

Emotional Intelligence and Interpersonal Relations

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ABSTRACT. In 7 studies, the authors examined the link between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations. In Studies 1 and 2, the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence had higher scores for empathic perspective taking and self-monitoring in social situations. In Study 3, the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence had higher scores for social skills. In Study 4, the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence displayed more cooperative responses toward partners. In Study 5, the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence had higher scores for close and affectionate relationships. In Study 6, the participants' scores for marital satisfaction were higher when they rated their marital partners higher for emotional intelligence. In Study 7, the participants anticipated greater satisfaction in relationships with partners described as having emotional intelligence.

Key words: cooperation, emotional intelligence, empathic perspective taking, interpersonal relations, marital satisfaction, self-monitoring, social skills

IN THE PRESENT STUDY, we explored the association between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relations. *Emotional intelligence* is the ability or tendency to perceive, understand, regulate, and harness emotions adaptively in the self and in others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Schutte et al., 1998). Some conceptualizations of emotional intelligence are rather broad

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and include a range of adaptive characteristics associated with emotions (e.g., the ability to effectively communicate emotions; Goleman, 1995), whereas other conceptualizations of emotional intelligence (e.g., Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000) emphasize the cognitive elements, such as emotions aiding judgment and memory. Furthermore, researchers have conceptualized emotional intelligence both as an ability and as a trait (Goleman, 1995; Mayer et al., 2000; Schutte & Malouff, 1999).

There are several theories of emotional intelligence. Gardner's (1993) *theory of multiple intelligences* encompasses intrapersonal intelligence, including knowledge of one's own emotions and thoughts. Averill and Nunley's (1992) *emotional creativity theory* focuses on the value of emotional fulfillment through emotional creativity. Saarni's (1999) *theory of emotional competence* is similar to other theories of emotional intelligence but places an additional emphasis on the social contexts of emotional functioning and on emotional self-efficacy.

Goleman (1995) hypothesized that emotional intelligence plays a role in establishing and maintaining relationships, and Saarni (1999) posited that the related construct of emotional competence is a crucial component of social development and contributes to the quality of interpersonal relationships. However, researchers have not empirically examined the connections between emotional intelligence and relationships. Because emotional intelligence, theoretically, includes the ability to understand and regulate others' as well as one's own emotions, emotional intelligence may be related both to characteristics that build relationships and to the quality of those relationships. Four building blocks of relationships may be empathy, the ability to self-monitor in social situations, good social skills, and cooperation. Three important indices of relationship quality may be affiliation, close affective ties, and a satisfactory close partnership.

In the following series of studies, we explored the relationships of emotional intelligence to (a) seven aspects of interpersonal relations (four may build relationships; three may be indices of relationship quality) and (b) participants' preference for emotionally intelligent partners. We operationalized emotional intelligence as the ability to understand, regulate, and harness emotions adaptively in the self and others; we assessed it as a relatively enduring and typical performance characteristic.

STUDY 1

Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, and Self-Monitoring

Because the ability to perceive and understand emotions in others is an important component of emotional intelligence, persons with higher emotional intelligence should have a greater ability to experience empathy. Salovey

and Mayer (1990; Mayer & Salovey, 1997) posited that empathy is an important component or correlate of emotional intelligence. Preliminary support for this notion came from Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999) who, by using a performance measure of emotional intelligence, found that individuals with higher scores for emotional intelligence had higher scores for empathy. In Study 1, we tested whether the trait of emotional intelligence would be related to empathy.

Self-monitoring is the ability to (a) understand others' emotions and behaviors, (b) understand environmental contexts, and (c) modify self-presentation in response to such understanding (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984). Because emotional intelligence encompasses understanding others' emotions and regulating one's own emotions (which may allow more effective self-presentation), higher emotional intelligence may facilitate self-monitoring. Hence, we also tested in Study 1 whether the trait of emotional intelligence would be associated with self-monitoring.

Method

Participants

The participants in Study 1 were 24 students (17 women, 7 men; mean age = 27.5 years, $SD = 8.23$) from a university in the southeastern United States.

Procedure

The participants completed the trait measure of emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998), the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980), and the Self-Monitoring Scale (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984). The measure of emotional intelligence, the 33-item Assessing Emotions Scale, assesses to what extent individuals perceive, understand, regulate, and harness emotions adaptively. On a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*), respondents rate their agreement with such items as "I am aware of my emotions as I experience them" and "I help other people feel better when they are down." The sum of all items constitutes the total scale score, which can range from 33 to 165 (higher scores indicate greater emotional intelligence). Schutte et al. reported that the internal consistency of the measure of emotional intelligence was between .87 and .90. According to validation studies, scores on the emotional intelligence measure (a) were related, as expected, to characteristics such as optimism, impulse control, and lack of depressed affect; (b) predicted students' grades during the first year of college; (c) were higher for groups expected to score higher on emotional intelligence; and (d) showed evidence of discriminant validity (Schutte et al.).

The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980) assesses four components

of empathy: empathic perspective taking, empathic fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress. Sample items include "I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective" for the Empathic Perspective Taking subscale; "I daydream and fantasize, with some regularity, about things that might happen to me" for the Empathic Fantasy subscale; "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than I" for the Empathic Concern subscale; and "In emergency situations, I feel apprehensive and ill-at-ease" for the Personal Distress subscale. Respondents rate themselves on each item by using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *does not describe me well*, 5 = *describes me very well*). For each of the preceding 7-item subscales, higher scores indicate a greater level of the quality being measured. Previous researchers (Davis, 1980; Davis & Franzoi, 1991) showed that the internal consistency of the four subscales in the index ranged from .68 to .79. According to validity studies, scores on the subscales were associated with theoretically related constructs and were sensitive to interventions aimed at increasing empathy (Schutte & Malouff, 1999).

The 13-item Self-Monitoring Scale (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984) assesses sensitivity to the expressive behavior of others and the ability to modify self-presentation in response. Respondents use a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = *certainly, always false*, 6 = *certainly, always true*) to answer such items as "In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I am conversing with" and "In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for." Higher scores indicate greater self-monitoring. The internal consistency of the scale ranged from .70 to .83 in different samples (Schutte & Malouff, 1999). Results of validity studies revealed associations of scale scores with theoretically related constructs such as greater extroversion and less social anxiety (Schutte & Malouff, 1999).

Results

The participants' average score for emotional intelligence was 126.88 ($SD = 12.18$); their average score for self-monitoring was 33.83 ($SD = 6.11$); their average score for empathic perspective taking was 24.42 ($SD = 4.01$); their average score for empathic fantasy was 20.63 ($SD = 6.18$); their average score for empathic concern was 27.46 ($SD = 4.49$); and their average score for personal distress was 16.58 ($SD = 5.69$).

The participants who scored higher for emotional intelligence scored significantly higher for self-monitoring, $r(23) = .59$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed), and for empathic perspective taking, $r(23) = .35$, $p < .045$ (one-tailed). The three other dimensions of empathy measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1980) were not related to emotional intelligence. Furthermore, there was no significant association between self-monitoring and any of the dimensions of empathy.

STUDY 2

Emotional Intelligence and Empathy Replicated

In Study 1, emotional intelligence was related to empathic perspective taking but not to empathic fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress. All the dimensions of empathy have important emotional components, but only empathic perspective taking is clearly emotionally adaptive. Taking another's perspective allows one to understand the other person better and to interact with that person more effectively. Empathic fantasy (e.g., feeling the emotions of a fictional character) has little adaptive value. Empathic concern and personal distress may not be adaptive because they involve negative emotions.

Although there is a conceptual explanation for the finding that emotional intelligence was related to empathic perspective taking but not to the other three dimensions of empathy in Study 1, the post hoc explanation, as well as possible alpha inflation attributable to the multiple statistical comparisons, warranted further investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and empathic perspective taking. Thus, we designed Study 2 to cross-validate the association between emotional intelligence and empathic perspective taking.

Method and Results

We asked 37 teaching interns in the southeastern United States to complete the emotional intelligence measure (Schutte et al., 1998) described in Study 1 and the Empathic Perspective Taking subscale (Davis, 1980) described in Study 1. For the participants who reported demographic information (24 women, 1 man; 12 did not report), the average age was 29.36 years ($SD = 6.73$).

The participants' average score for emotional intelligence was 142.51 ($SD = 9.46$), and their average score for empathic perspective taking was 27.32 ($SD = 3.49$). The participants who scored higher for emotional intelligence scored significantly higher for perspective taking, $r(36) = .59$, $p < .0001$ (one-tailed).

STUDY 3

Emotional Intelligence and Social Skills

Because central components of emotional intelligence are the ability to understand others' emotions and the ability to regulate and harness one's own emotions adaptively, one would expect persons with higher emotional intelligence to be more socially adept and to display better social skills. Social skills are the lubricants of social life that help individuals interact in mutually beneficial ways (Malouff & Schutte, 1998). Furthermore, social skills tend to be reciprocal; persons who display good social skills tend to receive good treatment in return (Gouldner, 1960) and to be liked by others (Anderson, 1968).

In Study 3, we hypothesized that the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence would have higher scores for social skills.

Method

Participants

A mixed sample of 77 university employees, university students, older adults attending seminars on a university campus, and residents of a retirement home volunteered to participate in Study 3. All participants (44 women, 33 men; mean age = 53.22 years, $SD = 24.83$) resided in the southeastern United States.

Procedure

Each participant completed the measure of emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998) described in Study 1 and a measure of social skills (Riggio, 1989). The 105-item Social Skills Inventory (Riggio) assesses a variety of social skills such as social control, social sensitivity, social expressivity, emotional control, emotional sensitivity, and emotional expressivity. Respondents rate on a 9-point Likert-type scale (1 = *not at all true of me*, 9 = *very true of me*) such items as "People often tell me that I am a sensitive and understanding person"; "I usually take the initiative and introduce myself to strangers"; and "I can fit in with all types of people, young and old, rich and poor." Higher scores indicate better social skills. According to results of other studies (Riggio), the measure had an internal consistency of .94, and its scores were (a) related to scores on other measures of social skills, (b) related to success in social interactions, and (c) correlated with the size of individuals' social networks.

Results

The participants' average score for emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998) was 132.84 ($SD = 12.37$), and their average score on the Social Skills Inventory was 281.65 ($SD = 28.23$). Higher scores for emotional intelligence were significantly associated with higher scores for social skills, $r(76) = .41$, $p < .0001$ (one-tailed). A gender comparison showed no difference between the emotional-intelligence scores or the social-skills scores of the men and the women.

STUDY 4

Emotional Intelligence and Cooperation

The ability to understand others' emotions and the ability to understand and regulate one's own emotions, which are central elements of emotional intelli-

gence, may be important foundations for cooperation with others. Cooperation, in turn, is an essential element in building and maintaining relationships. Persons who cooperate tend to have more positive relationships with each other (Austin & Worchel, 1979; Deutsch, 1980).

In Study 4, we hypothesized that the participants with higher emotional intelligence would cooperate more with others.

Method

Participants

A mixed sample of 38 public school employees and college students (25 women, 13 men; mean age = 29.13 years, $SD = 8.04$) from the southeastern United States participated in Study 4.

Procedure

The participants first completed the measure of emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 1998) described in Study 1 and then engaged in a prisoner's-dilemma paradigm, traditionally used to assess cooperation (e.g., Boone & Macy, 1999). The prisoner's-dilemma paradigm is an example of a social-trap situation in which mutual cooperation benefits each individual; however one person can exploit the cooperativeness of others for personal gain. We randomly assigned to each participant a partner from among the others who had volunteered to attend the same small-group testing session. We explained the prisoner's dilemma as follows:

For each of 30 trials, which lasted until both participants had come to a decision, the participants were to select either a *C* response or a *D* response. They recorded their selections on a response sheet by writing in a *C* or a *D* without showing their partners which response they had selected. Partners sat across from each other, with a barrier between them that prevented them from seeing each other's responses. We asked them not to communicate which alternative they had selected for each trial until they had completed all trials. We told them that the partners would look at each other's responses at the end of all 30 trials. We also told them that if the participant selected a *C* response on a trial and the partner also selected a *C* response on that trial, then both would earn 10 points. If the participant selected a *C* response and the partner selected a *D* response, then the participant would lose 5 points, and the partner would earn 20 points. If the participant selected a *D* response and the partner also selected a *D* response, then both partners would earn 0 points. If the participant selected the *D* response and the partner selected the *C* response, then the participant would earn 20 points, and the partner would lose 5 points. At the end of the 30 trials, each participant and partner would look at each other's responses and calculate the total number of points for each. We carried out this procedure exactly as explained to the partic-

ipants. Because a C response provided both the individual making that response and the individual's partner with the opportunity for a gain, we operationalized it as a cooperative response. The outcome of interest was the number of cooperative, or C, responses given by each of the participants.

Results

The participants' average score for emotional intelligence was 131.61 ($SD = 14.23$). The average number of cooperative responses was 20.05 ($SD = 3.88$). Those with higher scores for emotional intelligence had significantly more C (cooperative) responses, $r(37) = .72, p < .0001$ (one-tailed).

STUDY 5

Emotional Intelligence and Relations With Others

Many aspects of emotional intelligence—understanding others' emotions, having the ability to help others regulate their moods positively, and being able to regulate and harness one's own emotions when interacting with others—may be foundations for building good relationships. Thus, one would expect persons who have higher emotional intelligence to be more socially connected and to have better relationships. Good relationships fulfill basic needs for belonging and nurturance; the social support provided by relationships buffers the negative impact of life stressors (House, Robbins, & Metzner, 1982; Oxman, Berkman, Kasl, Freeman, & Barrett; 1992; Pilisuk & Parks, 1986).

In Study 5, we hypothesized that the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence would have higher scores for close relationships (i.e., would report more associations and more emotional involvement with others) than would those with lower scores for emotional intelligence.

Method

Participants

The participants in Study 5 were 43 college students and church attendees (23 women, 16 men, 4 did not report gender; mean age = 24.77 years, $SD = 7.74$) in the southeastern United States.

Procedure

The participants completed the measure of emotional intelligence described in Study 1 (Schutte et al., 1998) and the Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation–Behavior Inventory (FIRO–B; Schutz, 1978). The FIRO–B mea-

tures wanted and expressed (a) inclusion, (b) affection, and (c) control in interpersonal relationships. *Inclusion* refers to the degree to which a person associates with others; *affection* refers to how emotionally involved with others a person becomes; and *control* refers to the extent to which a person assumes responsibility, makes decisions, and dominates in relationships. Because dominating a relationship is not usually adaptive, we did not predict a connection between emotional intelligence and control.

On a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = *never*, 6 = *usually*), respondents rate themselves on such items as "I join social groups" for the Inclusion subscale, "I try to have close relationships with people" for the Affection subscale, and "I am easily led" (reverse coded) for the Control subscale. Higher scores on the preceding 18-item subscales indicate more of the quality being measured. Schutz (1978) reported an internal consistency of .94 for the FIRO-B and evidence of validity that included expected group differences, association with related constructs, and prediction of the outcome of social interactions.

Results

The participants' average emotional-intelligence score was 131.56 ($SD = 15.67$), and their average FIRO-B score was 18.77 ($SD = 9.52$). Higher emotional-intelligence scores were significantly related to higher scores on the total FIRO-B, $r(42) = .33, p < .015$ (one-tailed). Higher emotional-intelligence scores were also significantly related to higher scores on the Inclusion subscale, $r(42) = .31, p < .021$ (one-tailed), and to higher scores on the Affection subscale, $r(42) = .29, p < .029$ (one-tailed). Scores for emotional intelligence were not significantly related to scores on the Control subscale.

STUDY 6

Emotional Intelligence and Marital Satisfaction

Qualities such as understanding others' emotions, having the ability to help others regulate their moods positively, and being able to regulate and harness one's own emotions when interacting with others may help individuals build satisfying long-term relationships. Therefore, one would expect that persons with higher emotional intelligence would have better marital relationships and greater marital satisfaction than would those with lower emotional intelligence. Researchers (Kulik & Mahler, 1993; Schwarzer & Leppin, 1989) have illustrated the importance of marital relationships in maintaining good mental and physical health.

In Study 6, we hypothesized that the participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence would have better marital relationships as manifested by higher scores for marital satisfaction than would those with lower scores for emotional intelligence.

Method

Participants

Thirty-seven married employees (22 women, 13 men, 2 did not report gender; mean age = 48.14 years, $SD = 14.32$) in two health care settings in the southeastern United States volunteered to participate in Study 6.

Procedure

Each participant completed (a) the measure of emotional intelligence described in Study 1 (Schutte et al., 1998), (b) a version of the measure of emotional intelligence modified for the present study so that the respondents rated their spouses on each item, and (c) the Locke–Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (Locke & Wallace, 1959). The reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the spousal-rating version of the emotional intelligence measure used in the present study was .92.

The 15-item Locke–Wallace Marital Adjustment Test consists of (a) an 8-item section assessing on a 6-point Likert-type scale (1 = *always disagree*, 6 = *always agree*) the extent to which spouses agree on issues such as handling of family finances and (b) a 7-item section in which respondents rate their satisfaction with the marriage by using individually anchored and differentially weighted response options to answer questions such as “Do you confide in your mate?” Higher scores indicate greater marital satisfaction. The Locke–Wallace Marital Adjustment Test has a reported internal consistency of .90 and the following evidence of validity: Couples who scored lower reported more negative communication than did those who scored higher, and persons in troubled marriages scored lower than did those in good marriages (Schutte & Malouff, 1995).

Results

The participants' average emotional-intelligence score was 121.13 ($SD = 13.18$), their average emotional-intelligence rating for their spouses was 115.76 ($SD = 19.39$), and their average marital-satisfaction score was 108.08 ($SD = 26.60$).

The participants with higher scores for emotional intelligence reported significantly greater marital satisfaction, $r(36) = .51$, $p < .0005$ (one-tailed), than did those with lower scores for emotional intelligence. In addition, those who rated their partners higher for emotional intelligence reported significantly greater marital satisfaction, $r(36) = .72$, $p < .0001$ (one-tailed), than did those who rated their partners lower for emotional intelligence. We calculated a composite emotional-intelligence score for each couple by summing the scores of the participant and his or her partner. The composite emotional-intelligence scores were also significantly related to scores for marital satisfaction, $r(36) = .75$, $p < .0001$ (one-tailed).

STUDY 7

Preference for Emotionally Intelligent Partners

The results of Studies 1 through 6 provided evidence that higher emotional intelligence was associated with better interpersonal relations. Because of the association between emotional intelligence and qualities such as empathic concern, greater cooperation, and closer relationships, one might expect that others would perceive individuals with higher emotional intelligence as desirable relationship partners. However, some researchers have suggested that, for certain characteristics, such as the ability to understand facial cues (Brauer & DePaulo, 1980) and social characteristics (Hill & Stull, 1981), people prefer similarity to their own characteristics in those of their partners. Thus, one might make the counterargument that people would prefer partners similar in emotional intelligence, which would result in no overall preference for emotionally intelligent partners. Those high in emotional intelligence would prefer others high in emotional intelligence, whereas those low in emotional intelligence would prefer others low in emotional intelligence. Because of (a) the connection between emotional intelligence and the building blocks of relationships and (b) the association between emotional intelligence and indices of relationship quality, we predicted that the participants would perceive persons with higher emotional intelligence as more desirable partners. We tested that hypothesis in Study 7, an experimental study in which we systematically varied emotional intelligence in descriptions of prospective dating partners. The respondents indicated how satisfying they anticipated relationships with the prospective partners would be.

Method

Participants

In Study 7, the participants were 52 unmarried college students (28 women, 24 men; mean age = 19.08 years, $SD = 1.10$) from the southeastern United States.

Procedure

Each participant read descriptions of four prospective dating partners and then rated on a Likert-type scale (1 = *not satisfying*, 4 = *very satisfying*) how satisfying a dating relationship would be with each partner. The prospective dating partners had gender-neutral names (e.g., Pat, Chris), and we varied the descriptions as follows: (a) The first dating partner had difficulties recognizing and managing emotions both in the self and others; (b) the second was adept at recognizing and managing his or her own emotions but had difficulty in recognizing and managing the emotions of others; (c) the third was adept at recognizing and managing others' emotions but had difficulties in recognizing and managing his or her own emotions; and (d) the fourth was adept at recognizing and managing emotions both in the self and others. We presented the descriptions in random order.

Results

The participants gave the highest average rating to the prospective dating partner who was adept at recognizing and managing emotions in both the self and others ($M = 3.31$, $SD = .81$); they gave lower ratings to the prospective partner who could recognize and manage emotions in the self but not in others and to the prospective partner who could recognize and manage emotions in others but not in the self ($M_s = 2.28$ and 2.48 , $SD_s = 0.85$ and 0.87 , respectively); and they gave the lowest rating to the prospective partner who could recognize and manage emotions neither in the self nor in others ($M = 1.48$, $SD = .70$). According to planned repeated comparisons, the partner who was adept at recognizing and managing emotions in both the self and others received significantly higher ratings than the partner who could recognize and manage emotions in the self but not in others and the one who could recognize and manage emotions in others but not in the self, $t(51) = 10.71$, $p < .0001$. Furthermore, the second and third partners just noted received significantly higher ratings than did the partner who was adept at recognizing emotions neither in the self nor in others, $t(51) = 6.65$, $p < .0001$.

Discussion

Overall, the results of the seven studies supported the proposition that emotional intelligence was connected to interpersonal relations in the U.S. populations sampled. In Studies 1 and 2, higher scores for emotional intelligence were related to higher scores for empathic perspective taking but were not related to scores for empathic fantasy, empathic concern, and personal distress, perhaps because those three types of empathy are less emotionally adaptive than empathic perspective taking. In Study 1, higher scores for emotional intelligence were related to higher scores for self-monitoring—that is, the ability (a) to understand others' emotions and behaviors, (b) to understand environmental contexts, and (c) to modify self-presentation accordingly. In Study 3, higher scores for emotional intelligence were related to higher scores for social skills. By using a prisoner's dilemma paradigm in Study 4, we found that the participants with higher emotional-intelligence scores showed more cooperative responses toward their partners. In Study 5, the participants with higher emotional-intelligence scores desired and experienced more inclusion and more affection, but not more control, in relationships. In Study 6, higher emotional-intelligence scores were associated with higher scores for marital satisfaction. In Study 7, the participants anticipated more satisfaction in relationships with prospective partners with high emotional intelligence.

Together with a previous finding that emotional intelligence (as assessed by a performance measure) was associated with empathy (Mayer et al., 1999), the present findings suggest that emotional intelligence is associated in several important ways with interpersonal relationships. Qualities expected to facilitate more successful relationships (e.g., empathic perspective taking, self-monitoring,

good social skills, cooperation) were related to emotional intelligence. Furthermore, higher emotional-intelligence scores were associated with better relationships, as operationalized by higher scores for close and affectionate relationships and for marital satisfaction.

In Studies 1 through 6, we used correlational designs. Thus, it is not possible to determine whether higher emotional intelligence caused more empathic perspective taking, more self-monitoring, better social skills, more cooperative behavior, closer relationships, and greater marital satisfaction. More empathy, more self-monitoring skills, more cooperative behavior, good social skills, closer relationships, and a good marriage may have resulted in higher emotional intelligence among the participants. Alternatively, a third variable may have accounted for the associations.

Using an experimental design in Study 7, we shed some light on the causal direction by showing that the participants anticipated greater satisfaction in relationships with partners high in emotional intelligence. That finding is important because it suggests that emotional intelligence is perceived as a desirable quality and leads to interpersonal attraction. Furthermore, if the participants in Study 7 drew on their experiences with others high or low in emotional intelligence in rating the prospective partners, one might conclude that, in the past, they had the most satisfying relationships with persons high in emotional intelligence. Hence, emotional intelligence seems to facilitate interpersonal relations.

Although researchers (e.g., Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Schutte et al., 1998) have conceptualized emotional intelligence as relatively stable, it may be possible to increase emotional intelligence through intensive training. If it is possible to increase it, then future researchers could design studies to investigate whether increasing people's emotional intelligence can heighten their empathy, self-monitoring, social skills, cooperation, relationship ties, and marital satisfaction.

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