareness of emotions in others * Management of emotions in self * Management of emotions in others 	Goleman, 1998.
Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SREIT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Monitor and discriminate between emotions * Use emotions in thought and reactions 	Schutte et al, 1998.
Multi-factor Emotional Intelligence Test (MEIS) Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Emotion perception * Using Emotion to facilitate thought * Understanding emotion * Emotion management 	Mayer, Caruso and Salovey, 1999; Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2000.
Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQ)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Self-awareness * Emotional resilience * Motivation * Inter-personal sensitivity * Influence * Intuitiveness * Conscientiousness 	Dulewicz and Higgs, 2000.
Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT)/Genos EI Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Incorporate the predominant models and measures of EI 	Palmer and Stough, 2001.
Work Group Emotional Intelligence Profile (WEIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Awareness of emotions * Ability to discuss emotions * Using emotions to prioritise thinking * Application of own emotions to facilitate thinking * Ability to recognise emotions in others * Ability to read others' false display of emotion * Managing others' emotional states * Ability to encourage positive emotions in self and others' 	Jordan et al, 2002.

Source: Derived from Mayer, Caruso and Salovey (1999); Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2000); Bar-On (1997); Dulewicz and Higgs (2000); Jordan et al (2002); Palmer and Stough (2001); Schutte et al (1998) and Salovey et al (1995).

While differences exist amongst the models, there is, however, agreement on certain key components, which is the understanding oneself and others, and managing oneself and others Goleman (1998, 2001) and Boyatzis, Goleman and Rhee (2000).

The Necessity of EI

In the context of this study, the objective is to understand to what extent a client's EI would motivate them to work towards securing employment. While knowledge and experience is important in decreasing an individual's period of time out of employment, it is proposed here, that these components are not sufficient in themselves to explain why some clients of the service are quicker at securing employment than others. "Technical skills are necessary for productivity; these are insufficient to explain the difference between high and mediocre performers" (Rijamampianina and Wallace 2005: 84). Research suggests that emotionally intelligent individuals have a stronger capacity to engage with the world around them (McPhail 2003: 630), and, more specifically, EI has its place in the process of career guidance, "EI positively relates to less dysfunctional career thinking, greater career decision-making, self-efficacy, a higher level of willingness to explore a variety of career preferences" (Puffer, 2011: 132). The current economic climate is leading to increasing working hours, less job security and a faster, more competitive market place, and, as a result, the importance of EI is growing, "market forces that are reshaping our work life are putting an unprecedented premium on emotional intelligence for on-the-job success", as Goleman argued (1995: 105).

The need to recognise and utilise the role of EI in the process of undertaking a challenge has been discussed in the literature. Some researchers argue that the role of EI may need to be moderated, "qualities of agreeableness such as empathy, altruism, and interpersonal sensitivity are central to conceptions of EI, but these qualities may mitigate against effective performance in jobs requiring ruthlessness, toughness, and individual initiative" (Zeidner, Matthews and Roberts, 2004: 382). However, Cooper (1997:32) argues "we are paying a drastic price, in our personal lives and organisations, for our attempts to separate our hearts from our heads and our emotions from our intellect. It can't be done. We need both, and we need them working together". In the context of the latter argument, it would be of great importance for guidance counsellors to recognise and embrace the role emotions will play in overcoming challenges of unemployment, "In the context of a supportive career guidance relationship, clients may be provided with emotional support and challenges to negative thinking that assist them in the management of distress" (Robertson 2013: 256). Goleman (1998) and Huy (1999), also support this position by arguing the EI can have a substantial impact on the individual, and, in turn, society. Cooper (1997) argues that emotions when properly managed can drive commitment in individuals. Vandervoort (2006) suggests that a community of individuals with well-developed emotional intelligence will demonstrate lower levels of mental health problems and violent crime, and that the overall health of a society would be better than that of a society demonstrating lower levels of EI. Again, in the context of this article, this is an interesting argument, and begs the question, "would a community based programme designed to improve emotional intelligence levels amongst a population lead to lower levels of unemployment, and/or shorter periods of unemployment?"

Motivation

For the purposes of the study conducted for this paper, it was decided to utilise the theory of Carver and White (1994) which, in turn, built on the theories of Gray (1972, 1981) who postulated the presence of two components of personality, namely impulsivity and anxiety proneness. Gray (1972, 1981) proposed that an individual is guided by a desire to avoid pain, while also compelled by a desire to achieve goals. The levels at which these components are present within the individual varies. The BIS (behavioural inhibition system) function causes the individual to have feelings of fear, anxiety, and agitation in the face of possible negative outcomes. Conversely, the BAS (behavioural approach system) function creates feeling of joy, excitement, and elation at the prospect of potential outcomes. “BAS is more about what can make a person happy and excited. BIS appears to be about anxiety” (Dunning, 2016: 28).

Interestingly, Dunning (2016) refers to the powerful desire for people to find meaning in life which could be construed as a positive construct. However, he also argues that finding meaning in life may be as a consequence of anxiety avoidance, and that finding meaning is not pleasurable, but something that must be done to avoid pain. With this in mind, it is usual for people who are seeking work to be doing so from a position of anxiety, they are often driven not by wanting to find joy, but to avoid pain. This again reflects the relevance of utilising the BIS/BAS scale for this purposes of examining motivation and EI within the context of job searching, as it takes into consideration the potential for an individual to approach job seeking from a positive, or indeed, negative point of view.

Presently, there does not appear to be a direct study of how EI might influence an individual's propensity for behaving according to the BIS or BAS systems within the literature, and it is proposed here that this makes for a timely study. Interestingly, Carver and White (1994) propose that extreme levels of BAS may be indicative of a sociopathic personality, which would also imply very low levels of EI in the individual.

Exploring the Relationship between EI and Motivation

“Those who are able to understand and regulate their emotions should be able to generally maintain a better outlook on life and experience better emotional health” (Schutte et al. 2002: 770). A positive outlook is the capacity to remain motivated while confronting challenges, which stems from the capacity to manage ones emotions. “EI is thus postulated to buffer the effects of aversive events through emotional self-awareness, expression and management”, (Magnano, Craparo and Paolillo, 2016). It is worth noting that well-being is a component that is not fully appreciated amongst career guidance practitioners and researchers, and further research is urgently needed to fully understand its implications (Robertson 2013).

In speaking specifically regarding unemployment, “appropriate emotion regulation and the effective use of emotions is of paramount importance in coping with this situation”, (Knopp, 2016). But how does EI relate to motivation in the context of job searching? Research suggests EI may well play a role in resilience (Armstrong, Galligan, and Critchley, 2011) which is a necessary requirement in coping with the frustrations of job searching. “EI seems to strongly predict motivation to achieve, since it has a direct impact on workers' motivation which didn't disappear neither after controlling for their resilience”, (Magnano, Craparo and Paolillo, 2016). Furthermore, EI is associated with problem focused coping (Noorbakhsh, Besharat and Zarei, 2010), “emotion has a place in the individual's internal processes; it is also an important

dimension of needs, plans, goals, and purposes; and it serves as an energiser and motivator of action” (Young et al. 1997: 36). Plaude and Rascevska (2011) stated plainly that those with higher EI are better equipped at managing themselves when unemployed. These arguments support the central thesis of this paper, namely, that clients who possess higher levels of EI are better equipped in remaining resilient in the struggle to return to the workforce. The implication is that EI is relevant to motivation and is present in the specific context of job hunting. Nonetheless, there presently exists little in the way of specific research on the relationship between EI and motivation in the context of job searching. In fact, there is little research studying the relationship between EI and motivation in general terms (Magnano, Craparo and Paolillo, 2016). As a result, we are required to hypothesise on the nature of this relationship, “While few studies have explored the relationship between EI and the functioning of unemployed persons, it seem reasonable to assume that it facilitates coping with job loss and maintaining mental health” (Knopp, 2016: 437). In considering the above, it is argued here that more research is needed to examine how EI can motivate a person to engage in a sustained job hunting strategy.

Following the review of the literature presented thus far, certain hypotheses have been derived for the purposes of primary research which are as follows:

H. 1: Emotional intelligence will be positively related to motivation;

H. 2: Emotional intelligence will be positively related to the Behavioural Activation System (BAS);

H. 3: Emotional intelligence will likely demonstrate a negative coefficient with regard to the Behavioural Inhibition System (BIS);

In order to examine the hypotheses laid out above, a self-report approach was utilised. It was determined by the authors that a questionnaire would be the most appropriate approach to collecting data on clients of the service as the intention was to gather as many responses as possible.

Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire was administered to clients availing of employment guidance with the Northside Partnership, and the responses were analysed using a combination of factor analysis and MANOVA to examine the contribution of the identified components of EI on effective motivation.

The structure of the questionnaire was split into three sections: section A, B and C. Section A examined the 7 components of EI as detailed by Dulewicz, V. and Higgs, M.J. (2000) (2003) which are: self-awareness, emotional resilience, motivation, inter-personal sensitivity, influence, intuitiveness, conscientiousness. There were 21 questions in total in section A. For the purposes of examining motivation which makes up section B of the questionnaire, the BIS/BAS scales by Carver and White (1994) as previously mentioned was utilised. 15 questions from a possible 24 were selected from the BIS/BAS scale, with a total of 36 questions provided to the respondents between section A and B. Both sections were written in a Likert-type format, section A requested respondents answer on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 corresponds to low and 5 represents high. An example of a question is as follows, “When I am depressed, I am

capable of identifying what is upsetting me”. Section B provided a 4-point response scale, with 1 indicating strong agreement and 4 indicating strong disagreement, with no option for a neutral response. An example of a question included is: “Criticism or scolding hurts me quite a bit”. Finally, section C was designed to capture the demographic data of the respondents.

Ethical Considerations

From an ethical standpoint and in the opinion of the authors, it was imperative that the respondents were fully briefed on the nature and purpose of the research, from the perspective of adhering to proper ethical guidelines (Greenwood, 2016), but also for ensuring the research participants understood the level and purpose of their involvement, which in turn, would improve the consistency of the responses. It was made clear to all the participants that their contribution was entirely voluntary and anonymous, they were also provided an opportunity to ask questions and review the questionnaire before agreeing to take part.

Sample

As previously stated, the research for this paper was carried out with the assistance of the Northside Partnership. This is an organisation that provides support to people within the north Dublin area who are currently unemployed. The Northside Partnership designs and implements programmes to support clients back into the workforce, or back into further education. The organisation employs a team of Career Guidance Counsellors within a Department called the Local Employment Service. The Career Guidance Counsellors were recruited by the authors to supply clients with the questionnaire during the course of a one to one meeting and group engagement sessions. It was during both these types of interventions that the questionnaires were supplied to the clients.

A total of 435 clients of the Northside Partnership responded to the questionnaire. Due to missing data, 360 questionnaires were usable, which accounted for 82.75% of total participation. The respondents lived in the north Dublin area and aged from 18 to 63 years of age. In terms of the respondents’ profile, they were all considered work ready which was reflected in the particular social welfare payment they were in receipt of from the Irish government. Their work history varied, as did the period of time a respondent may have been out of work at the time of completing the survey. It took two months to complete data collection from May to June 2016. As previously stated clients were asked to complete the questionnaire during the course of a meeting with a Career Guidance Counsellor.

Findings

In the process of analysing the findings of the components of EI, four components were identified by factor analysis and they are as follows:

- 1) Others emotions awareness relates to conscientiousness, interpersonal sensitivity;
- 2) Others emotions management reflects influence;
- 3) Self emotional control relates to emotional resilience, motivation;
- 4) Self emotions awareness encapsulates intuitiveness, self-awareness.

These components of the independent variables were then assessed against the dependent variables of the questionnaire which are BAS/Reward responsiveness, BIS Anxiety, BAS Drive, BAS/Fun Seeking (see Table 2), this in turned provided a clear breakdown of the results of the questionnaires.

Table 2 MANOVA

Independent variables	Dependent variables	F	Mean square
Self emotions awareness	BAS reward responsiveness	2.69*	1.64
Others emotions awareness	BIS	3.02*	3.86
Others emotions management	BAS reward responsiveness	2.82*	1.72
Others emotions awareness	Fun seeking	2.25*	1.37
Others emotions management	Fun seeking	2.06*	1.42
Others emotions awareness * others emotions management	BAS reward responsiveness	2.81*	1.71
Others emotions management * self emotions control	BAS reward responsiveness	2.14*	1.30
Self emotions awareness * others emotions awareness * self emotions control	BAS Drive	3.62**	3.83
Self emotions awareness * others emotions awareness * self emotions control	Fun seeking	2.82*	1.94
Self emotions awareness * others emotions management * self emotions control	Fun seeking	2.43*	1.68
Others emotions awareness * others emotions management * self emotions control	Fun seeking	2.93*	2.02
Self emotions awareness * others emotions awareness * others emotions management * self emotions control	BAS reward responsiveness	5.37**	5.68
Self emotions awareness * others emotions awareness * others emotions management * self emotions control	Fun seeking	6.05**	4.17

Only significant results are presented in Table 2. The findings are as follows:

- 1) The findings suggest that self-emotion awareness is significant in predicting an individual's inclination to act on the basis of the BAS reward system. An individual who has an ability to identify when they are in a low mood and are also able to improve their mood accordingly, will be more likely to be motivated on the basis of the BAS reward responsiveness. Therefore, the more a client can remain aware of their own emotions, the more likely they will be motivated on the basis of BAS reward responsiveness, which plays a positive role in a client's return to employment.
- 2) The second finding from the analysis relates to emotional awareness of others and its impact on the BIS component. An individual who is conscious of the emotions of others

may act according to a desire to avoid punishment or judgement. Gray (1977) stated that punishment and non-reward are inherent within the BIS function. A fear of punishment can only occur as an action from another party. Hence, if an individual is afraid of being reprimanded for their actions, it can be said they are driven by the BIS function in that particular instance. As the BIS component examines a subject's perceived fear of judgement from others, it stands to reason that an emotional awareness of others would be significant in this context. The more the clients are aware of other people's emotions, the more likely they are to be motivated on the basis of BIS function.

- 3) A further finding of the research indicated that the ability to influence others is related to the BAS reward responsiveness of motivation. An individual driven to achieve goals as a consequence of an inherent desire to succeed may indeed need to win over others in order to achieve objectives. For example, a question from the surveys asks the respondent if it would excite them to win a competition. This may require influencing others in order to perform well enough to win, consider team sports as a suitable example. Therefore, an ability to influence others is an important skill to possess, should the client would like to be motivated.
- 4) An awareness of others and the ability to influence others emotions reflect an individual's drive towards fun seeking individually. This would suggest that in order to be motivated by seeking fun, the clients need to be aware of others emotions or manage others emotions, either option will suffice.

Limitations and Recommendations

As a consequence of the findings there are, in the opinion of the authors, some recommendations for potential future research. While this was a voluntary contribution on the part of the respondents, it could be argued that some respondents may have felt compelled to engage, perhaps thinking that they needed to comply with the organisation for fear that it might in some way reflect negatively on them, and, in turn, the level of assistance they may receive from the service, or that their social welfare payment might be affected, "Organisational research participants are also subjects of, and subject to, the organisation to which they belong (and are often dependent upon this for the livelihood). Such research participants are not autonomous individuals free to respond without regard for any number of organisational factors such as employment security, relationships with co-workers, and loyalty to the group"

(Greenwood, 2016). It should also be stated that concern for the level of honesty in responses would be reasonable, as again respondents may have felt the urge to indicate high levels of motivation to secure employment, again, in case it should somehow reflect negatively on them.

Despite these limitations, ultimately the utility of a self-completion measure was deemed the most appropriate for purposes of researching the target market. Furthermore, another possible avenue for further research relates to feedback from participants who indicated that the questionnaire proved a useful tool in the self-evaluation process, thereby providing an opportunity to reflect on what the literature would describe as the 4 traits of core self-evaluation, namely self-esteem, self-efficacy, neuroticism, and locus of control (Bono and Judge, 2003). Future research could also use a qualitative analysis via interviews of a smaller target sample.

Conclusion

As Ireland continues to recover from the recession, unemployment should continue to decrease. Nevertheless, it is likely that a percentage of the population will remain out of work. There are numerous potential reasons for this, such as obsolete training and/or skills, which are easier to measure and address via appropriate training courses. However, as discussed, psychological factors also feature, which are often harder to define and measure, and in turn can be more complex to address. Emotional factors such as low self-esteem, reduced confidence in one's own abilities and general feeling of low mood are typical manifestations brought on by the scenario of unemployment. Therefore, it can be argued that there exists an urgency to ensure that this cohort of the population is identified, and suitable interventions are introduced in assisting them in rebuilding their confidence, which in turn will provide the motivation to engage enthusiastically in the process of job hunting.

Determining methods to motivate others regardless of context has, and, continues to be, of great interest to researchers. This paper set out to build on existing literature in the study of the potential role of EI in motivation. As discussed previously, attempting to define concepts such as EI and motivation is challenging enough and divides opinion, there remains "scant, and sometimes highly controversial, empirical evidence used to support the importance of EI" (Zeidner, Matthews and Roberts, 2004: 372), not to mention the complexities of examining the relationship between EI and motivation. However, the research conducted for this paper returned interesting findings which imply that certain aspects of EI play a role in effective motivation. Despite the uncertainties and limitations, it is argued here that the importance of exploring all possible methods for creating positive changes in people who find themselves in a position of unemployment remains of critical importance. The research to date clearly illustrates the psychological damage that can incur with regard to individuals who find themselves in the unfortunate position of unemployment and the potential for continued psychological disintegration as the amount of time spent out of work increases.

The findings indicated that people who are sensitive to the position of others may be inclined to function according to the BIS approach. However, it was also determined that various components of EI can influence an individual to operate under the parameters of fun seeking and reward responsiveness. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that interventions that are designed to assist in developing these emotional competencies would be of value within the context career guidance.

While this body of research was applied within the context of unemployment, it could be argued that individuals in current employment may also suffer with similar levels of psychological inertia as a result of the failure to progress within an organisation. It would be of potential interest to carry out further studies that examine EI and motivation within a different context to the research conducted for this paper. For example, an examination of the relationship between EI and motivation levels amongst staff within a large organisation might prove interesting. This paper focused purely on a target audience that was not in current employment, and therefore there would be the potential to build on this research within an organisational context.

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