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The CEU SOP community: Difficulty, level of emotional intelligence, and their coping approaches in new flexible learning modalities

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Abstract

All Higher Education Institutions were mandated by the Commission on Higher Education to continue amid the COVID-19 pandemic through flexible learning. This sudden shift was challenging for both faculty and students as it affects their level of emotional intelligence (EI). This study determines the correlation of EI level and coping approaches of CEU pharmacy community during flexible learning despite COVID19. This cross-sectional correlational study employed a descriptive quantitative method. 291 student respondents were obtained using proportionate stratified random sampling. Contrastingly, 14 SOP faculty of second semester A.Y. 2021-2022 were included. There was an online survey containing three sections for socio-demographic profile and the difficulties encountered during flexible learning, level of EI, and coping approaches applied. Subsequently, the percentage and frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation, and profile analysis were utilized to analyze and interpret the data collected. The teachers were reported to have good EI domains except for self-regulation, which could be improved, and students have satisfactory EI. They recognized their self-regulation (64.58) and empathy (65.26) better than the teachers who realized their self-awareness (75.60), motivation (64.29), and social skills (73.21) better. Both respondents preferred problem-focused as their coping strategy. The teacher respondents had a good approach to problem solving (55.13), fair to their emotions (43.75), and poor to their avoidant coping (18.97). While, students had a good approach to problem solving (56.75) and fair to their emotions (47.57) and avoidant coping (26.71). Hence, there was no significant difference between the respondents' socio-demographic profile and EI as well as coping mechanisms.

Keywords: Flexible Learning; Modalities; Emotional Intelligence; Coping Approaches; CEU SOP Community

1. Introduction

Adapting flexible learning in the educational system amidst the COVID-19 pandemic affects the faculty and students' EI level. This learning setup causes stress and challenges such as learning module preparation, internet connectivity, and distractions encountered for teachers [1], whereas time allotment/schedule, internet connection status, and distractions experienced for students that affects both their level of EI [2]. They use different coping approaches including the problem-focused, emotion-focused and avoidant-coping to manage such challenging circumstances [3]. The study aims to identify the difficulty, EI level, and coping approaches applied by the CEU community during flexible learning and determine whether there is a significant difference in the socio-demographic profile of the respondents

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and their level of EI and coping approaches. Hence, this was conducted to recognize the significance of EI and coping approaches, particularly to the students and teachers, and how flexible learning affects their level of EI, specifically in their performance during an online class.

2. Material and methods

This cross-sectional correlational study employed a descriptive quantitative method. The 305 respondents of the study were Pharmacy faculty handling professional courses and full-time students from different year levels officially enrolled in the academic year 2021-2022. 291 student respondents were obtained using proportionate stratified random sampling, and the sample size was acquired using the Cochran formula. On the other hand, 14 SOP faculty members were included. An online survey was conducted through Google forms to gather data and was distributed via CEU Gmail. There was a set of questionnaires containing three sections for socio-demographic profile and the difficulties encountered during flexible learning, level of emotional intelligence, and coping approaches applied. The study protocol was submitted to the Centro Escolar University Institutional Ethics Review Board (IERB) for review and evaluation before the conduct of the survey. A descriptive analysis was performed to describe the profile of the respondents in terms of their demographic characteristics. The level of emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms of the respondents were analyzed using summary statistics such as the mean and standard deviation of the computed aggregate scores for each domain. To determine if their level of emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms were influenced by their demographic characteristics, profile analysis, a multivariate technique, was used as a statistical treatment of the data.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Demographic Profile of Faculty Member Respondents

This table presents the findings of the demographic profile of SOP faculty member respondents according to age, gender, and years of teaching experience.

Table 1 The Demographic Profile of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
25 to 34 yrs. old	8	57.1%
35 yrs. old and above	6	42.9%
Gender		
Female	9	64.3%
Male	5	35.7%
Years of Experience		
1 to 5 years	1	7.1%
6 to 10 years	10	71.4%
11 years and above	3	21.4%

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the faculty member respondents. Based on the age structure of the sampled faculty members, it appears that they belong to the Millennials and Generation X age brackets, where 64% are female. Evaluating the distribution with respect to their years of teaching experience, it is shown that at least 92% are tenured, having been in their field for at least 6 years, with the longest at 35 years of service.

3.2. Demographic Profile of Student Respondents

This table presents the findings of the demographic profile of SOP student respondents according to age, gender, year level, and number of siblings.

Table 2 The Demographic Profile of Students of the CEU SOP Community

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Below 21 yrs. old	140	48.1%
21 yrs. old and above	151	51.9%
Gender		
Female	234	80.4%
Male	57	19.6%
Year Level		
First Year	80	27.5%
Second Year	73	25.1%
Third Year	78	26.8%
Fourth Year	60	20.6%
Number of Siblings in School		
0	54	19.5%
1	112	40.4%
2	64	23.1%
3	30	10.8%
4	6	2.2%
All graduates	11	4.0%

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the student respondents. Based on the results, 48% are at least 18 years old, with 52% being over 21 years of age. In the sample, female students outnumbered male students by 80%, which has been a common trend in the field of Pharmacy. The distribution of the respondents was split similarly across all year levels, with at least 20% of each year level represented in the sample. When asked about their number of siblings, 70% had at least one attending school currently.

3.3. Difficulties Encountered During Flexible Learning According to Faculty Members

Table 3 Difficulties Encountered during Flexible Learning by Faculty Members of the CEU SOP Community

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Hours to prepare a module		
4-6 hours	4	28.6%
7-9 hours	6	42.9%
10 hours and above	4	28.6%
Internet stability status		
Intermittent	5	36.4%
Stable	9	63.6%
Internet connectivity as a problem		
Yes	3	21.4%
No	11	78.6%

Given the COVID pandemic, schools have been closed and teachers have been forced to adjust to a new normal in the online setting. The table presents the difficulties encountered by faculty respondents during flexible learning.

Table 3 shows the difficulties encountered during flexible learning by the faculty member respondents. When asked about their internet stability status, 36% of the faculty members reported it as intermittent; however, 79% of them do not necessarily view their internet connectivity as a problem. In addition, while there wasn't a significant difference between the brackets, 43% of the faculty members take 7 to 9 hours at the very least to prepare a module for their classes.

3.4. Difficulties Encountered During Flexible Learning According to Students

Schools have been closed due to the COVID epidemic, and students have been forced to acclimate to a new normal in the online context. The table depicts the difficulties the students' respondents faced during flexible learning.

Table 4 Difficulties Encountered during Flexible Learning by Students of the CEU SOP Community

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Number of hours spent on school activities		
1 to 3 hours	19	6.5%
4 to 6 hours	89	30.6%
7 to 9 hours	76	26.1%
10 hours and above	22	7.6%
Depends	85	29.2%
Devices used for online classes		
Cellular phone	252	86.6%
Tablet	83	28.5%
Laptop	270	92.8%
PC	52	17.9%
Internet Stability Status		
Intermittent	185	63.6%
Stable	106	36.4%
Distractions Encountered		
Environmental noise	243	83.5%
Social media and text notifications	250	85.9%
Slow internet connection	159	54.6%
Interruption by family members	226	77.7%
Important events that need accompaniment	68	23.4%
Household chores	100	34.4%
House responsibilities	41	14.1%
Video games	11	3.8%
Mental block	44	15.1%
Work and meetings	2	0.7%

Table 4 shows the difficulties encountered during flexible learning by the student respondents. Based on the number of hours students spent on school activities shown in the table above, 31% of them spent 4 to 6 hours, while 29% say it depends on the activity. The majority of the students use a laptop or a cellular phone to perform the activities. Similar to the faculty members, 64% also report their internet as intermittent, which could be due to the poor internet infrastructure of the country. Evaluating the distractions encountered, the majority are due to environmental noise, which includes noise emitted by people, vehicles, and animals, as well as social media and text notifications, and interruption by family members.

3.5. The Perceived Level of Emotional Intelligence during Flexible Learning According to Faculty Members

This table exhibits the findings of the faculty member respondents' level of emotional intelligence during flexible learning.

Table 5 Statistics of the Emotional Intelligence of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Interpretation
Self-Awareness	75.60	10.57	50.00	100.00	Good
Self-Regulation	52.98	8.40	41.67	100.00	Good
Motivation	64.29	16.80	41.67	100.00	Good
Empathy	60.12	12.73	33.33	75.00	Good
Social Skills	73.21	20.20	25.00	100.00	Good

Scale: Excellent - 76 to 100, Good - 51 to 75, Fair - 26 to 50, Poor - 0 to 25

Table 5 shows the perceived level of emotional intelligence in terms of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills of faculty member respondents. Based on the mean scores, it could be inferred that the respondents have positive and good perceptions regarding their emotional intelligence, especially self-awareness (mean = 75.60), motivation (mean = 64.29) and social skills (mean = 73.21). However, all aspects, especially self-regulation (mean = 52.98), could still be improved.

3.6. The Perceived Level of Emotional Intelligence during Flexible Learning According to Students

This table shows the perceived level of emotional intelligence of the students during flexible learning.

Table 6 Statistics of the Emotional Intelligence of Students of the CEU SOP Community

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Interpretation
Self-Awareness	70.90	16.71	8.33	100.00	Good
Self-Regulation	64.58	15.29	25.00	100.00	Good
Motivation	59.08	17.45	0.00	100.00	Good
Empathy	65.26	13.86	25.00	100.00	Good
Social Skills	68.61	17.78	16.67	100.00	Good

Scale: Excellent - 76 to 100, Good - 51 to 75, Fair - 26 to 50, Poor - 0 to 25

Table 6 shows the perceived level of emotional intelligence in terms of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills of student respondents. Based on the mean scores, it could be inferred that the respondents have positive and good perceptions regarding their emotional intelligence. Students perceive their self-regulation (mean = 64.58) and empathy (mean = 65.26) better, in contrast to the faculty members' scores who perceive their self-awareness, motivation, and social skills better.

3.7. The Emotional Intelligence Coping Strategies According to Faculty Members

This table exhibits the emotional intelligence coping strategies applied of the teacher respondents.

Table 7 Statistics of the Coping Mechanisms of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Interpretation
Problem-focused	55.13	12.23	31.25	75.00	Good
Emotion-focused	43.75	9.25	18.75	56.25	Fair
Avoidant Coping	18.97	12.16	0.00	50.00	Poor

Scale: Excellent - 76 to 100, Good - 51 to 75, Fair - 26 to 50, Poor - 0 to 25

Table 7 shows the scores of the faculty member's primary coping styles on the subscales of problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidant coping. Based on the mean scores, it could be inferred that the respondents have good psychological strength and a practical approach to problem-solving (mean = 55.13), a fair approach to regulating their emotions (mean = 43.75) associated with a stressful situation, and poor physical or cognitive efforts to disengage from the stressor, which is indicative of avoidant coping (mean = 18.97).

3.8. The Emotional Intelligence Coping Strategies According to Students

This table presents the emotional intelligence coping strategies applied by the student respondents.

Table 8 Statistics of the Coping Mechanisms of Students of the CEU SOP Community

Variable	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Interpretation
Problem-focused	56.75	11.81	15.63	75.00	Good
Emotion-focused	47.57	10.26	20.83	75.00	Fair
Avoidant Coping	26.71	13.23	3.13	75.00	Fair

Scale: Excellent - 76 to 100, Good - 51 to 75, Fair - 26 to 50, Poor - 0 to 25

Table 8 shows the scores of the student's primary coping styles on the subscales of problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidant coping. Similar to the mean scores of the faculty members, it could be inferred that the respondents have good psychological strength and a practical approach to problem-solving (mean = 56.75), a fair approach to regulating their emotions (mean = 47.57) associated with a stressful situation, and a fair physical or cognitive efforts to disengage from the stressor, which is indicative of avoidant coping (mean = 26.71).

3.9. Correlation of the respondent's socio-demographic information to their level of emotional intelligence According to Faculty Members

Table 9 Stage 1 and Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community

Stage 1 Profile Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	Pillai's Trace	Approx F	p-value	Remark
Age Group	0.4200	1.6291	0.2491	Null hypothesis accepted
Gender	0.5204	2.4411	0.1225	Null hypothesis accepted
Years of Experience	0.7920	1.4751	0.2340	Null hypothesis accepted
Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	F statistic	p-value	Remarks	
Age Group	4.503	0.0553	Not significant	
Gender	2.928	0.1130	Not significant	
Years of Experience	5.984	**0.0174	Not significant	

*Denotes significance at a 5% alpha; **Denotes significance at a 1% alpha

This table reveals the correlation of the faculty respondents' socio-demographic factors to their level of emotional intelligence according to faculty members by utilizing stage 1 and stage 2 Profile Analysis. This is to determine if the emotional intelligence scores are influenced by their demographic characteristics based on their age, gender, and years of experience.

Table 9 shows stage 1 and stage 2 profile analysis of the Emotional intelligence of teachers. Stage 1 profile analysis illustrates that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha, and so the null hypothesis of parallelism is not rejected. Therefore, each segment of the profile is identical, and so the researchers proceed to stage 2 of testing for equality. The stage 2 profile analysis of the emotional intelligence of teachers showed that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha, and therefore, the groups are coincident.

3.10. Correlation of the respondent's socio-demographic information to their level of emotional intelligence According to Students

This table shows the relationship between student respondents' socio-demographic factors and their level of emotional intelligence as determined by Stage 1 and Stage 2 Profile Analysis.

Table 10 Stage 1 and Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence of Students of the CEU SOP Community

Stage 1 Profile Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence of Students of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	Pillai's Trace	Approx F	p-value	Remark
Age Group	0.02037	1.4871	0.2061	Null hypothesis accepted
Gender	0.03032	2.2355	0.0653	Null hypothesis accepted
Year Level	0.04123	0.9964	0.4503	Null hypothesis accepted
No. of Siblings	0.0507	0.7325	0.7949	Null hypothesis accepted
Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Emotional Intelligence of Students of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	F Statistic	p-value	Remark	
Age Group	2.345	0.127	Not significant	
Gender	0.714	0.399	Not significant	
Year Level	0.482	0.695	Not significant	
No. of Siblings	0.0463	0.804	Not significant	

*Denotes significance at a 5% alpha; **Denotes significance at a 1% alpha

Table 10 shows stage 1 and stage 2 profile analysis of the emotional intelligence of the students based on factors including age, gender, year level, and number of siblings. The stage 1 profile analysis exhibits that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha, and so the null hypothesis of parallelism is not rejected. Therefore, each segment of the profile is identical, and so the researcher proceeds to stage 2 of testing for equality. Likewise, the result for stage 2 profile analysis of the emotional intelligence of the students stated that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha, and therefore, the groups are coincident.

3.11. Correlation of the respondent's socio-demographic information to their Emotional Intelligence coping strategies applied According to Faculty Members

The table illustrates the correlation of the faculty member respondents' socio-demographic information including their age, gender and years of experience to their emotional intelligence coping strategies applied.

Table 11 presents the stage 1 and stage 2 profile analysis of the Coping Mechanism of Teachers based on factors such as age, gender, and years of experience. For stage 1, it indicates that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha and so the null hypothesis of parallelism is not rejected. Therefore, each segment of the profile is identical, and so the researcher proceeds to stage 2 of testing for equality. Moreover, the stage 2 Profile analysis shows the stage 2 profile analysis of the Coping Mechanism of teachers. The result shows that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha, and therefore, the groups are coincident.

Table 11 Stage 1 and Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Coping Mechanisms of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community

Stage 1 Profile Analysis of the Coping Mechanisms of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	Pillai's Trace	Approx F	p-value	Remark
Age Group	0.1937	1.3215	0.3060	Null hypothesis accepted
Gender	0.1075	0.6624	0.5350	Null hypothesis accepted
Years of Experience	0.6374	2.5725	0.0662	Null hypothesis accepted
Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Coping Mechanisms of Teachers of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	F Statistic	p-value	Remark	
Age Group	0.188	0.672	Not significant	
Gender	0.061	0.809	Not significant	
Years of Experience	0.527	0.605	Not significant	

*Denotes significance at a 5% alpha; **Denotes significance at a 1% alpha

3.12. Correlation of the respondent's socio-demographic information to their Emotional Intelligence coping strategies applied According to Students

The table exhibits the correlation of the student respondents' socio-demographic information to their emotional intelligence coping strategies applied using stage 1 and stage 2 Profile Analysis.

Table 12 Stage 1 and 2 Profile Analysis of the Coping Mechanisms of Students of the CEU SOP Community

Stage 1 Profile Analysis of the Coping Mechanisms of Students of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	Pillai's Trace	Approx F	p-value	Remark
Age Group	<0.0001	0.0080	0.9920	Null hypothesis accepted
Gender	0.0244	3.5946	0.0287	Interaction exists
Year Level	0.0387	1.8891	0.0806	Null hypothesis accepted
No. of Sibling	0.0258	0.7436	0.6834	Null hypothesis accepted
Stage 2 Profile Analysis of the Coping Mechanisms of Students of the CEU SOP Community				
Factors	F Statistic	p-value	Remark	
Age Group	2.411	0.122	Not significant	
Year level	0.882	0.451	Not significant	
No. of Siblings	0.644	0.667	Not significant	

*Denotes significance at a 5% alpha; **Denotes significance at a 1% alpha

Table 12 presents the stage 1 and stage 2 profile analysis of the coping strategies of students. The findings shows that one of the demographic factors is significant at 5% alpha, which is gender, and so the null hypothesis of parallelism is not rejected. Only avoidant coping mechanisms have a significant difference with the gender. Therefore, all segments of the profile except gender are identical, and so the researcher proceeds to stage 2 of testing for equality. Furthermore, the stage 2 profile analysis of the Coping Mechanism of the students indicates that none of the demographic factors are significant at 5% alpha, and therefore, the groups are coincident.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the research has established that there was no significant difference in the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and their level of emotional intelligence and coping approaches based on the professors' age, gender, and years of teaching experience as well as the students' age, year level, and number of siblings. This result can be associated with the CEU School of Pharmacy respondents' having a high emotional intelligence level and developing good coping mechanisms, allowing them to understand and manage their own emotions well. It can also be concluded that students had a similar but slightly higher degree of engagement across all coping styles compared to professors. Moreover, their level of emotional intelligence did not differ significantly by their socio-demographic profile and the coping approaches that they applied since it will be affected by the difficulties, they encountered including internet stability, learning module preparation, and distractions for professors, while time schedule, module task completion, and devices used for students. This directly indicates emotional intelligence is governed by other factors, probably on intrinsic motivation, personnel competence, and social competence. However, emotional intelligence and socio-demographic profiles may play an important role in producing more efficient and competitive professors and students. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors confirmed that there is no conflict of interest.

Statement of ethical approval

The authors confirmed that the study protocol and informed consent underwent and approved by the Institutional Ethics Review Board.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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