

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AMONG YOUNG RELIGIOUS

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Abstract: Emotional Intelligence Among Young Religious. The young religious in formation try to form his/herself to be emotionally matur person in order to face the challenges of his/her vocation and to establish meaningful and harmonious relationships with others. To achieve this goal, formation program offers emotional intelligence to young religious. Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to know, appraise, and manage one's emotion. At the same time, it is the ability to perceive and recognize emotional in others, and the ability to regulate emotions in ways that promote emotional growth. It also includes the ability to facilitate thoughts. The main components of emotional intelligence are knowing one's emotion, managing emotion, motivating oneself, recognizing emotion in others, and handling relationship.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, formation in religious

Abstrak: Kecerdasan Emosional Bagi Para Religius Muda. Para formandi yang berada pada jenjang formasi dasar berusaha membentuk dirinya menjadi pribadi yang lebih matang dan dewasa dalam hal emosi agar mereka mampu menghadapi berbagai tantangan dalam panggilannya dan membina hubungan yang bermakna dan harmonis dengan orang lain. Untuk mencapai tujuan ini, maka program-program formasi menawarkan salah satu tema kepada para formandi yaitu membangun kecerdasan emosi. Dan kecerdasan emosi diartikan sebagai kemampuan untuk mengenal, menilai, dan mengelola perasaan pribadi. Pada saat yang sama, kecerdasan emosi juga berarti kemampuan untuk memahami dan mengakui emosi orang lain, dan kemampuan untuk mengatur emosi agar bertumbuh dengan lebih baik. Kecerdasan emosi juga termasuk kemampuan untuk memperlancar cara berpikir yang sehat/rasional. Komponen-komponen utama kecerdasan emosi adalah mengenali emosi diri, mengelola emosi, memotivasi diri sendiri, mengenali emosi orang lain, dan membina hubungan.

Kata kunci: kecerdasan emosi, pembentukan dalam hidup religius

INTRODUCTION

Religious men and women are constantly challenged to keep up with the pace of changes and developments in the modern world which is marked by continual change and renewal. To face these challenges properly in religious life, young person who enter religious congregations must adergo a process of growth and maturity in what is called "the formation process". In this connection, religious congregations have sought the help of contemporary sciences, especially in the area of psychology, particularly in the aspects of mental health and emotions, self esteem, psychological testing, anxiety, self concept and burn-out.

In recent years, a concept that has made waves all over different fields is emotional intelligence. The concept of emotional intelligence refers to "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand

emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to reflectively regulate emotions in ways that promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer, Cirochi, & Forgas, 2015: 10).

Emotional intelligence has received increasing attention in a variety of literature bases, such as education, business and organizational psychology (Maddona & Gainor, 2001: 131-139). Is is now highly recognized by managers, employers, psychologists, and individual alike. Emotional intelligence has been positively associated with the different aspects of a person like IQ, interpesosnal relationship, empathy, life adjustment, self-esteem, success, leadership, age, and gender (Bar-On, 1997; 2002).

Even though the role of emotional intelligence in many fields has been well established, its role and possible relevance in religious life, especially among young religious men and women in formation has yet been studied. Emotional intelligence may have

an important role in the religious formation because it can help the young religious in formation to achieve emotional balance (Svodo, 1998: 353-357). Because there seem to be a lack of research dealing with the role or relevance of emotional intelligence in religious life, this study intends to be an opener in this area, concretely by finding out the importance of emotional intelligence among young religious in formation.

This section begins with literature and studies on formation among religious. It then presents the different definitions of emotional intelligence and some studies done on the subject. It also discusses literature that show why emotional intelligence may be important for formation among young religious in religious life.

FORMATION IN RELIGIOUS

When a young men and women enter a religious congregations, he/she must be oriented into the ways of his/her call and mission. In religious life, this orientation is done in what is called religious formation. This is a process of gradual unfolding and it encompasses all dimensions of the individual personality. Formation calls for a realistic knowledge of self and for adequate development of personal gifts. It requires frequent adjustments and constant growth in both personal and intra-personal levels, and at the same time, a constant renewal of the motivation for living a religious life.

The task of the formation process is to help young religious achieve “the total consecration to God in the following of Jesus Christ at the service of the Church” (Pope Paul VI, 1976: 30, #65). This task is achieved by bringing about integration and maturity in the lives of young religious. This implies that the stages of formation or the formation process must help the young religious grow towards human and religious maturity (Gray, 1994: 107-119).

To achieve all the goals and objectives of formation of young religious, formation programs must adjust to the needs of the modern world. The United States Conference of Bishops (2002) mentioned in their strategies and plans for formation that “the church and the society in which we live have not stood still. God still calls us, but our ways supporting that call may have changed. We need to look at new ways to help create an environment in which the young religious can say “yes” to religious life” (p. 1). In his message for the World Day of Vocations, John Paul II (2002) confirmed what the U. S. Bishops had said. John Paul said: “It is necessary to adopt all means to ensure that vocations to the priesthood and conce-

crated life are continuously at the center of spirituality, of pastoral action, and prayer of the faithful” (#3).

In this connection, religious life has tried to adjust to the modern realities and needs by incorporating into formation programs for young religious, concepts or tools from the modern world. Religious life has attempted to follow cultural trend of integrating emotional components into formation training and community life. Religious congregations are interested in theories and techniques which may help improve and mature the religious vocation, especially of those in formation. In this sense, young religious are assisted in their formation according to their level of development (Bebano, 1998: 69-85).

During the last decade, a new concept in particular that has been given attention in studies and different researches is emotional intelligence. However, it seems, to the knowledge of this researcher, that the concept of emotional intelligence has not yet been incorporated into Religious life.

The formation of young religious usually is done through stages. People who enter religious congregations have to go through certain stages of formation. Religious congregations design programs to achieve the goals of formation. In the formation stages, there should be a constant assessment of the young religious. This must be done to assure perseverance and effectiveness in the religious vocation (Rulla, 1976: 79).

There are three main stages in formation: the postulancy, the novitiate, and post-novitiate or years in temporary vows. Postulancy aims to assist young men and women to discern the call of God. This stage is also an opportunity for the young people in formation to achieve a deeper knowledge of self and others and, at the same time, they are helped in the clarification of their values, and in being aware of their consistencies and inconsistencies.

The novitiate formation recognizes individual differences and aids individuals to move ahead in the development of their selfhood. The Church in its regulation for the novitiate period states that “Novices are to be led to develop and cultivate human and Christian virtues. They are to be introduced to a fuller way of perfection of self and self-denial (Code of Canon Law, 1985: 297, #652).

Temporary vow is a stage in which young religious begin to give witness to their consecrated life. They become aware of their gifts and limitations to be able to adjust to their ministry. This is a time in which a religious should continue in his growth and find fulfillment in his vocation (The Constitutions of The Society of Divine World, 2000: 58-60).

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence became popular with the publication of a book by Daniel Goleman (1995) entitled *Emotional Intelligence. Why it can matter more than IQ?* Drawing on groundbreaking brain and behavioral research, he successfully expressed the argument that IQ is not the only critical factor in determining individual success. However, the term emotional intelligence was originally coined in 1990 by J. D. Mayer and Peter Salovey (Harmon, 2000: 43-51).

There are many definitions of emotional intelligence. Different authors have given different definitions and theories about what emotional intelligence is. Some of these theories are quoted in the research of Schute et al (2001: 523-536). Among the theories and definitions they mentioned are: Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences which encompasses intrapersonal intelligence, including knowledge of one's own emotions and thoughts; Averill and Nunley's emotional creativity theory which focuses on the values of emotional fulfillment through emotional creativity; Saarnis's theory of emotional competence which is similar to others theories of emotional intelligence but places an additional emphasis on the social contexts of emotional functioning and on emotional efficacy. Bar-On has also developed his own construct of emotional intelligence. He defines emotional intelligence as an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competences, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.

Nevertheless, the main definition of emotional intelligence comes from the main proponents on the subjects, Goleman (1995: 331-333) and Mayer and Salovey (1990: 185-211). Goleman defined emotional intelligence as knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotion in others, and handling relationships. Mayer and Salovey, in an early definition of emotional intelligence, described emotional intelligence as a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action. More recently they defined emotional intelligence as "the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to reflectively regulate emotions in ways that promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Mayer, Cirochi, & Forgas, 2015: 10).

Mehrabian's (2001: 1) definition of emotional intelligence integrated and expanded the definitions of Goleman and Mayer and Salovey. He defines emotional intelligence as emotional empathy, attention to, and discrimination of one's emotions accurate recognition of one's own and others' moods, and mood management or control over emotions, response with appropriate (adaptive) emotions and behaviors in various life situations, especially to stress and difficult situations, balancing of honest expression of emotions against courtesy, consideration and respect (i.e. possession of good social skills and communication skills). Additional, though less mentioned, qualities include selection of work that is emotionally rewarding to avoid procrastination, self-doubt, and low achievement (i.e. good self-motivation and goal management) and balance between work, home and recreational life.

Mehrabian adds to his definition of emotional intelligence the concept of emotional thinking which is an expansion of Goleman and Mayer and Salovey's reference to the use and influence emotions on thought and action.

This paper adopts Mehrabian's definition because of its integration of the major concepts of emotional intelligence, according to the major proponents, i.e., Goleman and Mayer and Salovey.

According to all definitions given above, the main components of emotional intelligence are:

First, self-awareness: Knowing one's emotions, recognizing a feeling as it happens. Self-awareness is the keystone of emotional intelligence. The ability to monitor feelings from moment to moment is crucial to psychological insight and self-understanding. People with greater certainty about their feelings are better pilots of their lives.

Second, managing emotions: Handling feelings so that they are appropriate is an ability that builds on self-awareness. People who excel in this ability can bounce back far more quickly from life setbacks and upset; finding ways to handle fears and anxieties, anger, and sadness.

Third, motivating oneself: Marshaling emotions in the service of a goal is essential for paying attention, for self-motivation and mastery, and for creativity. Emotional self-control, delay gratification and stifling impulsiveness, underlies accomplishment of every sort. People who have these skills tend to be more highly productive and effective in what ever they undertake.

Fourth, Empathy-recognizing emotions in others: Sensitivity to others' feelings and concerns and taking their perspective; appropriating the differences in how people feel about things. The roots of empathy

are the social cost of being emotionally tone-deaf and the reasons empathy kindles altruism. People who are empathetic are more attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want.

Fifth, handling relationship: The art of relationship is, in the large part, skill in managing emotions in others; social competence and social skills. These are the abilities that undergird popularity, leadership, and interpersonal effectiveness. People who excel in these skills do well at anything that relies on interacting smoothly with others; they are social stars (Goleman, 1995: 347-348).

From this point of view, a person with these components integrated in his/her life is considered to be well adjusted and emotionally skilled; deficiencies in these areas render a person socially and emotionally disabled.

Importance of Emotional Intelligence

Social scientists are beginning to uncover the importance of emotional intelligence in the fields of leadership, group performance, individual performance, interpersonal/social exchange, managing change and conducting performance evaluation. Emotional intelligence can play some sort of role in leadership, career development and work-life. In the work place, applications of emotional intelligence may include: career development, understanding people and oneself can help a person consider people-oriented careers like counseling, mental health and others. Management development – understanding and enhancing emotional intelligence may enhance certain management skills and styles (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997: 35-44).

Goleman (1995: 38-39) affirms that much evidence testifies that people who are emotionally adept who know and manage their own feelings well, and who read and deal effectively with other people feelings are at an advantage in any domain of life, whether romance and intimate relationships or picking up the unspoken rules that govern success in organizational politics. People with well-developed emotional skills are also more likely to be content and effective in their lives, mastering the habits of mind that foster their own productivity; people who can not marshal some control over their emotional life fight inner battles that sabotage their ability for focused work and clear thought.

Assessment of Emotional Intelligence

In a paper published in 2000, Cherniss presented the most important and popular measures that

have been developed to assess emotional intelligence. They are summarized in this paper.

The oldest instrument is Bar-On's (1997) Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-I). This self-report instrument was designed to assess those personal qualities that enabled some people to possess better emotional well being than others. The instrument yields scores on emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, self-regard, self-actualization, independence, empathy, intra-personal relationship, social responsibility, problem solving, reality testing, flexibility, stress tolerance, impuls control, happiness and optimism (Hein, n.d). The major limitation of this instrument is its cost. Since it is used mostly in the business and management fields, it is expensive to obtain the instrument and only a limited number of samples are allowed to be used with each purchase.

A second instrument is the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS). The MEIS is a test of ability rather than a self-report measure. The test-taker performs a series of tasks that are designed to assess the person's ability to perceive, identify, understand, and work with emotion. There is some evidence of construct validity, and discriminant validity, but none for predictive validity. Like the Baron-On EQ-I, this instrument is expensive and its usage is limited to a certain sample size.

The Emotional Competence Inventory (The ECI), the EQ Map, and Schute et al.'s (1998: 167-177) self-report measure on emotional intelligence are three instruments to measure emotional intelligence. However, these measures are in the early stages of development, the data reported are ambiguous, or the conceptual framework is based on earlier definitions of emotional intelligence and therefore, at the moment, they may not be the proper instruments to measure emotional intelligence.

Studies on Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has been found to be connected to interpersonal relationship. Schute et al (2001: 523-536) conducted seven studies to examine the link between emotional intelligence and interpersonal relationships. In each study, the participants completed the measure of intelligence developed by the researchers and a measure for a particular aspect of interpersonal relationships. These aspects are empathy, the ability of self-monitoring in social situations, good social skills, cooperation, affiliation, close effective ties and a satisfactory close relationship. Results of each study showed that participants with higher scores in the emotional intelligence had high scores for each aspect of interpersonal relationships.

In his study, Sjöberg (2001: 8) found that emotional intelligence is positively associated with successful life adjustment. His study also showed emotional intelligence to be positively related to gender, women being higher in emotional intelligence than men.

Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999: 267-298) administered the MEIS scale to a large number of participants. Results showed that emotional intelligence correlates with self-report empathy. Harmon (2000: 43-51) reported Handley's study which used the Bar-On EQ-I and found a positive relation between emotional intelligence and empathy among 1,300 US Air force recruiting personnel. This study further showed that the five factors measured by the EQ-I that were found to be the most predictive of recruitment success were assertiveness, empathy, happiness, emotional self-awareness, and problem solving skill.

Bar-On EQ-I was administered to 4,500 males and 3,200 females in United States and Canada by the Multi-Health System, Inc (1997) set out to find whether emotional intelligence was related to growth and development. They wanted to examine whether adults functioned at a higher level of emotional intelligence than adolescents. The study was made by giving the same tests to an adolescent and an adult sample. Results showed a positive outcome for their prediction of adults performing higher in their emotional intelligence than adolescents.

In the Indonesia context, research on emotional intelligence has not been extensive. Only few undergraduate and graduate theses were found to have dealt with the subject of emotional intelligence in relation to schools, company and religious life. Riyanto & Handoko (2008: 26-41) in their study described the characteristic of emotional intelligence people such as knowing one's own emotion, have ability to control emotions, understand others, and build good social relation. And Awangga (2008) explained further emotional intelligence by adding material about knowing one's emotion. First of all, the person must know his/her own self especially his/her own emotion and personality types.

Emotional intelligence has also been positively associated with self-actualization and happiness. Self-actualization is a critical emotional intelligence skill because it serves as a road map of sorts for success in life (Bar-On, 2000: 79). Research on more than 40,000 people, using the Bar-On EQ-I, has shown that people with high emotional intelligence score very high on self-actualization and happiness. In more recent review of the Bar-On EQ-I, Stein (2002) says that a study of more than 250,000 people tested worldwide has shown positive relation of

emotional intelligence to 15 specific scales measured in EQ-I. Among these scales are self-actualization and happiness. Merabian (2000: 133-139), using the General Emotional Intelligence Scale, has also reported that person with higher emotional intelligence scores have been found to show, among others, higher self-actualization, that is, the capacity to develop to one's full potential.

What these results show is that a person with a high EQ level and high self-actualization has the strength to lead a meaningful, rich, full life. People with high EQ level and high self-actualization are people who can maximize their potential. They are seen as energetic, enthusiastic, committed to their long term goals, dynamic and eager to fulfill their dreams. On the contrary low level of emotional intelligence are shown in person who do not know what to do in life and do not care much about improving themselves (Rock, 2002).

Happiness is also an important component of emotional intelligence. Hein (n.d.) affirms that being emotionally intelligent means knowing what makes you happy and knowing how to achieve it. To be particularly emotionally intelligent is to know how to achieve maximum long-term happiness with minimum wasted effort and with minimum harm. Our emotions provide the feedback to move us from unhappiness towards happiness.

The reviews of Mitten (n.d.) and Stein (2002) mentioned above, also showed the positive relationship of emotional intelligence and happiness. People with high levels of emotional intelligence are happy people who often feel good and at ease both at home and at work. People with high EQ levels are people who have a general feeling of cheerfulness and enthusiasm (Bar-On, 2002).

IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN RELIGIOUS LIFE FORMATION

Emotional intelligence may be important for religious life because emotions do have an impact on the daily lives of young religious. Emotions also affect their work. Young religious should learn to acknowledge and value feeling in others, themselves and respond appropriately. No healthy life can be built upon an unstable pathological emotional life. Psychological health and mental well being are the fertile ground upon which spirituality must build its life (Hall, 1986: 100-102).

A formator in religious life must take into consideration the psycho-emotional level of the religious in formation. As Dejoras (2000: 2-14) affirms that it

is of utmost importance for the formator to remember that emotional and psychological maturity can be reached if the seminarian is helped to recognize the different forces of life in him, to develop them according to their potentialities, to assume them in order to put them at the service of their vocation. These tasks will entail a lot of trials and errors, many doubts and crises. The formator will need to adapt his formative approaches and methods to the different moments of growth of the seminarian.

The General Assembly of Canadian Religious Conference (1982) drew up valuable guidelines for the formation teams. They affirmed that the character traits more necessary for a religious of today are well balance personality, ability to face problems, good humor, happy disposition in spite of ones' limitations, integration of one's emotion and affectivity and the ability to make choice-all leading to further growth.

Young religious in formation are on the process of growth and development and need more skills to learn especially about emotions and personality. Goleman (1995: 47-48) mentions some skills which are main component of Emotional intelligence that can be used for their good, such as: *self-awareness*: observe one self and recognizing his/her feelings; building a vocabulary for feelings; knowing the relationship between thoughts, feeling and reaction. *Personal decision-making*: examining his/her actions and knowing their consequences; knowing if thought or feeling is ruling a decision; applying these insights to issues such as sex and drugs. *Managing feelings*: monitoring "self-talk" to catch negative messages such as internal put-downs; realizing what is behind a feeling; finding ways to handle fears, anxiety, anger and sadness. *Handling stress*: learning the value of exercise, guided imagery, and relaxation methods. *Empathy*: understanding others' feelings and concern and taking their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel about things. *Communications*: talking about feeling effectively: becoming a good listener and question-asker; distinguishing between what someone does or says and your own reactions or judgments about it; sending "I" messages instead of blame.

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Self-discloser: valuing openness and building trust in a relationship; knowing when it is safe to risk talking about your private feelings. *Insight*: identifying patterns in your emotional life and reactions; recognizing similar pattern in others. *Self-acceptance*: feeling pride and seeing yourself in a positive light; recognizing your strength and weaknesses; being able to love at yourself. *Personal responsibility*: taking responsibility; recognizing the consequences of your decisions and actions, accepting your feelings and moods, following through on commitment. *Assertiveness*: stating your concerns and feelings without anger or passivity. *Group dynamic*: cooperation; knowing when and how to lead, when to follow. *And conflict resolution*: how to fight fair with community members or others; the win-win model for negotiating compromise.

CONCLUSION

The goal of formation program in religious life is to promote a gradual proses of growth and development in the candidates to the religious life. Therefore, formation programs try to maximize the potentials of young religious as human persons and also help them to integrate into themselves the values, attitudes and qualities needed to fulfill their vocation as followers of Jesus Christ.

To achieve all these goals and objectives, formation programs focus on different aspect of personality of young religious. One of these aspects is emotional maturity. A young religious needs to have emotional maturity to face the challenges of his/her own vocation and to establish meaningful and harmonious relationship considering the needs of others. Hence, the development of emotional and effective maturity is emphasized in the formation of young religious.

Emotional intelligence is one way to improve emotional maturity of young religious in formation. Emotional intelligence is also the ability to know, appraise, and manage one's emotional and young religious can learn to know his/her own self, manage his/her emotion, motivating his/herself, handling relationship with others, and using emotion to facilitate thoughts.

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