CONFIDENCE, MOTIVATION & EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION
INTO FEMALE EMIRATI EFL STUDENTS WHO SELF-COACH TO SUCCESS

Submitted by

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

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You all have been my guiding lights. Thank you.
Glossary

**Academic Confidence**: a mediating variable between the individual’s inherent abilities, their learning styles and the opportunities afforded by the academic environment of higher education. (Sander & Sanders, 2005)

**Confidence/Self-confidence**: a belief in one’s abilities and therefore a belief in one’s self. “Self-confidence refers to belief in one’s personal worth and likelihood of succeeding. Self-confidence is a combination of self-esteem and general self-efficacy” (Neil, 2005).

**Emotional Intelligence (EI)**: the ability to handle one’s emotions, empathize and interact with others. Terms that are often used interchangeably with emotional intelligence are EQ. Emotional literacy: the approach to emotions and learning, emotional and social competence, mental health, emotional and social well-being.

**Extrinsic Motivation**: motivation from sources outside of an individual.

**First generation student**: A student whose parents do not have a college or university degree.

**Goals**: the immediate objectives or the particular sequences of behavior (Brophy, 2004)

**Incremental view of intelligence**: the belief that intelligence is changeable, therefore intelligence increases when knowledge is gained.

**Leadership skills**: the ability and desire to lead or give direction to oneself and possibly others.

**Maladaptive motivational patterns**: self-defeating behaviors and or beliefs (such as assigning negative attributions to oneself).

**Metacognition**: an awareness of one’s knowledge, strategy used; the ability to self-correct.

**Motivation**: a theoretical construct used to describe the initiation, direction, intensity, the degree of persistence, and the quality of behavior directed towards reaching one’s goals. (Maehr & Meyer, 1997).

**Motivational factors**: determine not just the goals toward which people aspire but the way in which they seek out, process, and use information” (Collier, 1994, p. 8)

**Motives**: Motives explain why people are doing what they are doing.

**Self-awareness**: being aware of both our mood and our thoughts (Goldman, 1995, p. 51)
Self-efficacy: One’s belief about one’s capabilities of performing the necessary actions to accomplish the task at hand.


Self-handicapping: Creating an obstacle as a reason for one’s performance.

Self-instruction: Verbal or non-verbal instruction to control one’s actions.


Self-reference: Comparison of one’s performance to previous performances.

Self-regulated learning: A learner’s active participation in their own learning.

Self-science: Course ranging from social developmental skills, life skills to social and emotional learning.

Self-worth: An individual’s image of self and their competence.

Self-leadership: The ability to self-direct and self-manage.

Self-talk: The dialogue one has with one’s self.

Strategies: The methods used to reach goals.

Volition: Using one’s will and strategies to persist in reaching one’s goals regardless of the obstacles encountered and therefore largely depends on how an individual handles distractions.

Vision of a possible self: how one thinks about one’s self in regards to their future.
**Abbreviations/Acronyms**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACS</td>
<td>Academic Confidence Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMEI</td>
<td>Confidence, Motivation and Emotional Intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>EI</td>
<td>Emotional Intelligence</td>
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<td>ENDP</td>
<td>Emirates National Development Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>Emotional Quotient</td>
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<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
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<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESR</td>
<td>Educators for Social Responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCC</td>
<td>Gulf Cooperation Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>HGSE</td>
<td>Harvard Graduate School of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSBC</td>
<td>The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Multiple Intelligences</td>
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<td>NWD</td>
<td>National Workforce Development</td>
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<td>RQ</td>
<td>Research question</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDT</td>
<td>Self-Determination Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCED</td>
<td>Social-Emotional and Character Development</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
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<td>SLL</td>
<td>Second Language Learner</td>
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<td>ZU</td>
<td>Zayed University</td>
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<td>UAE</td>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
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Abstract

Education is, at least, the endeavor to get people to do things they could not previously do, to understand things they did not previously understand, and perhaps, to become the people they did not expect to become.

- Sackett, 1998, p. 195

In today’s fast-paced technology driven knowledge-based society, students in the Gulf and abroad, are expected to remain engaged while playing a more invested role in becoming independent, mature learners, no matter what their personal or educational challenges are.

It is quite common for students to abandon their EFL studies due to a lack of motivation and/or confidence. There has been extensive research undertaken to better understand how motivation and confidence affect EFL/ESL learners, yet little attention has been paid to a more recent area of educational research in emotional intelligence (EI) and how self-coaching may also contribute to a tertiary EFL/ESL learners’ ability to succeed. It is not unreasonable to hypothesize that everyday occurrences encountered in their personal and academic life may very well, at times, have a detrimental effect on students’ confidence and motivation, and therefore impede their ability to reach set goals. This study explores the possible correlations between the three main constructs, confidence, motivation and EI while investigating female Emirati tertiary EFL students at Zayed University in the U.A.E. and their interest towards self-coaching to reach their academic and personal goals.

This exploratory longitudinal interpretive study used a mixed-method approach to gather data generated from a survey (CMEII) constructed and piloted for this study and completed by 199 female Emirati tertiary EFL participants measuring motivation, confidence and EI. In addition, student journals, interviews and progress reports retrieved from CMEI workshops also informed the research questions pertaining to these aforementioned constructs.

Results suggest that there is a correlation between confidence, motivation and EI. These results would indicate that when the level of motivation increases, so does the level of confidence in speaking English. Motivation to self-direct in English is positively correlated with problem solving, higher life-satisfaction and confidence levels. Surprisingly the higher the
academic anxiety, the more students want to self-direct. Furthermore it was found that students participating in this study found self-coaching methods extremely helpful in supporting them in reaching both their personal and academic goals.

The implications of this exploratory study into confidence, motivation and emotional intelligence has laid the foundation for future research in this area. By creating and piloting the first Confidence, Motivation and Emotional Intelligence survey instrument (CMEII) designed for the ESL/EFL learning environment, a primary obstacle has been traversed. The CMEII research instrument and results of this study will no doubt help bring light and understanding to how self-coaching and self-direction can support female EFL students in reaching their personal and academic goals in the U.A.E and abroad.