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The Informal to Formal Learning Development of Emotional Capital for Sustainable Citizenship Development

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Abstract

From the field of emotional intelligence and education, combined with an economics, sociological and psychological approaches, we will present in this talk the Emotional Capital (EC) concept and research work (which won a 2006 national Prize of the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences) and its application and impact on citizen skills. The EC is the set of emotional competencies (Gendron, 2008) that equipped people to interact with others and to know themselves. For a long time, developed through informal learning, Emotional Capital is now developed through program. The EC is an essential capital especially for children and young people at risk to enable their citizenship construction which participates to a better social cohesion, smoother human relations for their future life success in the society. This paper will present an experimentation led in Thailand on two groups of freshmen students (the experimental and control groups) which brings evidence on how Emotional Capital impact people behavior and their citizenship for a sustainable balance person development.

Key words: *emotional capital, emotional competencies, citizen skills, formal and informal education, human capital, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), The Mindfulness Based Emotional Competencies Counseling (MBECC)*

In education as at work, emotions have always been put out of the door even if the extent to which emotional upsets can interfere with mental life is no news to teachers. Pupils who are anxious, angry, or depressed don't learn; people who are caught in these states do not take in information efficiently or deal with it well. Since new insights from the field of neuropsychology, time has come to reject the Cartesian body-mind dualism and to consider that the affective domain cannot any longer be separated from the cognitive domain. Emotions are just as important as intelligence. Quality emotions and feelings help pupils give their best potential in the classroom. Also, learning environments are social environments, and learners are highly complex beings whose emotions interact with their learning in powerful ways. Psychologically-based theories have provided influential explanations of how emotional experience is produced and how it affects behaviours and can affect learning processes and lives' construction. In this presentation, based on the emotional intelligence theories introduced to psychology in a series of papers by Mayer, Salovey and Goleman, I will present a conceptual model showing that Emotional Capital (EC) defined as "*the set of resources (emotional competencies) that inhere to the person, useful for personal, professional and organizational development, and participates to social cohesion, personal, economical and social success*" is an essential capital for all as it impacts people learning process and can explain individual differences in people trajectories as for instance their career: why people do what they

do? How to explain those traditional and recurrent differences between females and males careers choices. This conceptual model won a National Prize of the *Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques* from the prestigious Académie Française, in November 2006.

Part 1. From emotional Intelligence, emotional competencies to the Emotional Capital

1.1 Emotional Intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence is not recent. Nevertheless, scientific studies on emotional intelligence from psychology fields have evolved since the 1970's. LeDoux (1987, 1989), discovering the emotional intelligence, noticed that some stimuli responsible of emotions were not treated by the cortex but at the encephalic level. The term was introduced to psychology in a series of papers by Mayer and Salovey although the issue of non-cognitive or social intelligences had been addressed by previous researchers as early as 1940. In their work, they showed that being able to direct one's emotions, as well as being able to understand and influence other people's emotional responses, went a long way towards effective adaptation to an environment. They defined emotional intelligence as: "Ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions." (1990); "the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (1997). They go into more detail, explaining that emotional intelligence consists of "four branches of mental ability": Emotional identification, perception and expression, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional understanding and emotional management. Bar-On's 1997 suggested an emotional intelligence definition: "an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures." Finally, Goleman brought wide popular recognition to the concept of emotional intelligence in his best-selling 1995 book of the same name *Emotional Intelligence*. In sum, emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of emotions as a source of energy, information, creativity, trust and connection.

1.2 Emotional Competencies

Goleman, Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso have argued that by itself emotional intelligence probably is not a strong predictor of job performance. Rather, it provides the bedrock for competencies that are. In an economic of human resources perspective, the emotional competencies as the technical competencies are essential at work and often part of the job. Thus, Goleman (1998) expanded upon Salovey and Mayer original meaning of the term emotional intelligence (EI) and divides up into several emotional competencies referring to personal and social competencies.

Personal competencies are declined into two skills. First, self-awareness concerns knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources, and intuitions. Self-awareness competence allows to identify and name one's emotional states and to understand the

link between emotions, thought and action. This competence refers to how much we understand ourselves and have confidence in our feelings and abilities. Equipped with this awareness, an individual can better manage his own emotions and behaviors and better understand and relate to other individuals and systems. The self-awareness cluster contains three competencies: emotional awareness (recognizing one's emotions and their effects), accurate self-assessment (knowing one's strengths and limits) and self-confidence (a strong sense of one's self-worth and capabilities). Second, self-regulation or self-management refers to managing ones' internal states, impulses, and resources i.e. to managing one's emotional states - to control emotions or to shift undesirable emotional states to more adequate ones. These competences refers to how well we behave under stress, or how it can be counted on to use our emotions to help us achieve ends without harming ourselves or others. The self-regulation and management cluster contains six competencies: self-control (keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check), trustworthiness (maintaining standards of honesty and integrity), conscientiousness (taking responsibility for personal performance), adaptability (flexibility in handling change), achievement orientation (striving to improve or meeting a standard of excellence), and initiative (readiness to act on opportunities).

The EI model of Goleman *et al* defines the social and personal competencies as follows. Social competencies include social awareness and social skills of communication. Social awareness refers to how people handle relationships and awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns. The social awareness cluster contains six competencies: empathy (to read, be sensitive to and influence other people's emotions; this is how sensitive we are to people, both their feelings and their potential i.e. sensing others' feelings and perspectives, and taking an active interest in their concerns), organizational awareness (reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships), service orientation (anticipating, recognizing, and meeting people' needs). Social skills concern the skills or adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others. Those competencies are related with communication, influence, conflict management, leadership attitude, change, catalyst, building bonds, collaboration, team synergy...as they allow entering and sustaining satisfactory interpersonal relationships. The social skills cluster contains six competencies: developing others (sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities), leadership (inspiring and guiding individuals and groups), influence (wielding effective tactics for persuasion), communication (listening openly and sending convincing messages), change catalyst (initiating or managing change), conflict management (negotiating and resolving disagreements), building bonds (nurturing instrumental relationships), teamwork and collaboration (working with others toward shared goals, creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals).

In an economic of human resources perspective, the emotional competencies as the technical competencies are essential at work or more or less part of the work according the jobs. Especially, they are essential in all jobs involving important human interactions (social work, education, health, services, team-managers). As Goleman *et al* stress out, those competencies can be learned developed, enhanced and used for competitive advantage. Therefore, in an economic perspective, EI refers to skills and competences useful for the job and thus the set of those emotional competencies that I named "emotional capital" (Gendron, 2004) must be analyzed as belonging to human capital in a broader sense (compared with Becker approach). As far as those competences

contribute to the productivity or to the job performance, this set of emotional competences can be seen as belonging of the human capital. Therefore, the following sections will proceed on the basis of that emotional competencies frame formulated in Goleman *et al* work and I will show that this emotional capital can differ between males and females and matter at work but already in vocational choices.

1.3 Emotional capital

Emotional capital (Gendron, 2004) belongs to human capital (HC) defined in a broad sense. Nevertheless, first coined by economists T.W. Schultz and G.S. Becker, the way it has been measured by those authors related to “General Knowledge” (Savoir) and technical skills (Savoir-Faire). Thus, all types of competencies called behavioural or “soft” competencies, or social skills produced outside of formal institutions are not mentioned explicitly and have not been measured neither taken into account in most of HC measurements.

Thus, through my model of Emotional capital (2004), I introduced those forgotten soft skills or behaviour competencies also called emotional competencies described in IE models. I defined the emotional capital as “the set of resources (emotional competencies) that inhere to the person useful for his or her personal, social and economical development (Gendron, 2004) which participates to social cohesion and has personal, professional and organizational return (Gendron, 2008). Those emotional competencies are those described in the emotional intelligence models, especially Goleman *et al.* models (see section above, Emotional competencies). The emotional competencies have an impact in the learning process, in behavioral answer and it matters in health issues.

Thus, as written above, as much research in emotional intelligence stressed, emotional competencies are useful to perform better socially, economically and personally, the set of emotional competencies can be considered as a real capital (Gendron, 2004). Emotional Capital (EC) is the set of emotional competencies (Gendron, 2009) that equipped people to interact with others and to know and understand themselves. The EC is an essential capital especially for children and young people at risk to enable their citizenship construction which participates to a better social cohesion, smoother human relations for their future success life and in the society and to allow a sustainable life long learning for people. Emotional Capital has been developed for long through informal learning, but we want to bring evidence in this paper that it can be developed through formal program, i.e with a counseling theoretical programme and applied program set up in Thailand among freshmen students facing stress.

Part2. Emotional Capital & Mindfulness Based Emotional Competencies Counseling Program (MBECC)

Can Emotional Capital be developed in a ‘formal’ way? How Emotional Capital positively impacts people behavior, their citizenship and their abilities for lifelong learning? were issues we raised and experimented in our research. Emotional Competencies reveal with brain and mind has urged us to find the intervention to develop EC in the new way. As recent researches have shown, training in mindfulness has proven to support building Emotional Competencies: conflict management, and, in

children, providing strengthening to neural circuit for self-awareness, self-mastering, and empathy (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Brown&Ryan, 2003; Shearer & Shearer, 2006; Goleman, 2008). Two theoretical counseling programmes were developed to enhance EC which called “The Mindfulness Based Emotional Competencies Counseling (MBECC)” based on the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) (Hayes et al., 1999) and “The Mindfulness-Based Emotional Intelligence Training” (Ciarrochi et al., 2007). The MBECC focused on EC concept, mindfulness training, and values clarifications according to the key concepts of ACT.

2.1 Aims and theoretical foundation of the research

ACT is the 3rd wave of Behavioral therapy, based on basic behavioral principle and Relational Frame Theory (Hayes et al., 1999). The process of ACT emphasizes mindfulness, acceptance, and values clarification in helping clients overcome obstacles in their lives such as struggle in life changing. Generally, the length of counseling intervention in ACT research varied from 2 days workshop -5 days per week for 6.5 hours each day (Blackledge & Hayes, 2001; Blackledge & Hayes, 2006; Verra, Hayes, Roget & Fisher, 2008). Concerning the length of counseling, there will be a longer period from 3 months which may be one session per week (Corey, 2007). The short time-limited or Brief Counseling will be from 1 – 12 weeks which may be 1-2 sessions per week. Thus, this study aimed to examine the length of ACT to develop Emotional Capital through Emotional Competencies on the program “The Mindfulness Based Emotional Competencies Counseling (MBECC)” by applying Brief Counseling for 3 weeks with 2 sessions per week and Marathon Counseling for 2 days with 12 hours (6 sessions, 12 hours in total) in order to compare, firstly the effectiveness of these tools on Emotional Competencies and the levels of dispositional of mindfulness of sample whether these tools were differentially effective or not. The second aim was to examine whether the level of dispositional mindfulness was affected by the intervention involving Emotional Competencies or not.

Can Emotional Capital be developed in a ‘formal’ way? How Emotional Capital positively impacts people behavior, their citizenship and their abilities for lifelong learning? These were issues we raised and experimented in our research. The purpose was to *develop and test EC programs based on ACT (Acceptance & Commitment Therapy) via the Mindfulness Based Emotional Competencies Counseling (MBECC) programs based on ACT (Acceptance & Commitment Therapy) with the comparison of 2 programs (called “Brief” & “Marathon”): experimentation led in Thailand on 3 groups of sample (2 experimental groups & 1 control groups)*

2.2 General Methodology

Sample

The sample was the 18 freshmen at the first semester-2009 with a score of emotional competencies less than 25th percentile of the Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening test of Age 12-60 (the score was below than 154). The subjects were divided in 3 groups with 6 persons per group by simple random sampling. Each group composed of the 3 High Levels of Dispositional Mindfulness (HDM) students and the 3 Low Levels of

Dispositional Mindfulness (LDM) which defined by the score of the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) (higher and lower than mean score; 63.6). The first group included 4 males (1HDM and 3 LDM) and 2 HDM females who received the MBECC program by the Brief counseling method. The second group included 4 males (1HDM and 3 LDM) and 2 HDM females who received the MBECC program by the Marathon counseling method. The third group was the control group which composed of 2 males (1 HDM, 1 LDM) and 4 females (2HDM, 2 LDM) did not receive any program. The sample was lawfully protected and human rights protected according to the ethical procedures of the research (permitted from The Intuitional Review Board (IRB) of Burapha University).

Data Collections

The 130 freshmen (49 males and 82 female) of the Faculty of Education, Burapha University completed 2 questionnaires; The Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening test of Age 12-60 (the Thai-EI) and the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). We got 26 freshmen whose the score less than 25th percentile on the Thai -EI test. They were consisted of 9 HDM students and 17 LDM students according to the score of the MASS. Grouping was done by simple random sampling with the score the MAAS for the experimental group. Thus, the 9 HDM and 9 LDM were divided into 3 groups with 3 persons, each of 3 groups consisted of 3HDM and 3LDM students. They were formed again by simple random sampling into 3 groups: 2 experimental groups and a control groups. The two experimental groups were: first group followed the “Brief” counseling, and the second group received the “Marathon”. The control group did not receive any program.

Research Procedures

The research duration was divided into 3 phases: Pre-test, Post-test, and the Follow-up phase.

Pre-test phase: The Thai-EI test was evaluated to select the sample whose score of Emotional Competencies less than 25th percentile for participating in this research and the MAAS were used to grouping the sample into the 2 experimental groups and a control group.

Post-test phase: The sample received the MBECC program in 2 difference method according to their groups; the Brief group, and the Marathon group. The control group did not receive any program. Immediately after the program finished, the 3 groups were administered the Thai EI- test. These were the EC scores of the post-test.

Follow-up phase: One month later the 3 groups were administered again for the Thai-EI test and were interviewed by the researcher.

Table 1 Experimental Procedures

	Pre experiment phase	Experiment phase	Post-experiment phase	Follow-up phase
Week	1	2 3 4	4	8
Brief Group	Pre-test	3 weeks	Week 4	
Marathon Group	Pre-test	2 days and then Post test	-	

Control Group	Pre-test	-	Post-test	
Activities	evaluated EC score and levels of the dispositional of mindfulness	Provided the counseling program	Evaluated the EC score	

2.3 Methodology of interventions and its theoretical base: The MBECC programs

Theoretical framework

The Mindfulness Based Emotional Competencies Counseling (MBECC) was developed based on the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy: ACT (Hayes et al., 1999) and the Mindfulness-Based Emotional Intelligence Training (MBEIT) (Ciarrochi et al., 2007). ACT is a psychological intervention based on modern behavioral psychology and Relational Frame Theory (RFT) that applied Mindfulness from Buddhism, acceptance, and commitment and behavior change process, in order to create and expand psychological flexibility. From the point of view of ACT, psychological flexibility means the process of contacting in the present moment fully as a conscious human being, and persisting or changing behavior in the service of changing behavior (Luoma et al., 2007)

Practical interventions

The MBECC is the group counseling program consisted of 6 sessions (2 hours per session), 12 hours in total. The MBECC focuses on EC concept, Mindfulness practice, Willingness practice, Valued Clarification, and Commitment and Behavior Change process.

The six sessions of MBECC

- 1) Orientation and Exploration: Activities are such as providing the concept of EC and mindfulness practicing,
- 2) Effective Emotional Orientation: Activities are such as identifying self adjusted of avoiding experiences and practicing Willingness skills,
- 3) Defusing from Unhelpful rules, Evaluations, and Other Symbolic Experience: Activities are such as "Say it funny" and experiencing an observer's perspective,
- 4) Being Aware of Emotions: Activities are such as practicing Yoga and Mini Meditation,
- 5) Effective Action Orientation: Activities are such as attending your own funeral to identify their values, and
- 6) Integration of All the Emotional Competencies Dimensions and Conclusion: Activities are such as practicing a mental rehearsal experience and applying to real life.

2 Kinds of Programme

- 1) The Brief MBECC conducted in 3 weeks on every Tuesday and Thursday (1 session per day)
- 2) The Marathon MBECC conducted in 2 days on the weekend (3 sessions/day)

2.4 Instrumentation

Two kinds of questionnaires were administered for the research.

1. *The Thai Emotional Intelligence Screening Test of Age 12-60* from the Department of Mental Health, Ministry of Public Health is the emotional screening test that the Department of Mental Health has constructed for Thai people. This screening test was developed from the Emotional Intelligence test of Cyber Shirk, Danaï Goleman, J.A. Cross, Shuttle et al., and Bar-On (Department of Mental Health, 2000 p. 31). The reliability and construct validity of the questionnaires have been demonstrated with samples to different types, such as students, teachers, nurses, the narcotic related juvenile delinquents, and business officers in Thailand (Chitchutvong, 2003; Lekwong, 2003; Pumipong, 2003; Suk-Erb, 2007; Tiraputtichai, 2001). This screening test is a 52-item, self-report scale with 3 categories of subscales that cluster into three second-order factors: goodness (self-regulation, empathy, and responsibility) consisting of 18 items, excellence (motivation, decision making and problem solving, and relationship skill) consisting of 18 items, and happiness (self-esteem, life -satisfaction, and mind-peacefulness) consisting of 16 items. For each item, participants were to choose whether they were agree or disagree with the statement based on 4 rating scale ranging from being “not true of me” to “true for me”. The duration time of assessment was 15-20 minutes. Scoring divided by age of range (12-17, 18-25 and 26-60 years). The ranges of normal scores for age 12-60 years were 139-173 (Department of Mental Health, 2000 p. 51).

2. *The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)* (Day-to-Day Experience). The MAAS is a 15-item scale designed to assess a core characteristic of dispositional mindfulness, namely, open or receptive awareness of and attention to what is taking place in the present. The measure took 6-10 minutes to complete. Scoring the scale, involves computing a mean of the 15 items. Higher scores reflect higher levels of dispositional mindfulness (Brown& Ryan, 2003). The MAAS was translated into a Thai version and tested for reliability by testing with the 53 freshmen who were not the subjects in this research. The reliability of the MAAS was .87.

2.5 Statistical Analysis

Research Design

We examined the effects of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) on the EC through Emotional Competencies and whether the level of Mindfulness effected on EC. Thus, this research employed an experimental design by utilizing the Multifactor Experiments Having Repeated Measures on The Same Elements: Three-Factor Experiment with Repeated Measures (Winer, Brown, & Michels, 1991, pp. 547-557). There were 2 experimental groups (2 methods of counseling) and one control group. Each group consisted of 6 subjects. We measured the scores of EC in 3 phases (pretest, post-test, and follow up).

Statistic Analysis

The data was analyzed by a MANOVA repeated measures, multivariate analysis of variance statistical test with two between-subjects variables and one within-subjects variables (Howell, 2007, p. 461), the method of counseling and the levels of dispositional Mindfulness were the between subjects variables and interval (time) was the within subjects variables. ANOVA (Analysis of Variance statistical test) was performed to analyze the test of between subjects simple effect (interval). When we found the interaction or significant of the main effects or simple effect, Pairwise Comparisons were utilized on the variable. To prevent the experiment wise error rate from inflating when the analysis was conducted (type 1 error), the alpha level was adjusted by using the Student Newman-Klues procedures. The SPSS version 11 was used to analyze in this research.

2.6 Results

Outcomes were as follows:

- (1) The Marathon MBECC and the Brief MBEC enhanced the sample's emotional competencies at the post-test and follow up phase significantly ($p < .05$).
- (2) The Marathon MBECC and the Brief MBECC increased the mean scores on emotional competencies of the experimental group higher than the control group at the post-test and follow up phase significantly ($p < .05$).
- (3) The Marathon MBECC and the Brief MBECC increased the mean scores on emotional competencies of the experimental group no significantly different, at the post-test and follow up phase; and
- (4) The scores of the 2 levels of Dispositional Mindfulness of the sample were no significantly effect on the scores of emotional competencies.

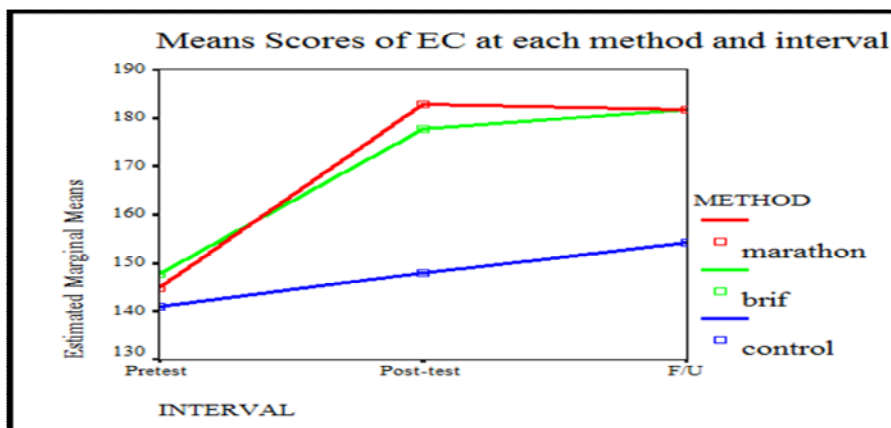


Fig1. The means score of EC at each group and at pretest, post-test, and follow up phase

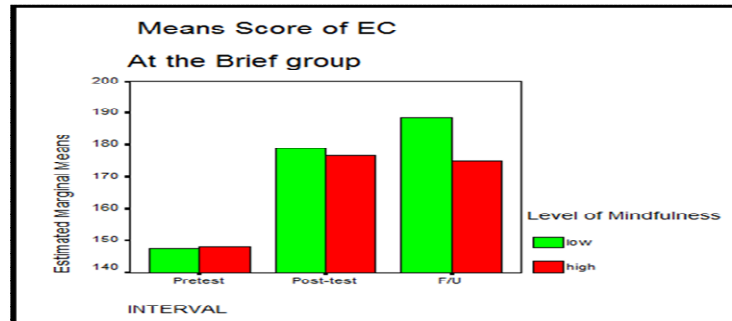


Fig2. The mean scores of EC at level of mindfulness at pretest, post-test and F/U in the Brief group

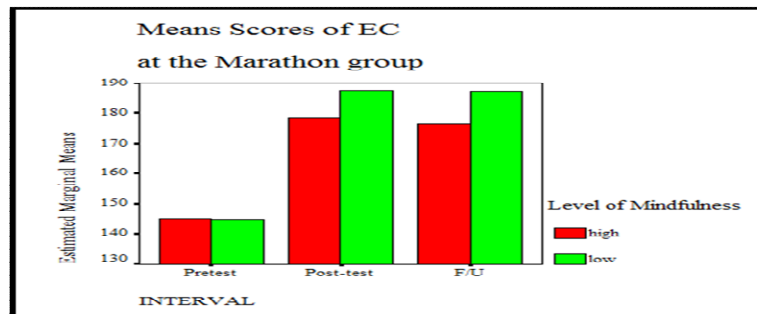


Fig3. The means scores of EC at level of mindfulness at pretest, post-test and F/U in the Marathon

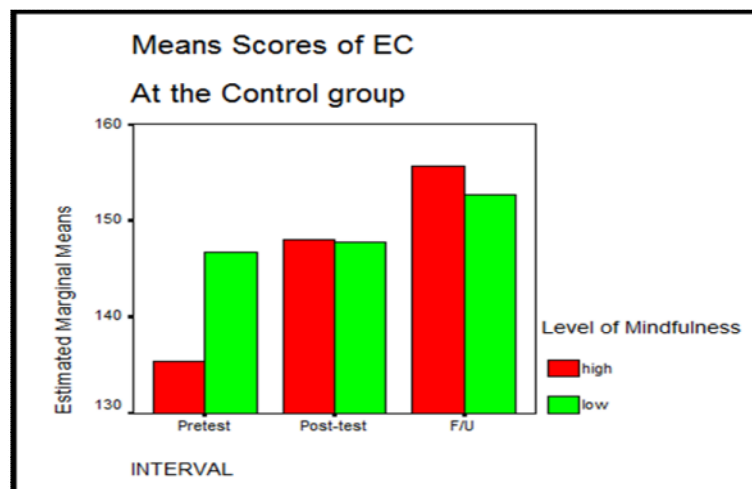


Fig 4. The means scores of EC at level of mindfulness at pretest, post-test and F/U in the control group.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter tried to bring evidence on how Emotional Capital impacts on peoples' behavior and their citizenship for sustainable balanced person development. The experimental research was conducted on the Thai freshmen of Burapha University, Thailand. The research results have shown that the MBECC based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy improved Emotional Capital on the freshmen which participates to their citizenship skills and allows a balanced lifelong learning process. Also, there were no differences between the conducted programmes in 2 days workshop or in the longer 3 week period. The length of time for developing EC with the MBECC can be adjusted to meet the needs of the participants. From the research, it was difficult for the freshmen to come often in the week. If it was possible, they would have preferred to come continuously on the weekend. Furthermore, because of the scores of the level of Dispositional Mindfulness of the freshmen were no effects on the scores of emotional competencies. It found that this programme can be successful with freshmen who have different levels of mindfulness.

** Emotional Capital (EC) won a 2006 National Prize of the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences.

Further and possible developments

- 1) Considering studying the effect of MBECC in a different culture (France).
- 2) Proving the effectiveness of the MBECC for persons of different ages, in different sectors, "lifelong EC knowledge sustainability" via further and later post-tests.

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