

Analysis of Emotional Intelligence among Young Adults

A Gender Specific Study

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Abstract

Indian youth is under a lot of emotional stress and instability owing to many factors like peer pressure, Government apathy and lack of opportunities. The employers want people who are emotionally stable and can carry out the work assigned with commitment and vigour. A study was therefore carried out to study the Emotional Intelligence of 80 undergraduate students of a management institution who were administered the TEIQue-SF questionnaire developed by K. V. Petrides. The results were analysed on the basis of gender and the scores for EI factors Well-being, emotionality, sociability and self-control were derived. From the result it was inferred that females were found to be more emotionally intelligent as compared to their counterparts.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Emotionality, Sociability, Self-control, Emotionality.

INTRODUCTION

Today's youth is under constant pressure due to psychological, economic, social, political, environmental and legal factors gaping at young graduates who are about to take the transition from education to

employment. Youth today are faced with enormous problems with peer pressure looming large over their heads. The outcomes of such pressure is seen in their educational success, emotional instability, not getting along with others, giving up on things easily and engaging in destructive behavior.

Students drop-out of college not because of lack of ability or on being chucked out by school administration but because of low motivation levels, disillusionment and discouragement. Here Emotional Intelligence can come to the rescue of an individual by addressing the non-academic challenges. EI can impact leadership effectiveness of students both on campus and in future too. Research on Emotional Intelligence suggests that students who can recognize and manage their moods, feelings and attitudes well are likely to perform better academically.

Contrary to popular belief that education is the best measure of the potential of an individual, is the predictor of success and would land you a good job, it is now believed that emotional intelligence is an equally good predictor of success in career. Employers look for numerous skills and traits in a new joiner like good listening and communication skills, ability to learn on the job, adaptability, problem solving skills, personal management, self-motivation, initiative taker, interpersonal skills, a good negotiator, team player, etc., to name a few.

It is therefore, believed that progressive steps should be taken in schools and colleges to build up the emotional stability of young adults. There is an increased focus on Emotional Intelligence in higher education. 'There is a growing body of research findings that scientifically demonstrates that emotional intelligence predicts how well we perform at

home, school and in the workplace' (Reuven Bar-On, 2004). Daniel Goleman has defined Emotional Intelligence as 'the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships'.

Emotional Intelligence is said to make an impact on organizational outcomes like performance (Goleman, 1998; Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2000). In order to develop emotional intelligence an individual is required to make conscious efforts and devote time on self-introspection in key areas like Emotional Self-Control, Acceptance of Criticism, Teamwork and Collaboration, Communication, Empathy, Resolve Conflict Positively, Build Positive Relationships, Learn Body Language and Learn to Deal with Stress. Cognitive abilities followed by emotional intelligence are the two important factors which can determine the success of an individual.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence involves the ability of controlling one's own as well as other's emotions, discriminating amongst them and using the information to give direction to an individual's actions and thought process. Emotional Intelligence as a type of social intelligence was introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990). Goleman (1998) popularized the concept of Emotional Intelligence and defined it as 'the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships'.

Bar-On (1997) described EI in context of personality traits. His definition of EI is based on non-cognitive capabilities and an

individual's inherent skills and competencies which make him capable of dealing with environmental stress, demands and pressure. His model consisted of five broad areas: intra-personal skills, inter-personal skills, adaptability, general mood (optimism, happiness) and stress management.

A significant relationship has been found between dimensions of emotional intelligence (use of emotions) and stress among college students (Bryant Scotte E. & Malone Timothy I., 2015). Age and gender also plays an important role while studying relationship between EI and stress.

Pavithra Raj, Dr. V. Chandramohan (2015) in their research have indicated high relationship among EI and academic achievement. Increased interest in this concept has led researchers to study the development of EI and whether it affects intelligence and personality in areas of life satisfaction, life success and well being both physical & mental, and inter-personal relations. The focus has now shifted to an individual's behaviour towards his work, career development, team effectiveness, leadership potential, job performance, occupational stress, etc.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the objectives of the proposed study:

1. To analyse the overall Emotional Intelligence Score of college going adults.
2. To analyse and compare the EI score on the basis of gender.
3. To analyse and compare the score of sub variables of EI on the basis of gender.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is empirical in nature in which

primary as well as secondary data has been used. The sample comprises of 80 students in the age group 19-22 years who are doing their graduation/post-graduation in the area of management. The sampling method used is random probability sampling. The questionnaire used for data collection is the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – Short Form (TEIQue-SF) which has been developed by K.V. Petrides. TEIQue contains 30 questions and can be used to derive global trait EI scores and derive scores on factors like well-being, emotionality, sociability and self-control.

FINDINGS

The findings are based on the responses to the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form. The scores are reported in three different banding categories: Above Average: includes scores that range from 70%-99%, Average: 30%-69%, Below Average: 1%-29%. The analysis of the data has been done to derive the overall Global Trait EI score followed by the score for the factors, viz., Well-being, self-control, emotionality and sociability.

Global Trait Score – This score gives an overview of the general emotional functioning of an individual. It gives an indication of an individual's perceived capacity to assimilate, process and use information about personal emotions and the emotions of other people in everyday life. It is important to note that the global score is very broad, but it is made up of more focused factor scores. From the analysis it was found that for males 25% students had below average score, 73% had average score and 2% had below average score. For the female students 92% students had average score whereas only 8% students reported above average scores.

Well-being – The Well-being factor comprises three different traits: Happiness, Optimism and Self-esteem. This measures the judgement of an individual as to how satisfied he/she is with his/her life. It reflects the perception of people about how cheerful and content they usually feel, how much they value themselves and how optimistic they are about future.

From the findings it was found that 6% male students had below average score which implies that they are low on self-esteem, have a negative attitude towards life and thus are unhappy with the way their life is shaping up. 94% candidates had average score which shows that students are leading a satisfactory life and are not very gung-ho about their future.

Amongst the females 96% recorded an average score and 4% had above average score.

Self-control – The self-control factor describes the ability of an individual to control their impulses or being controlled by them. It comprises three different traits: Impulse Control, Stress Management and Emotional Regulation.

It addresses important questions like:

- Do you resist urges and consider their consequences before acting?
- How well do you cope with stress in your personal and professional life?

The outcomes on this factor has been a little interesting with 6% males having below average scores, 86% with average scores and 2% with above average scores.

Amongst the females 17% had below average scores, 79% had average scores and only 4% had above average scores.

The figures depict that both the male & female candidates have difficulty in managing

their emotions and are therefore under stress which is detrimental to their performance in academics.

Emotionality – The Emotionality factor comprises four different traits: Empathy, Emotion Perception, Emotion Expression and Relationships. Together they indicate how aware you may be of your own emotions and feelings, as well as those of other people. Scores on these traits tend to reflect how highly you value this ‘emotional literacy’ and when and how you make use of it. Self-aware people, who use emotionality in a balanced way, respond compassionately towards the emotions and feelings of others at the right time. They also express their own feelings clearly and understandably and don’t let emotions and perceptions prevent them from thinking logically. These qualities are important in order to work effectively with other people. From the analysis of data it was found that 90% males obtained Average score & 10% males recorded above average score. Whereas 83% females obtained an average score and 17% recorded an above average.

Sociability – The Sociability factor describes how comfortable an individual feels while attending parties and social gatherings to formal business meetings. Sociability is an important factor in leadership positions as it helps leaders motivate a variety of people in order to achieve goals and resolve difficult situations and underperformance. The Sociability factor is a combination of Emotion Management, Assertiveness and Social Awareness traits.

From the responses received it has been found that 88% males and females have average sociability score. 12% females have above average score in comparison to 4% males. It was also found that 8% males had

below average scores which implies that they have low levels of social awareness, emotion management and assertiveness.

The following table indicates the summative scores of male and female young college graduates:

Table 1

<i>Sample Mean</i>	<i>107.2466</i>	
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
<i>Overall EI Score</i>	Below Average – 16% Average – 84% Above Average – Nil	Below Average – Nil Average – 100% Above Average – Nil

From the above table it can be established that females are better than males when it comes to managing their emotions and understanding the emotions of others as well. 16% males have scored below average score which shows that they are poor in managing their emotions when in public eye.

Table 2: Mean Score on Sub-variables

<i>Sub-variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Overall EI score	104.45	112.96
Global trait score	14	15.208
Well-being	20	23.25
Self-control	19	19
Emotionality	31	33.83
Sociability	22	22.67

Table 3: Gender-wise Percentage Score of Sub-variables

<i>Gender</i>	<i>TEIQue Factors</i>				
	<i>Global Trait Score</i>	<i>Well-being</i>	<i>Self-Control</i>	<i>Emotionality</i>	<i>Sociability</i>
<i>Males</i>	Below avg. – 25%	Below avg. – 6%	Below avg. – 12%	Below avg. –	Below avg. 8%
	Avg. – 73%	Avg. – 94%	Avg. – 86%	Avg. 90%	Avg. – 88%
	Above avg. – 2%	Above avg.	Above avg. – 2%	Above avg. – 10%	Above avg. – 4%
<i>Females</i>	Below avg.	Below avg.	Below avg. – 17%	Below avg.	Below avg.
	Avg. – 92%	Avg. – 96%	Avg. – 79%	Avg. – 83%	Avg. – 88%
	Above avg. – 8%	Above avg. – 4%	Above avg. – 4%	Above avg. – 17%	Above avg. 12%

From the Table 2 it can be inferred females with 92% score have a better Global Trait score of Emotional Intelligence in comparison to their counterparts. Females have a better sense of well-being in comparison to males which shows that they are happier, optimistic and are high on self-esteem. Males have scored better on the self-control factor which shows that females tend to break down under stress whereas males can handle stressful situations in a better manner. Men don't cry phenomenon is no longer applicable nowadays males don't shy away from exhibiting their emotions and have become more expressive surpassing females. Higher percentage of females recorded above average scores as far as emotionality is concerned.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The college going students are exposed to a plethora of information in this 24x7 connected world. They suffer from peer pressure coupled with parental pressure and are under stress from their childhood to outperform in every field. Therefore we can see cases of stress, early burnout, lifestyle diseases and exhaustion among young adults which affects their performance personally and professionally. They are indecisive and lack a proper focus in life. It is therefore necessary that they get

proper guidance at their childhood stage so that they grow up to emotionally stable adults. The colleges at least can play a decisive role because students by then are mature and are looking for ways to chart out their career through proper guidance from their mentors. It is therefore necessary that at this stage students be exposed to activities which improves their emotional intelligence because corporate are looking for stable employees who are not job hopping. The following suggestions can be implemented at their college education level:

- *Psychometric tests* – The students should be administered a lot of psychometric tests with detailed analysis of their result followed by proper counselling and mentoring to help them overcome their weaknesses. A periodic review to study the desired outcome is necessary.
- *Mentor-mentee system* – This system would enable a student to be in constant touch with his/her mentor who can provide the much needed professional and personal guidance.
- *Counselling sessions* – The colleges should conduct psychological counselling sessions periodically so that the changes in the behaviour of the students are recorded over a period of time or may be cross-sectional study should be carried out.
- *Motivational sessions* – The current generation is very fickle minded with a very short span of focus. They need to be constantly motivated to achieve what they dream of. Motivational speakers can help them achieve their goals.
- *Team building exercises* – With nuclear families being the norm nowadays, children lack the emotions of sharing and caring for others. They are more selfish and self-centred. It is therefore necessary

that they be involved in lot of group activities and team building activities so that they become team players.

- *Meditation* – Guided meditation for at least 30 minutes should be carried out daily which will decrease the distractions from the minds of the individual thereby increasing the concentration levels and focus of the students.
- *Yoga* – Yoga classes should be made mandatory for the students as yoga is known to increase the blood flow to all parts of the body and promotes a sense of well-being by releasing stress.

CONCLUSION

The study carried out by the researchers shows that the college going young adults who are about to enter the workforce show a lot of variation in their Emotional Intelligence. In order to sustain they need to acquire command on the ability to reduce negative emotions; the ability to stay cool and manage stress; the ability to be assertive and express difficult emotions when necessary; the ability to stay proactive, not reactive in the face of a difficult person; the ability to bounce back from adversity; the ability to express intimate emotions in close personal relationships; mindfulness practice builds self-awareness as it reduces stress; become aware of how effectively you use non-verbal communication; use humour and play to relieve stress.

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