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# Trait emotional intelligence and achievement goals in EFL

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**Abstract:** *This study was designed to investigate the relation of Trait Emotional Intelligence with student achievement goals in the context of English as a Foreign Language. Given the challenging nature of EFL, the importance attached to teachers' emotions as the basis of a psychologically secure and motivating learning environment and students' achievement goals as a key concept for positive academic results, the present research sought to fill in a gap in the literature, shed light on the nature of the constructs as well as their potential association and broaden the knowledge base of this field of research thus facilitating Foreign Language teaching and learning. Twenty-seven in-service EFL teachers working in secondary education and their 531 students from various schools in the prefecture of Trikala participated in the present research. The results showed that teachers' Trait Emotional Intelligence failed to predict which type of goals students would pursue. It was also revealed that students' Trait Emotional Intelligence positively correlated with mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance and performance-approach goals whereas it negatively correlated with performance-avoidance goals.*

**Keywords:** *Trait Emotional Intelligence, Achievement Goal Theory, English as a Foreign Language*

**JEL Classification:** *I20, I29*

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

There has been growing interest in the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) resulting in several publications aiming to define it (Petrides & Furnham, 2003). Being one of EI conceptualisations, Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) associates emotion with intelligence and denotes the idea of effectively dealing with emotions and behavioral dispositions whose intelligent use helps individuals make successful decisions in intrapersonal and interpersonal contexts (Petrides et al., 2016). Despite its popularity and the explosion in the number of studies investigating its role in education (Perera, 2016), little research has been done to examine its power to predict various dimensions of personal functioning such as the adoption of goals (Martinez-Pons, 1997). Achievement Goal Theory (AGT) is an important theoretical strand in motivational research (Nicholls, 1989). Instead of regarding students as motivated or demotivated individuals, AGT studies the goals students perceive and pursue (Maehr, 1989), their performance and the way they think about themselves when engaged in learning (Ames, 1987).

## 2 TRAIT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Petrides and Furnham (2001) proposed a distinction between ability EI (AEI) and trait EI (TEI). AEI is one's ability to understand, assimilate, label, express and manage emotions in the self and others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Adopting a cognitive perspective, it treats EI as a standard intelligence and should be measured with maximum performance tests (Petrides, 2001). On the other hand, belonging to the personality domain (Petrides, Frederickson & Furnham, 2004), TEI is defined as an array of emotional self-perceptions which are located at the lower levels of personality hierarchical structures (Petrides, 2011) and encompasses one's perceptions of their behavioral patterns (Petrides, Pita & Kokkinaki, 2007) and capabilities to identify, interpret, regulate, manage and use emotional information (Petrides et al., 2004). Given the innate subjectivity of emotional experiences (Christou, 1999; Watson, 2000), it should be measured with self-report rather than objectively scoring instruments as there are no explicit criteria of what a correct response is (Pérez, Petrides & Furnham, 2005): only the individual can provide accurate knowledge of themselves (Ciarrochi, Chan & Caputi, 2000).

What distinguishes TEI from AEI is the methodological approach by which the construct is measured, not the facets encompassed in the models (Pérez et al., 2005). The construct - method distinction is imperative for multidimensional constructs: constructs pertain to the conceptual variables the measures assess whereas methods refer to the procedures, techniques and tests used to measure the constructs (Bobko, Roth & Potosky, 1999). Different results would be provided if different measuring approaches, even those developed to support the same model, were used (Eaton & Christou, 1997; Petrides & Furnham, 2000). Under the label of TEI, all models operationalised via self-report can be linked to psychological scientific theories (Petrides, 2011) because self-report instruments strongly intercorrelate regardless of their link to ability or mixed models (Perez et al, 2005).

TEI, the latest EI model, is a second generation model (Table 1). Being the product of systematic content analyses of other EI models and correspondent personality constructs, such as empathy and emotion expression, it encompasses "all personality facets that are specifically related to affect" (Petrides et al., 2007: 274) and can be found in more than one EI models (Petrides et al., 2007). TEI predicts convergence between many EI questionnaires providing they cover its sampling domain whichever model they rely upon (Warwick & Nettelbeck, 2004). Recognizing the significance attached to TEI in educational contexts (Petrides et al., 2004), the TEI model was used in the present research.

Table 1  
The constituent elements of Trait EI

Table 1 The constituent elements of Trait EI (Petrides, 2009:90)		
Factors	Facets	High scorers view themselves as...
Emotionality	Adaptability	... flexible and willing to adapt to new conditions
	Self-motivation	... driven and unlikely to give up in the face of adversity
	Emotion perception (self and others)	... clear about their own and other people's feelings
	Emotion expression	... capable of communicating their feelings to others
Self-control	Relationships	... capable of maintaining fulfilling personal relationships
	Trait empathy	... capable of taking someone else's perspective
	Emotion regulation	... capable of controlling their emotions
	Impulsiveness (low)	... reflective and less likely to give in to their urges
Sociability	Stress management	... capable of withstanding pressure and regulating stress
	Assertiveness	... forthright, frank, and willing to stand up for their rights
Well-being	Emotion management (others)	... capable of influencing other people's feelings
	Social awareness	... accomplished networkers with superior social skills
	Self-esteem	... successful and self-confident
	Trait happiness	... cheerful and satisfied with their lives
	Trait optimism	... confident and likely to "look on the bright side" of life

### 3 EI AND EFL

Despite the growing interest in the role of EI in education (Mortiboys, 2013), few studies are subject specific. Not surprisingly, studies on the importance of EI in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are few (Brackett & Katulak, 2006). The vast majority was conducted in Iranian university settings (e.g. Afshar & Rahimi, 2016; Motallebzadeh, 2009) and measured participants' EI levels with instruments other than the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) (Petrides, 2009). Predictable though they are, findings are quite interesting as they reveal the influence of EI on language teaching and learning.

Concerning EFL teachers, there is a dearth of empirical studies. Teachers' EI shapes their students' motivation to learn a foreign language (Alavinia, Bonyadi & Razavi, 2012), their language achievement and their attitudes towards

learning: teacher high EI levels entail improved student language performance and a positive attitude towards the learning process (Saeidi & Nikou, 2012). Teachers' EI correlates with the years of teaching experience, their age and their learners' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness (Moafian & Ghanizadeh, 2009). Yet, no positive relation is noticed between teachers' EI and their own effectiveness whereas their self-regulation and instructional effectiveness are influenced by their EI (Toussi, Boori & Ghanizadeh, 2011). Finally, low EI contributes to teacher burnout (Alavinia & Ahmadzadeh, 2012).

Regarding learners, emotional traits and competencies positively affect reading comprehension (Abdolrezaei & Tavakoli, 2012; Motallebzadeh, 2009), writing performance (Pishghadam, 2009; Shao, Yu & Ji, 2013), listening comprehension (Badakhshan, 2012; Serraj, 2013), reflective thinking (Afshar & Rahimi, 2016) and speaking (Asadollahfam, Salimi, & Pashazadeh, 2012; Bora, 2012) particularly with reference to turn taking, error correction (Pishghadam, 2009) and the involvement of other cultures (Riemer, 2003). As for vocabulary acquisition, although two studies revealed that high EI positively influences linguistic development (Razmjoo, Sahragard & Sadri, 2009; Rostampour & Niroomand, 2013), Nesari, Karimi and Filinezhad (2011) traced no important relation between vocabulary learning and EI.

Concerning overall EI levels and language learning strategies (LLS), Aghasafari (2006) states there is a positive correlation between the two whereas Akbari and Talebinezhad (2003) claim they are unrelated. Alavinia and Mollahosseini (2012) conclude that Bar-On's Interpersonal and Adaptability dimensions predict the use of listening metacognitive strategies with gender having no effect on the link between EI and using LLS. Fouladi (2012) maintains that cognitive, memory and compensation strategies are significantly associated with EI whereas affective, social and metacognitive strategies are not, adding that the LLS choice does not depend on students' high or low EI levels. Zafari and Biria (2014), though, pinpoint that high EI learners use strategies more than those with low EI with the metacognitive strategy being the most frequently used one and the affective strategy the least preferred one.

EI is central to successful language performance (Chao, 2003; Méndez López, 2011; Motallebzadeh & Azizi, 2012; Shakib & Barani, 2011) depending on students' learning habits, effort, level of engagement (Sucaromana, 2004), decision making and planning (Downey, Mountstephen, Lloyd, Hansen & Stough, 2008). However, in other studies, overall EI and language proficiency negatively correlate (Shahmohamadi & Hasanzadeh, 2011; Zarafshan & Ardeshiri, 2012) with gender playing no role in score differences (Razmjoo, 2008). Research has positively associated age, interpersonal competencies and certain subcomponents of EI (i.e. self-assertion, independence and optimism) with language performance (Shahmohamadi & Hasanzadeh, 2011). Intrapersonal EI, stress management and general mood competencies also positively correlate with language achievement (Pishghadam, 2007). Overall EI favorably influences attitudes towards foreign language learning (Oz, Demirezen & Pourfeiz, 2015) and students' willingness to communicate in the EFL classroom (Alavinia

& Alikhani, 2014). EI is also positively linked to language performance through empathy (Rouhani, 2013), personality, attitude (Rossiter, 2003) and motivation but is negatively linked to anxiety (Henter, 2014). Regarding anxiety, differences were detected with reference to EI skills, gender and foreign language background (Ergün, 2011). Higher EI levels entail lower language anxiety (Rouhani, 2013) particularly among multilingual students (Dewaele, Petrides & Furnham, 2008).

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#### 4 ACHIEVEMENT GOAL THEORY

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According to Elliot (1999: 169), "Achievement motivation may be defined as the energization and direction of competence-based affect, cognition, and behavior". It activates achievement processes guiding students towards failure or success. Achievement goals set the context within which individuals construe and respond to events. They represent one's general purposes for achieving a task (Anderman & Maehr, 1994) and the reasons or the target, say self-improvement or superiority, adopted for evaluating competence or success in the task (Urdu, 1997) mainly in educational settings (Pintrich, 2000). Two classes of goals are traditionally distinguished in the literature: mastery goals pertaining to students' desire to develop their knowledge and comprehension of academic subjects through effortful learning while evaluating success relative to their past performance, and performance goals referring to one's wish to demonstrate competence in order to gain praise or avoid displaying incompetence especially when minimum effort is exerted, and evaluate success by comparing themselves to others (Archer, 1994).

Atkinson (1957) claimed that some individuals pursue success (approach) whilst others seek the evasion of failure (avoidance). Incorporating these concepts into AGT, Elliot and Harackiewicz (1996) suggested splitting the performance orientation into performance-approach focusing on achieving success and gaining favorable judgment of one's competence when compared to others, and performance-avoidance centering on evading failure and negative comments about one's competence relative to others.

Performance-approach oriented learners seek external rewards and work on a task hoping to outperform others (Sideridis, 2007). Adoption of performance-approach goals predict positive academic self-perceptions (Skaalvik, 1997), exertion of effort and persistence (Bouffard, Boisvert, Vezeau & Larouche, 1995), successful academic results, positive exam performance (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2001), grade aspirations, challenge appraisals (McGregor & Elliot, 2002), proper strategy implementation, intrinsic motivation (Cury et al., 2002) and absorption during task involvement (Elliot & Church, 1997). However, they positively correlate with negative outcomes such as shallow processing and test anxiety (Elliot, McGregor & Gable, 1999), withdrawal from help-seeking stances and fear of failure (Furner & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2011). Therefore, performance-approach goals clearly yield divergent results.

Performance-avoidance goals denote a student's fear of receiving negative judgment, looking incompetent or being outperformed (Vassiou, Mouratidis, Andreou & Kafetsios,

2016). They are positively linked to negative outcomes: lower grades (Senko & Harackiewicz, 2005), negative emotions (Zusho, Pintrich & Cortina, 2005), poor performance, lack of interest (Elliot & Church, 1997), lack of intrinsic motivation (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996), fear of failure and incompetence (Elliot, 1999), low effort or lack of effort, surface processing, worry, disorganisation (Elliot et al., 1999), procrastination, treating learning as a threat, test anxiety (McGregor & Elliot, 2002), avoidance of challenging tasks and help-seeking lest they appear stupid (Gheen & Midgley, 1999) and inappropriate use of study strategies (Elliot et al., 1999).

Later, Elliot and McGregor (2001) recommended mastery goals be dichotomised into mastery-approach and mastery-avoidance goals. Mastery-approach oriented individuals seek to develop their understanding and skills defining success with respect to the task (Midgley et al., 1998) They interpret competence in relation to their fear of not mastering or not learning the task or avoiding misunderstanding (Pintrich, 2003). They perform tasks for the satisfaction of being engaged in an activity (Sideridis, 2007) and the acquisition of new skills (Covington, 2000). They experience positive affect (Linnenbrick, 2005) and positively valence competence believing they are adequately skilled to succeed (Vassiou et al., 2016).

The mastery-avoidance oriented ones interpret competence in relation to their fear of not mastering or not learning the task or avoiding misunderstanding (Pintrich, 2003) and usually have low ability self-perceptions (Elliot, 1999), low self-determination, poor academic results and negative parental feedback (Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Sigala & Christou, 2003, 2009). They can be adopted in an achievement context when the task is the evaluation tool (Elliot, 1999). The mastery-avoidance construct was ignored in the literature because it was considered an approach dimension (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Mastery-avoidance orientation students differ from the mastery-approach oriented ones in that the first strive to avoid losing skill and ability rather than acquire it (McCullum & Kajs, 2007).

Goals perceived as knowledge structures are subject to the influence of the information available to the learner in a specific context (Pintrich, 2000). Students may adopt both orientations at differing levels and generate differentiated results.

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#### 5 AGT AND EFL

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Only one study involving school EFL learners came to this researcher's attention. According to it, highly self-efficacious elementary school students adopt mastery goals, which entail frequent use of metacognitive self-regulation strategies whilst the exact opposite is true concerning performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals. Help-seeking characterises mastery goals whereas help-avoidance is typical of performance-avoidance (He, 2004).

In EFL, goals have been examined mainly in relation to university students learning English. Mastery goals positively correlate with positive student outcomes, interest, joy (Jahedizadeh, Ghanizadeh & Ghonsooly, 2016), persistence when facing reading comprehension difficulties

(Tercanlioglu & Demiröz, 2015), the frequent use of reading strategies (Demiröz, 2008), high scores on listening tests while effectively using top-down listening comprehension strategies (Parker, 2017), self-efficacy (Zafarmand, Ghanizadeh & Akbari, 2014), better writing outcomes (He, 2005) and making more changes between drafts including adding, deleting and reorganizing a text during composition revising (Kodman, 2013). They negatively correlate with lack of interest (Allahdadi, Jahedizadeh, Ghanizadeh, & Hosseini, 2016), student burnout and experiences of failure (Jahedizadeh et al., 2016). Adoption of mastery-approach is an indicator of metacognitive reading strategy use whereas the other three orientations are negatively linked to it with gender not being an influence (Ghavam, Rastegar & Razmi, 2011). Performance-oriented learners do not exhibit critical thinking (Yaghoubi, 2013), self-efficacy or metacognitive awareness (Zafarmand et al., 2014). Performance-approach is positively linked to failure but negatively associated with lack of interest and the teacher being a demotivator (Allahdadi et al., 2016). Performance-avoidance is a positive predictor of experiencing failure (Jahedizadeh et al., 2016). Also, there is an important connection between the use of language learning strategies and all four goal types: memory, cognitive and affective strategies significantly correlate with mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance and performance-approach though insignificantly with performance-avoidance; metacognitive, compensation and social strategies are highly associated with all four goals (Shyr et al., 2017). However, goals do not crucially influence learners' performance in computer based and paper-based tests (Jalali, Zeinali & Nobakht, 2014). Adopting the multiple goal perspective, research reveals that strong mastery/strong performance orientation predicts the level of reading comprehension and the frequency of strategy use; such EFL students use intra-sentential, inter-paragraph, intra-paragraph and monitoring/evaluating reading strategies significantly more frequently than weak mastery/weak performance-oriented ones (He, 2008). The same is true for monitoring/evaluating, revising and compensating writing strategies (He, Chang, Chen, 2011). Strong mastery/weak performance-oriented students use monitoring/evaluating, revising and compensating writing strategies more than the weak mastery/strong performance group (He, 2005). Mastery/performance-oriented students use reading strategies more effectively whereas mastery-oriented participants may choose not to comprehend significant unknown vocabulary and exhibit lower levels of comprehension (He, 2001; Valachis et al., 2009).

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## 6 AGT AND EI

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AGT and EI haven't probably been investigated in combination. After delving into the literature, the researcher didn't come across any studies examining such a relation either in a general educational context or in EFL in particular. Therefore, the researcher looked for findings linking goal orientation with TEI factors or closely related constructs. It has been observed that TEI and the adoption of personal core value goals are related (Spence, Oades, & Caputi, 2004). Mastery motivation students have high self-esteem (Heimpel,

Elliot, & Wood, 2006), are satisfied with family and social relations and experience lower anxiety, depression and social stress (Gilman & Anderman, 2006). Mastery goals influence students' academic achievements (Rahmani, 2011), subjective well-being (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999) and emotion perception (Vassiou et al., 2016). Mastery-approach and performance-approach orientations are linked to positive affect (Vassiou et al., 2016). The performance-avoidance oriented ones have low self-esteem (Heimpel et al., 2006) and negative affect (Bάσιου, 2016). Students' subjective well-being positively influences goal attainability and goal commitment (Brunstein, 1993). Self-regulation predicts goal setting and planning (Lemos, 1999). Optimism has an impact on female students' career goals and male students' career expectations (Patton, Bartrum & Creed, 2004). For students with learning disabilities, performance goal structures correlate with less positive affect (Sideridis, 2005).

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## 7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

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Although all the more studies are recognizing the positive results EI brings to the educational field (Petrides et al., 2004), only few have been conducted in an EFL context. In all probability and to the extent of this researcher's knowledge, no study to date has explored the impact of TEI on students' goals using the TEIQue and the Trait Emotional Intelligence-Adolescent Short form (TEIQue-ASF) to measure teachers' and their students' TEI levels respectively. In order to examine the potential association of the constructs, the following questions were posed:

1. Do EFL teachers' EI levels influence their students' achievement goals?
2. Is there a relation between students' EI levels and their achievement goals?

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## 8 PARTICIPANTS, PROCEDURE AND INSTRUMENTS

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Data were collected through a group of 27 in-service EFL teachers working in secondary education and their students (grades 7-10) from various schools in the prefecture of Trikala, Thessaly. The teachers' sample comprised 26 females and 1 male. The majority of the teachers (66.7%) worked in High Schools, below one quarter of them (22.2%) worked in General Lyceums and the rest (11.1%) were Vocational School teachers. As for the students, there were 531 participants. Of them 19, 77 and 271 students attended the first, second and third grades of High School respectively, 115 were in the first grade of General Lyceum and 49 in the first grade of the Vocational School. They were taught English at school for 2 hours weekly (SD=0.1).

Participant EFL teachers were recruited during a seminar organized by the School Advisor of the prefecture of Trikala. Those who consented to take part identified the learners who would like to be involved. Being fluent users of English, teachers filled in the English version of the questionnaire whereas students completed the Greek versions to avoid misunderstandings. The measures were filled in during a formal class period at each school after participants had been

assured of the anonymity of their contribution and the confidentiality of their responses which would be used for research purposes only and would not affect their grades. Data were collected within 15 days and entered into an SPSS data file for analysis. The missing data, which were no more than 5%, were not substituted (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). The TEIQue, version 1.50 was used to measure EFL teachers' TEI. It is a self report measure developed by Petrides (2009). It is directly related to TEI theory and covers the whole TEI field (Petrides et al., 2007). It comprises 153 items yielding scores on 15 facets, four factors and global TEI. Thirteen facets load on four factors: wellbeing, self-control, emotionality and sociability, whereas adaptability and self-motivation are not included in any factor and directly contribute to the global TEI score. Answers are given on a 7-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 to 7 (strongly disagree-strongly agree).

The TEIQue-ASF was used to measure EFL students' TEI. It is a 30-item questionnaire for adolescents aged 12-17. The items correspond to the 15 facets of TEI (two for each facet) yielding a score for global TEI and four factors: well-being, self-control, emotionality and sociability. Answers are given on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 to 7 (strongly disagree-strongly agree) (Siegling, Saklofske, & Petrides, 2014).

The Achievement Goals Questionnaire assesses four goal orientation constructs with subject matter (EFL) items on a six-point Likert scale. Mastery-approach, performance-approach and performance-avoidance are assessed with 6 items each and mastery-avoidance is assessed with 3 items. The rating scale system ranges from 1=not at all to 6=very much (Sideridis, 2005).

**9 DATA ANALYSIS**

First, it was examined whether EFL teachers' EI levels influence their students' achievement goals. Means and standard deviations for the sample of students for all achievement goals were computed, and are summarized in Table 2. Students scored above midpoint in all scales with performance approach achieving the lowest score of all and mastery-approach achieving the highest. The mean score for mastery-approach was 4.59 (SD=1.07) (r=3.37-5.14), for mastery-avoidance, it was 3.34 (SD=1.31) (r=2.23-3.93), for performance-approach, it was 3.19 (SD=1.26) (r=2.57-4.03) and, for performance-avoidance, it was 3.53 (SD=1.02) (r=2.98-4.30).

Table 2  
Means and Standard Deviations

**Table 2**  
**Means and Standard Deviations (SD) on student goals**

	Minimum	Maximum	Means	SD
Mastery approach	3.37	5.14	4.59	1.07
Mastery avoidance	2.23	3.93	3.34	1.31
Performance approach	2.57	4.03	3.19	1.26
Performance avoidance	2.98	4.30	3.53	1.02

Linear regression was computed using one dependent variable each time (i.e. mastery-approach, mastery-avoidance, performance-approach and performance-

avoidance) and the 15 facets of teachers' TEI as the independent variables in each analysis. Table 3 depicts the p values. It was revealed that the independent variables as a whole did not predict whether a student would adopt a specific type of goals. Thus, there was no statistical significance between the facets and mastery-approach goals ( $R^2=0.710$ ,  $p=0.167$ ), mastery-avoidance ( $R^2=0.743$ ,  $p=0.11$ ), performance-approach ( $R^2=0.736$ ,  $p=0.118$ ) or performance-avoidance ( $R^2=0.717$ ,  $p=0.151$ ). However, optimism was a significant predictor for both mastery-approach ( $p=0.007$ ) and performance-approach ( $p=0.025$ ). The facet relationships predicted the adoption of mastery-avoidance goals ( $p=0.01$ ). Adaptability was significantly linked to both performance-approach ( $p=0.044$ ) and performance avoidance ( $p=0.024$ ). Stress management was a strong predictor for students' adopting performance-avoidance goals ( $p=0.024$ ).

Table 3  
P values

**Table 3**  
**p values**

	MaAp	MaAv	PeAp	PeAv
(Constant)	0.000	0.014	0.008	0.000
Self Esteem	0.986	0.147	0.318	0.511
Emotion Expression	0.884	0.184	0.558	0.448
Motivation	0.860	0.406	0.543	0.752
Emotion Regulation	0.291	0.882	0.392	0.389
Happiness	0.100	0.563	0.364	0.200
Empathy	0.589	0.345	0.808	0.134
Social Awareness	0.070	0.679	0.435	0.184
Impulse Control	0.874	0.467	0.264	0.618
Emotion Perception Index	0.414	0.225	0.511	0.356
Stress Management	0.264	0.060	0.082	0.024
Emotion Management	0.684	0.098	0.462	0.912
Optimism	0.007	0.212	0.025	0.096
Relationships	0.091	0.010	0.062	0.174
Adaptability	0.200	0.062	0.044	0.024
Sociability	0.228	0.461	0.340	0.228

Note: MaAp = Mastery Approach; MaAv = Mastery Avoidance; PeAp = Performance Approach; PeAv = Performance Avoidance.

Then, it was examined whether students' EI levels are related to their achievement goals. Means and standard deviations for the sample of students for global TEI and the four factors were computed, and are described in Table 4. Students achieved above the midpoint in all five scales with well-being enjoying the highest mean score and self-control the lowest. In particular, the mean score for global TEI was 4.89 (SD=0.65) (r=4.42-5.24), for well-being it was 5.36 (SD=1.17) (r=4.38-6.13), for self-control it was 4.26 (SD=1.00) (r=3.38-4.69), for emotionality it was 4.86 (SD=0.79) (r=4.42-5.38) and for sociability it was 5.03 (SD=0.82) (r=4.38-5.49). The group of students with the highest global TEI also scored the highest of all in well-being and emotionality factors whereas the group with the lowest score in global TEI achieved the lowest in well-being and self-control.

Table 4  
Means and Standard Deviations

**Table 4**  
**Means and Standard Deviations (SD) on students' TEI**

	Minimum	Maximum	Means	SD
global TEI	4.42	5.24	4.89	.65
well-being	4.38	6.13	5.36	1.17
self-control	3.38	4.69	4.26	1.00
emotionality	4.42	5.38	4.86	.79
sociability	4.38	5.49	5.03	.82

Pearson correlation was performed to identify the relation between students' TEI and their goal adoption (Table 5). The results indicated that there was a positive correlation and strong statistical significance between the adoption of



mastery-approach goals and global TEI ( $r=0.120$ ;  $p=0.007$ ), emotionality ( $r=0.113$ ;  $p=0.010$ ) and sociability ( $r=0.149$ ;  $p=0.001$ ). Mastery-avoidance positively correlated with global TEI and the four factors and their relation was statistically significant. There was a positive correlation and strong statistical significance between performance-approach goals and global TEI ( $r=0.147$ ;  $p=0.001$ ) and well-being ( $r=0.178$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). As for performance-avoidance goals, they negatively correlated with global TEI and its four factors, and their association with well-being, self-control and sociability was statistically significant.

Table 5  
Correlations

		Global TEI	Well-being	Self-control	Emotionality	Sociability
MaAp	Pearson	0.120**	0.055	-0.020	0.113**	0.149**
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	0.207	0.655	0.010	0.001
MaAv	Pearson	-0.229**	-0.213**	-0.215**	-0.137**	-0.127**
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.004
PeAp	Pearson	0.147**	0.178**	0.067	0.024	0.081
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.126	0.583	0.065
PeAv	Pearson	-0.052	-0.021	-0.035	-0.060	-0.041
	Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.248	0.636	0.430	0.167	0.350

Note: \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## 10 DISCUSSION

Not being mere transmitters of knowledge but individuals with emotional behaviors, teachers have self-perceptions which affect their students' achievements. EI definitely has an impact on the learning process (Goleman, 2001); yet, concerning the relation between teachers' TEI and students' goals, the 15 facets of teachers' TEI as a whole do not predict the type of goals students adopt. Despite the lack of empirical research on such a relation, the findings are surprising given the core role teachers have, the importance attached to EI in education and the relation between emotional competencies and second language learning.

Considering that providing emotional support affects students' behaviors leading to an enhanced learning environment (Sakiz, Pape & Hoy, 2012), the fact that the significance of EI for teachers is acknowledged (Goleman, 1995) and that learning a foreign language is demanding and stressful (Krashen, 1981), the need for the provision of humanistic education (Aloni, 2002) valuing students and creating a non-threatening motivational environment is present. Therefore, optimism entailing being positive and looking at the brighter side of life (Petrides, 2001) is a significant predictor of approach orientation because having expectancies of success, optimistic teachers are engaged in their attempts to construct a challenging and positive environment for their students (Kurz, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 2007) despite potential difficulties (Carver & Scheier, 1981). Foreseeing positive student outcomes, they implement teaching methodologies that will achieve their desired goals to help students. They focus on their students' positive characteristics and exploit their talents and potential to boost their performance (Pajares, 2001). Perhaps, they trust their students' abilities and assign particular responsibilities thus

encouraging learners to try their best, identify their strengths and weaknesses and become autonomous. As Woolfolk, Rosoff and Hoy (1990) posit, classroom management techniques stimulating student autonomy result in high academic achievements.

The facet relationships predicts mastery-avoidance goals, which is surprising, because positive relationships characterise exemplary teachers (Lowman, 1996) and a teacher's approachability is important in effective learning (Jarvis, 2005). Students may wish to live up to their teachers' expectations so they fear they may not learn or not master a task. They might as well feel they have infrequent contact or fewer positive interactions with their teachers and, as a result, they are too shy to ask for clarification or help, which, in turn, can lead to misunderstandings. However, it seems reasonable for adaptability to predict performance-approach goals because flexible teachers adapt their practices to accommodate their students' changing needs by adopting alternatives in case specific strategies do not work (Flanders, 1960) and look for new resource material to illustrate or further explain key lesson points (Collie & Martin, 2016). In contrast, low scorers in adaptability are inflexible, have fixed views and are unwilling to experiment; therefore, they fail to implement strategies to motivate performance-avoidance oriented students. This may be the case with low scorers in stress management: since a decline in work performance is a behavioral manifestation of stress (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977), such teachers would be expected to avoid hectic situations, give in to tension and reject the time- and effort-demanding task of energizing poorly-performing learners. Not to mention, teacher anxiety has been linked to poor student performance, poor quality classroom climate and unsatisfactory teacher – student interactions (Forman, 1982). Extensive review of the literature shows that both AGT and EI are linked to academic performance and student achievement, engagement and motivation (Jennings, 2011). Since positive emotions stem from doing well whereas negative ones from doing poorly (Carver & Scheier, 1998) and emotions and goals predict performance (Pekrun, Elliot & Maier, 2009), the significant correlation between AGT and students' TEI was anticipated. The results indicated that mastery-approach oriented students appeared to be highly emotionally intelligent caring only about mastering the language while taking advantage of their assertiveness, social awareness and management of the emotions of others (sociability facet) whereas performance avoidance ones were not. This is in line with findings by Vassiou et al. (2016) suggesting that mastery-approach and performance-approach goals were positively associated with positive affect whereas performance-avoidance was negatively linked to positive affect. Mastery-orientation also correlated with emotionality, which supports existing findings stating that emotion perception is positively related to mastery goals (Bάσιου, 2016). In fact, emotions are significant mediators of actions to avoid or approach the acquisition of knowledge (Meyer & Turner, 2002). Spence et al. (2004) report that high EI predicts self-integrated personal goal systems which are related to well-being whereas low EI is linked to depression and less life satisfaction, which are the exact opposite of well-being. These findings obviously reflect ours which negatively correlate global TEI and well-being with performance-

avoidance. As for the negative association between performance-avoidance and self-control, it is supported by Putwain and Symes (2012), who claim that students anticipating failure experience worry and tension, which are indicative of low self-control. Also, performance-avoidance oriented students may be attracted to temptations which prevent them from pursuing specific goals and push them away from learning (Perera & DiGiacomo, 2013) and, as is shown by Updegraff, Gable & Taylor, (2004), the less an individual is oriented towards seeking reward and positive experiences, the less their judgment of well-being is based on favorable emotional experiences.

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## 11 LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

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The present research was subject to certain limitations. The teacher sample was small and comprised mainly females. Future studies should use larger and more proportionate convenience samples to examine whether gender influences TEI or student goals. Also, since participant teachers worked in secondary education, the findings should not be generalised to all school levels. Besides, focusing on EFL, the results should not be applied to other school subjects and future studies should be interested in other disciplines. Moreover, the findings were based on self-report data containing the element of subjectivity. In the future, qualitative tools such as interviews giving further insight into the constructs should be implemented.

It is recommended that teachers take the results into consideration, for an awareness of the goals students adopt may help them orient their students towards mastery goals. Teacher trainers should organise seminars to improve teachers' TEI, which can yield long-term results and motivate teachers to conduct high quality instruction (Assanova & McGuire, 2009). Developing TEI within the EFL classroom can create a positive learning environment. As for policy makers and curriculum developers, it is suggested they consider the effects the above constructs have on the teaching and learning processes and design educational interventions and materials that promote an emotionally-intelligent and mastery-oriented classroom environment.

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## 12 CONCLUSION

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The present study has contributed new evidence to the importance of TEI in the field of EFL. So far, research on EI has been preoccupied with the clarification of the construct rather than the investigation of aspects of human functioning such as the adoption of goals. TEI refers to emotion-related self-perceptions reflected in distinctive ways of thinking, recognizing, managing and expressing emotions and choosing effective behaviors. AGT provides the framework in which the "why" of human behavior is explained. Achievement goals are cognitive representations of what students desire to learn, improve or exhibit competence in. To our knowledge, this is among the few studies, if not the first one, examining EFL teachers' TEI in combination with their students' TEI and goal adoption. The findings may have

significant implications for the educational sector calling for further investigation to be conducted so that the links between successful professional performance and academic achievement can be identified.

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