A Cross-Sectional Study of Emotional Intelligence Among Information Technology (IT) Employees

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Abstract: Information Technology (IT) sector in India has had the highest growth in the last decade creating 4.5 lakh new jobs. It is also predicted the sector is expected to grow almost twice this year contributing more than 9% to the national GDP. As a result, the workforce of the IT sector undergoing a lot of pressure, and dissatisfaction. Even the attrition rate of the IT sector is high compared to other sectors. The present paper aims at understanding the level of Emotional Intelligence (EI) of IT employees working at various software organizations in Chennai. The study is descriptive research and used a structured questionnaire to collect the data. The sample of the study was 200 employees working in the IT sector. Statistical tools used in this study are Means of Two-way tables, Percentages, Averages, Ranges, Standard Deviation, chi-square test, and Multiple Regression. the findings reveal that there is a close relationship between Age and the Emotional intelligence level of IT employees.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, IT, Employees.

1. Introduction

It has been argued that there has been a paradigm shift in organizational behavior as a result of the resurgence of interest in researching the impact of emotions at work. Both the elements of intelligence and emotions are included in emotional intelligence. These two complementary abilities have a profound effect on people. For a long time, the majority of people thought that having a higher I.Q. was the single most significant factor in an organization's growth and success. However, decades of research have now proven that an individual's ability to perform successfully at work is determined by their E.Q. (emotional quotient), not their I.Q. The ability to recognize, manage, and interpret emotions is referred to as emotional intelligence. While some academics contend that emotional intelligence is an inborn trait, others believe that it can be learned and improved. Emotional intelligence (EI) or Emotional Quotient (EQ) is the ability to know and manage one's emotions, as well as the emotions of others. EI is emotional awareness the ability to control emotions and apply them to everyday tasks.

2. Literature Review

There are different definitions for EI, it is defined as an individual's ability to assess emotional information accurately and efficiently (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The literature review aims to provide support for the above definition by reviewing the EI construct. Although general mental capacity is also a component of intelligence, other researchers argue that intelligence is a multidimensional concept that encompasses a variety of abilities. Thorndike proposed three categories of intelligence that were distinct from cognitive ability. The three types of intelligence namely abstract, mechanical, and social intelligence. Abstract intelligence involves the comprehension and management of thought, while mechanical intelligence requires being able to understand tangible objects. Hence it is social intelligence that is closely related to Emotional intelligence. Social intelligence can understand and get along with other others (Thorndike, 1920 cited in Kihlstrom & Cantor, 2000). We may think more creatively and use our emotions to solve difficulties when we have emotional intelligence. Identifying emotions, utilizing emotions, interpreting emotions, and managing emotions are all abilities of the emotionally intelligent individual. EI is defined as the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, discriminate among them, and use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189).

EI first appeared in 1985 in a doctoral dissertation by Wayne Leon Payne, entitled "A Study of Emotion: Developing Emotional Intelligence." His thesis on emotional intelligence included a framework to enable researchers to develop emotional intelligence. Payne argued that it was possible to develop emotional intelligence and that the root of many of the issues facing modern society was the suppression of emotion. Later Daniel Goleman coined the concept of Emotional Intelligence in the workplace, he made the concept of EI very popular by publishing a book on emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman's (1995) best-seller Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ. Emotional Intelligence then appeared in academic articles by John D. Mayer and Peter

Salovey (1990, 1993). An individual's professional career may be significantly impacted by emotional intelligence. Because of this, it's crucial to comprehend what it is and how important it is in the workplace. People are different in terms of their attitudes, emotional abilities, and qualities, and these aspects can have a significant impact on how they work.

3. Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

In many Western organizations, the use of EI measurements for job placement and career selection has just started to gain popularity. As a result, more and more businesses are realizing the potential importance of EI abilities in any organization's management philosophy. The main focus of the literature on emotional intelligence has been on whether it may or may not affect an individual's achievement. (Goleman, 1998; Higgs & Dulewicz, 1999) and, indeed, there is now empirical support for at least a positive association between EI and work performance (e.g., Kaipiainen & Fletcher, 2001; Slaski, 2001). Salovey and Mayer (1990) and Mayer and Salovey (1995) studies found that higher levels of EI result in better psychological and physical well-being. Four out of five companies are currently attempting to encourage EI in their organizations, according to a study of benchmark practices among significant corporations. The idea of EI is regarded as helpful when assessing continuing performance and employee wellbeing at crucial junctures in their careers. As the researchers have argued If the driving force of intelligence in twentieth-century business has been IQ, then in the dawning twenty-first century it will be EQ" (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997). Many of the strategies such as social awareness, understanding others, and communication used in early assessment centers evaluated non-cognitive abilities akin to EI. These abilities were found to be predictive of successful performance in managerial positions in many corporations. The value of including social and emotional competencies when seeking to predict occupational performance has been confirmed by more than three decades of standard psychological research (Boyatzis, 1982; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weich, 1970; Howard & Bray, 1988; Kotter, 1982). Research by Boyatzis (1982) has discovered several social characteristics that seem to be indicators of future management performance, including socialized power, self-esteem, and positivity. There have been several unfounded statements about the importance of EI in the workplace that have arisen in popular literature and the media. As a result, it has been asserted that EI can more accurately predict successful job behaviors than intellect.

4. Scope of the Study

The purpose of the research is to improve employees' emotional intelligence at work and to shed light on why certain people perform exceptionally well while others do not. Understanding and identifying the problems in businesses are essential components of emotional intelligence. Organizations can pick a plan and course of action to enhance employee performance based on the findings. A requirement of emotional intelligence is the ability to identify and comprehend problems in the organization. Organizations can pick a plan and course of action to enhance employee performance based on the findings.

5. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follows,
1. To understand the socio-demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To study the level of employee awareness of Emotional Intelligence.
3. To analyze the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and demographic factors.

A. Research Methodology

The present study is descriptive research and was a cross-sectional, analytical study. The pertinent information has been gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Data from 200 respondents in the IT Sector were gathered through a random sampling procedure using a random number table. Means of Two-way tables, Percentages, Averages, Ranges, Standard Deviation, chi-square test and Multiple Regression were employed for analysis.

The data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part reveals the socio-demographic profile of the respondents such as gender, age, education income, and marital status and the second part consists of the Danial Goalmans EI measurement questionnaire to measure the EI levels of IT employees.

6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

It is inferred from the table that the level of Emotional

Table 1
Gender and emotional intelligence level

S.No.	Marital Status	No. of Respondents	%	Average	Range Min	Range Max	S.D.
1	Male	144	72	37.25	23	50	7.577
2	Female	56	28	33.47	26	48	6.754
	Total	200	100				

Source: Primary Data

Table 2
Gender and emotional intelligence level (Two-Way Table)

S.No.	Gender	Level of EI Low N	Low %	Medium N	Medium %	High N	High %	Total N	Total %
1	Male	17	47.6	52	64.5	75	90.5	144	72.0
2	Female	20	52.4	29	35.5	7	9.5	56	28.0
	Total	37	100	81	100	82	100	200	100

Intelligence level among IT employees, with the male respondents, ranged between 23 and 50 with an average of 37.25. while the level of Emotional Intelligence among the female respondents ranged between 26 and 48 with an average of 33.47. Hence it has been revealed that the male respondents had the highest level of emotional intelligence than the female ones.

It could be stated from the table that the percentage of high level of Emotional Intelligence occurred by the IT employees was the highest (90.5%) among the male respondents and the lowest (9.5%) among the female respondents. The percentage of medium level of Emotional Intelligence was the highest (64.5%) among the male respondents and the lowest (35.5%) among the female respondents. On the other hand, the percentage of low level of Emotional Intelligence was the highest (52.4%) among the female respondents and the lowest (47.6%) among the male respondents.

It is found from the above table that the calculated chi- square value is less than the table value and the result is significant at 1% level. Hence, the hypothesis H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is a close relationship between gender of the respondents and their Emotional Intelligence level among IT employees.

It is highlighted from the above table that the level Emotional Intelligence level among IT employees, among the below 30 age group was ranged between 28 and 48 with an average of 39.41. the, level of Emotional Intelligence occurred between 31-40 age group was ranged between 21 and 52 with an average of 40.70 and the level of Emotional Intelligence for the age group above 40 was ranged between 24 and 50 with an average of 33.92. Thus, the table reveals that the maximum level of Emotional Intelligence level was occurred between the age group between 31-40.

It could be seen from the above table that the percentage of high level of Emotional Intelligence occurred by the IT sector was the highest (72.7%) among the 31-40 age group respondents and the same was the lowest (15.6%) among the below 30 and above 40 age group respondents. The percentage of medium level of Emotional Intelligence occurred by the IT employees was the highest (45.7%) among the 31-40 age group respondents and the same was the lowest (9.9%) among the below 30 aged respondents. On the other hand, the percentage of low level of Emotional Intelligence occurred by the IT employees was the highest (67.6%) among the 31-40 age group respondents and the same was the lowest (0%) among below 30 aged respondents.

It is found from the above table that the calculated chi- square value is less than the table value and the result is significant at 1% level. Hence, the hypothesis H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. From the analysis, it is concluded that there is a close relationship between Age of the respondents and their Emotional Intelligence level among IT employee.

A. Multiple Regression Analysis – Emotional Intelligence and Demographic Variables

This relationship is described in the following formula.
$$Y = b_0 + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6$$
Dependent variable Y = Emotional Intelligence
Independent variables are
X_1 = Gender
X_2 = Age in yrs
X_3 = Marital Status
X_4 = Educational Qualification
X_5 = Monthly Income
X_6 = experience
The model is linear because increasing the value of the jth predictor by 1 unit increases the value of the dependent by1 units. In this section multiple regression analysis is used to

Table 3
Gender and emotional intelligence level (Chi- Square Test)

Factor	Calculated Chi-square value	Table value	D.F	Remarks
Gender	28.558	9.312	2	Significant at 1% level

Table 4
Age and emotional intelligence level

S.No.	Age	No. of Respondents	%	Average	Min	Max	S.D.
1	Below 30	45	23	39.41	28	48	4.713
2	31-40	95	48	40.70	21	52	7.267
3	Above 40	60	30	33.92	24	50	6.683
	Total	200	100				

Table 5
Age and emotional intelligence level (Two-Way Table)

S.No.	Age	Low N	Low %	Medium N	Medium %	High N	High %	Total N	Total %
1	Below 30	0	0	8	9.9	12	15.6	20	10
2	31-40	25	67.6	37	45.7	58	72.7	120	60
3	Above 40	12	32.4	36	44.4	12	13.6	60	30
	Total	37	100	81	100	82	100	200	100

Table 6
Age and emotional intelligence level (Chi- Square Test)

Factor	Calculated Chi-square value	Table value	D.F	Remarks
Age	22.217	13.367	4	Significant at 1% level

Table 7
Regression coefficients

	Un standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	42.329	6.656	6.177	.000
Gender	.745	1.108	.684	.070
Age	-2.710	1.223	-2.457	.018
Marital Status	-2.246	.972	-2.244	0.37
Educational Qualification	-1.130	.672	-1.883	.063
Income	.174	.973	.194	.834
Experience	11.582	5.599	2.106	.047

Table 8
Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square Value	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.518	.169	.346	7.774

Table 9
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	2486.887	7	350.970	5.790	.000
Residual	11206.698	193	58.790		
Total	136933.755	198			

explain the variation in the Emotional Intelligence (dependent variable) based on the variation over the variables (independent variable) Gender, Age, Educational Qualification, Income and Experience.

B. Dependent Variable: Emotional Intelligence

Regression Model Summary table displays R, R Square, Adjusted R Square, and the standard error. R is the multiple correlation coefficient, is the correlation between the observed and predicted values of the dependent variables.

In the model 5 the R value of .518 indicates the moderate relationship. R squared value of .346 indicates the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the regression model. The R square moderate values indicate that the model fit the data satisfactorily.

The regression co-efficient and 't' value are calculated and presented in Table 3. This table 3 shows the coefficients of the regression line.

It states that the expected Emotional intelligence is equal to

Y = 42.329 + .745 Gender -2.710 Age-2.246 Marital status -1.130 Educational Qualification -.174 Income +11.582 experience.

From the above table it was found that five independent variables have a relationship with the dependent variable Emotional Intelligence and it was significant at 1% and 5% level.

The major findings of the study,
- It was found that the highest level of emotional intelligence was demonstrated by the male respondents in the study. It was found through chi-square analysis that there is a close relationship between the gender of the respondents and the Emotional Intelligence level of IT employees.
- It is witnessed from the analysis that the maximum level of Emotional Intelligence level occurred between the age group of 31-40.
- It is learned from the analysis that the percentage of high levels of Emotional Intelligence occurred by the IT

employees was the highest (72.7%) among the 31-40 age group respondents and the same was the lowest (15.6%) among the below 30 and above 40 age group respondents.
- It was learned from chi-square analysis that there is a close relationship between the Age of the respondents and the Emotional Intelligence level of IT employees.
- Through Multiple regression analysis, it was found that five independent variables Age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, and experience have a relationship with the dependent variable Emotional Intelligence and it was significant at 1% and 5% levels.

7. Conclusion

This paper attempted to identify the socio-demographic characteristics and measure the level of emotional intelligence among 200 IT professionals. The paper was successful in portraying the IT professionals' emotional plea for a more independent lifestyle to lead a balanced lifestyle.

The ongoing struggle to strike a balance between a job and its output can seriously influence a person's life by impairing their general well-being and quality of life. In today's busy world, where finding time for an individual seems impossible, there is a significant demand from employees for the right to balance work and Personal life also. However, emotional stability, mindfulness, and wellness initiatives can, without a doubt, help in balancing their personal and professional life.

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