

# A Mixed Methods Study on the Effect of Emotional Awareness Exercises on Adaptiveness in Coping and Empathy with Preservice Teachers in Mixed Reality Simulations.

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**Research Topics:** Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Adaptiveness in Coping, Mixed Reality Simulations

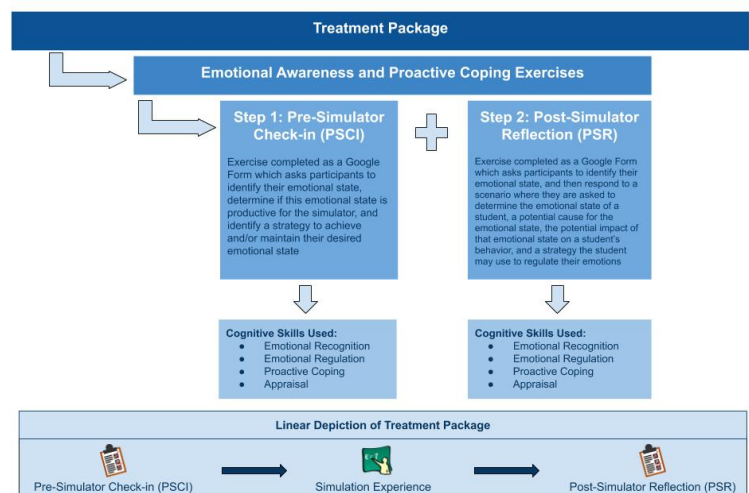
## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the perceived importance of emotional awareness with pre-service teachers (PSTs) participating in a mixed reality simulator (MRS), as well as the impact of emotional awareness exercises in an MRS on adaptiveness in coping and empathy. Emotional awareness includes the cognitive skills of appraisal, emotional recognition, and emotional regulation. A mixed-methods convergent research design will be employed. The quantitative aspect of the study will follow a quasi-experimental design and utilize a convenience sample of approximately 32 PSTs enrolled in a practice-based teacher preparation course that uses an MRS. This sample will be assigned by section to either treatment or comparison group. Participants in the treatment group will be asked to complete an emotional awareness check in prior to each simulation as well as an emotional awareness reflection exercise immediately after each simulation.

All participants will complete an inventory measuring adaptiveness in coping as well as a questionnaire of cognitive and affective empathy prior to the first and after the final simulation experience. The qualitative component will utilize a multiple case study to examine PSTs' perceptions of emotional awareness. Phase one of data collection will be used to gather survey data from all participants in the quantitative component of the study, and phase two of data collection will focus on gathering interview data from a subset of 12 participants. The results of both qualitative and quantitative findings will be compared using triangulation in an effort to uncover themes related to emotional awareness in the MRS.

## Research Questions and Treatment Package

1. What is the effect of emotional awareness exercises on empathy and adaptiveness in coping for pre-service teachers who participate in mixed reality simulation experiences?
2. How do preservice teachers participating in a mixed reality simulator perceive the importance of emotional intelligence and more specifically emotional awareness?
3. To what extent do the quantitative and qualitative data converge? How and why?



## Highlighted Findings from the Literature

Finding	Authors
By targeting specific skills and abilities that fall under the domain of emotional intelligence, <b>SEL programs provide students with the ability to practice and develop skills related to empathic phenomena.</b> These student-focused programs have been shown to have a significant impact on social and emotional skills as well as academic performance.	Bertrand et al., 2018; Brackett et al., 2011; CASEL, 2020; Jones & Kahn, 2017; Mayer et al., 2016; Mayer et al. 2004; Mayer et al., 2008
<b>Skills targeted by SEL programs are important for teachers as well as students because of the potential to aid teachers in promoting student engagement, enhancing mental flexibility, forming relationships, appraising the emotional context of the classroom, and buffering against burnout.</b>	Brackett & Baron, 2018; Castillo et al., 2013; Harvey et al., 2016; Tsouloupas et al., 2010; Valente et al., 2020; Valente et al., 2020
<b>Teachers' emotional intelligence abilities,</b> particularly emotional regulation, emotional appraisal and self-expression, and utilization of emotions, have been shown to be <b>positively related to self-efficacy beliefs and are proposed to allow for a more nuanced understanding of student behavior, thereby positively impacting the classroom environment.</b>	Alrajhi et al., 2017; Valente et al., 2020; Valente et al., 2020
The successful use of <b>adaptive coping strategies</b> has been shown to have a <b>positive impact on emotional exhaustion, teacher burnout, and the regulation of stress inducing situations.</b>	Chang, 2013; Mclean et al., 2007; Schäfer et al., 2020; Tsouloupas et al., 2010
The <b>perception of student discipline issues</b> has been shown to have a significant impact on teacher emotional experience. Teacher perceptions of student misbehavior were found to be <b>positively tied to emotional exhaustion,</b> and subsequent <b>cognitive reappraisal of misbehavior was negatively linked to emotional exhaustion,</b> with situation-specific efficacy thought to act as a mediator when coping with student behavior.	Chang, 2013; Tsouloupas et al., 2010
<b>Proactive coping</b> has been shown to <b>protect against burnout, improve classroom management</b> by decreasing the likelihood of an event being perceived as threatening. Situations that <b>were appraised as changeable</b> and within the control of the individual tended to <b>provoke less psychological distress</b> and may <b>facilitate the use of proactive coping strategies.</b>	Chang, 2013; Mclean et al., 2007; Schäfer et al., 2020
Mixed-reality simulation (MRS) experiences provide a <b>safe environment</b> for preservice teachers to <b>confront stressors</b> related to teaching, <b>develop cognitive and affective skills</b> in a complex situation and allows for the opportunity for <b>multiple attempts of practice,</b> for the <b>improvement of practice through feedback,</b> and for the <b>development of and resilience and confidence</b> developed without a negative impact on others.	Dawson & Lignugaris/Kraft, 2017; Dieker, Rodriguez, Lignugaris/Kraft, Hynes, & Hughes, 2014; Gul & Pecore, 2020; Gundel et al.; 2019; Ledger, 2020
MRS have been found to aid preservice teachers in <b>practicing managing difficult behavior</b> and <b>improve their ability to accurately appraise student behavior</b> as disruptive or defiant, leading to <b>improvements in redirection of behavior</b> and overall classroom environment.	Cohen, Wong, Krishnamachari, & Berlin, 2020; Larson, Hirsch, McGraw, & Bradshaw, 2010
Simulation experiences aimed at <b>detecting and responding to bullying</b> have been shown to <b>increase the likelihood of teachers responding</b> to incidents by speaking with other staff members or referring an incident to a guidance counselor. Additionally, teachers who underwent such an experience reported a <b>higher likelihood of intervening</b> when witnessing a bullying incident as well as reporting a <b>better ability to support students</b> belonging to minority groups, to <b>take on the student perspective,</b> and to <b>place themselves in the position of someone who is racially or ethnically different from themselves.</b>	Pas, Waasdorp, & Bradshaw, 2019; Stavroulia & Lanitis, 2019