

Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Psychological Well-Being among IT Professionals

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ABSTRACT

The modern day workplace is characterized by high degree of volatility, dynamism, uncertainty which has a huge influence on the mental health and well-being of an individual. It has been observed that emotional intelligence is among the most predominant factors that equips an individual to confront and cope up with the problems and situations. The level of emotional intelligence thus, is likely to influence the psychological well-being of individuals. This paper aims to explore the relationship of emotional intelligence and psychological wellbeing. The study was done on a sample of 106 employees working in the IT companies in the tri-city region of Chandigarh. They were asked to fill the Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al, 1998) and the Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff, 1989). The results found a significant and moderate relationship of emotional intelligence with four dimensions of psychological well-being.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, psychological well-being, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance

I REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(a) Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is a significant construct that acts an important measure of a sound and healthy mind which is well equipped to handle various situations and relations that arise in and out of the workplace.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence found its origin in the work of Thorndike (1920) [23] who gave the theory of social intelligence. He described social intelligence as the ability to understand and manage men and to act wisely in human relations. This concept of social intelligence was further explored by Gardner (1983) with his theory of multiple intelligence. He suggested two dimensions of social intelligence namely- interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence. Later, Sternberg (1988) [22] gave the term contextual intelligence which he described as the ability to lead a life successfully. Later, a model was given by Salovey and Mayer (1990) [19] where they suggested emotional intelligence to be a subset of social intelligence. Mayer and Salovey (1990) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own emotions and those of others, to discriminate among the emotions and then to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. Goleman (1995) [8] stated that emotional intelligence is a set of factors that have a bearing on the social and personal lives of people. Goleman (1998) later defined emotional intelligence as a set of factors responsible for a person to feel motivated about himself, regulate impulses and frustrations and thus coping up with everyday lifestyle issues. Boyatzis (1999) defined emotional intelligence as the process of effectively processing emotional information. Bar-on (2002) [1] stated that it is the ability to cope with the pressure through social, personal and emotional abilities. He (2004) further stated that interpersonal level of emotional

intelligence involves being able to understand emotions of others whereas at intrapersonal level, it is the about being aware of one's own emotions and to be able to express them. Brackett and Salovey (2006) [19] defined emotional intelligence as the capacity perceive, assimilate, understand and manage one's own emotions and those of others. Hein (2007) [11] defined emotional intelligence as the potential to use, communicate, describe, learn from and manage, and explain emotions.

(b) Psychological Well-being

Salovey and Mayer (1990) [19] suggested that emotional intelligence can significantly influence the level of psychological well-being amongst individuals. With the changing dynamics of the workplace discussed earlier in the paper, psychological well-being is developing into a key thrust area for researchers and practitioners. Well-being can be defined as the state of mental, physical and social health. Psychological well-being is a vast domain and developing one comprehensive definition for it may not be possible. Campbell (1976) [4] defined well-being as the current state of affairs for a person. Diener et al (1985) [7] defined well-being as having a sense of satisfaction with one's own life. Pavot and Diener (2003) state that feeling contented, happy and a satisfied life experience is called a state of wellbeing. Satisfaction with oneself as an individual, with close relations and with one's physical health is considered as psychological well-being by Salami (2010). [18] Psychological well-being is a simple feeling of being happy with one's life. Ryff and Keyes (1995) give six components of psychological well-being namely- self acceptance, purpose in life, personal growth, environmental mastery, autonomy, and positive relation with others. From this we can clearly interpret that psychological well-being is about being at peace with oneself, others and with the situations one encounters in life and which in turn lead to happiness. Deiner (2000) [7]

defines psychological well-being as attitudes and feelings about the work context. Campbell (1981) [4] and Ryan and Deci (2001) [15] have significantly contributed to the study of psychological well-being. It is the way people evaluate their lives and the general experiences that people have about life. Waterman (1993) [24] states well-being as the extent to which people exist with respect to their true selves. Psychological well-being is also explored from the point of view of life satisfaction and from the general level of positive and negative emotions that are experienced. People may not consciously think of well-being but experience positive as well as negative emotions thus, subconsciously being aware of their psychological wellbeing as suggested by Headey and Wearing (1992). [10] Dolan et al (2011) and Kahneman and Deaton (2010) [5] state three aspects of well-being namely: a) evaluative well-being- about the overall satisfaction level, b) affective well-being- about positive or negative feelings experienced, c) eudemic well-being-related to sense of autonomy, and control over life. Schrish (2015) [21] mentions the interest of researchers in understanding the role of perception about the world as an influencer of well-being. Deiner and Lucas (1999) [12] state that the perception of well-being develops early in life. It is also influenced by the genetic factors and stays stable over a span of time. However, Lucas (2002) mentions that events and changes happening in a person's life also impact the psychological well-being.

Psychological well-being can thus be viewed as an important variable that measures the positive state of mind and happiness that one experiences. Schmutte and Ryff (1997) [20] simplify psychological well-being as a generalized feeling of happiness. It is the state of wellness experienced by a person in life (Ryff, 1995). [17] Thus, it can be stated that the level and type of emotions that one experiences and how one manages them has a strong bearing on the psychological well-being.

II RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Emotional Intelligence is stated to be the ability to identify and manage emotions of self and those of others. It enhances the ability to channelize the emotions we experience and lead to better thinking, handling situations in a better way and solving life's problems through better management and regulation of emotions.

Psychological well-being however is a general state of satisfaction one experiences and a sense of happiness one feels about oneself, the situations and the environment in which one exists. The state of well-being is strongly influenced by the emotions, feelings and moods that a person experiences. The current paper makes an attempt to study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological well-being among the employees working in the Information Technology Industry. This industry is most strongly being influenced and affected by

the changes. It is the backbone to the growth and development of any country. Most innovations are driven by technology. The employees working in the IT industry constantly experience the pressure of these changes. This paper is an attempt to study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being of the employees working in the IT sector. The current study aims to identify if impact of emotional intelligence possessed by an individual on the psychological well-being that one experiences. The paper also aims to study the variance in emotional intelligence among the employees on the basis of demographic variables such as age, gender and educational qualification.

III OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are

- (a) To study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being among IT professionals
- (b) To determine if there is significant difference in level of Emotional Intelligence on the basis of age among IT professionals
- (c) To determine if there is significant difference in level of Emotional Intelligence on the basis of gender among IT professionals
- (d) To determine if there is significant difference in level of Emotional Intelligence on the basis of educational qualifications among IT professionals

IV HYPOTHESES

- (a) **H1-** There is a positive correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological well-being
- (b) **H2-** There is significant difference in level of Emotional Intelligence on the basis of age among the IT professionals
- (c) **H3-** There is significant difference in level of Emotional Intelligence on the basis of gender among the IT professionals
- (d) **H4-** There is significant difference in level of Emotional Intelligence on the basis of educational qualification among the IT professionals

V RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- (a) **Research Design-** This research is of deductive nature and the hypothesis is developed after a thorough study in the problem area in the light of previous literature and tested them to derive conclusions on the same.

(b) **Sample/ Participants-** The sample of study consisted of 106 employees working in the IT companies in the tri-city region of Chandigarh. Participants were selected on the basis of convenience sampling

(c) **Instruments-** The following instruments are used in the study for measuring emotional intelligence and psychological well-being

Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al, 1998): The scale consisted of 33 items covering 4 dimensions of emotional intelligence namely- Perception of Emotion, Managing own Emotion, Managing others' Emotion, and Utilisation of Emotions. The respondents had to rate five options from 1 to 5 where 1 meant strongly agree and 5 meant strongly disagree.

Psychological Well-being Scale (Ryff, 1989): The scale consisted of 16 items covering six dimensions namely- autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 meant strongly agree and 5 meant strongly disagree. Some items are negatively stated as well where a response of 5 was to be coded as 1, 4 as 2 and so on.

(d) **Procedure-** The survey questionnaire comprised of 33 questions which were devoted to measure dimensions of emotional intelligence and 16 questions to measure Psychological Well-being. Certain demographic factors such as age, educational qualification and gender were also included in the questionnaire. Primary data was collected through these questionnaires from professionals working in IT Companies in the tri-city region of Chandigarh.

VI ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

(a) Respondent Profile

**Table 1
Gender Profile**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	38	35.8	35.8	35.8
	Male	68	64.2	64.2	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

As given in Table One, 35.8 percent of respondents were females and 64.2 percent were male.

**Table 2
Age Profile**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	17-25 years	67	63.2	63.2	63.2
	25-35 years	39	36.8	36.8	100
	Total	106	100	100	

As per Table Two, 63.2 percent of respondents were in the age group of 17-25 years and 36.8 percent were in the age group of 25-35 years

**Table 3
Education Profile**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Graduate	35	33.0	33.0	33.0
	Post Graduate	52	49.1	49.1	82.1
	PhD	19	17.9	17.9	100.0
	Total	106	100.0	100.0	

As per Table Three, 33.0 percent respondents were graduates, 49.1 percent of respondents were post-graduates and 17.9 percent were doctorates.

(b) Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-Being

In this paper, the total mean value of emotional intelligence is considered as the independent variable. The six dimensions of psychological well-being ie autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance are taken as the six dependent variables.

The relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being was explored by using Pearson correlations. The results of the correlation are given in

Table Four and are measured at 95 percent level of significance. with strongest association between Emotional Intelligence and Environmental Mastery ($r=0.632, p\leq 0.05$). This is followed by the dimension of Purpose in Life ($r=0.620, p\leq 0.05$) and next is with Positive Relations ($r=0.552, p\leq 0.05$). The association between Emotional Intelligence and Self-acceptance ($r=0.509, p\leq 0.05$) is also moderately strong. However, the lowest correlation was seen between Emotional Intelligence and Personal Growth ($r=0.435, p\leq 0.05$) as well as Autonomy ($r=0.284, p\leq 0.05$).

Table 4
Correlation analysis – Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being

	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal Growth	Positive Relation	Purpose in Life	Self-Acceptance
Emotional Intelligence	0.284**	0.632**	0.435**	0.552**	0.620**	0.509**

Table 5
Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.806 ^a	.649	.646	.256
a. Predictors: (Constant), EI mean				

As shown in Table Five, in the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Psychological Well-being, the adjusted $R^2 = 0.646$ and was found to be statistically significant.

(i) Hypothesis Testing for H1

It is thus, concluded that H1 is only partially accepted. The results of the study reveal that IT professionals with higher emotional intelligence experience higher environmental mastery and a have clear purpose of life.

Emotional Intelligence has a moderate correlation with the other two dimensions of psychological well-being namely Positive Relation and Self-acceptance. However, no significant correlation was observed between emotional intelligence and personal growth and autonomy dimensions of psychological well-being. Thus, hypotheses H1 is partially accepted.

(c) Variance in Emotional Intelligence on the Basis of Age (among IT Professionals)

Table 6
Independent Samples Test - Age

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
EI	Equal variances assumed	1.070	.303	.821	104	.413	.060	.073	-.084	.204
	Equal variances not assumed			.800	73.426	.426	.060	.075	-.089	.208

Independent t-test has been used to identify the difference in the level of emotional intelligence among IT professionals working in the tri-city region of Chandigarh on the basis of age. As given in Table Six, it can be inferred that there is no significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence on the basis of age ($t_{104} = -0.821, p = 0.413$).

(i) Hypothesis Testing for H2

Thus, it can be concluded that H2 is rejected as there is no statistically significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence on the basis of age among the IT professionals in the tri-city.

(d) Variance in Emotional Intelligence on the Basis of Gender (among IT Professionals)

Table 7
Independent Samples Test- Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
EI	Equal variances assumed	.373	.543	.585	104	.560	.043	.073	-.102	.188
	Equal variances not assumed			.596	80.962	.553	.043	.072	-.100	.186

Independent t-test has been used to identify the difference in the level of emotional intelligence among IT professionals working in the tri-city on the basis of gender. As given in Table Seven, it can be inferred that there is no significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence on the basis of gender ($t_{104} = -0.585, p = 0.560$).

(i) Hypothesis Testing for H3

Thus it can be concluded that H3 is rejected as there is no statistically significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence among IT professionals working in the tri-city on the basis of gender.

(e) Variance in Emotional Intelligence on the Basis of Educational Qualification (among IT Professionals)

Table 8
ANOVA- Educational Qualification

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EI	Between Groups	.028	2	.014	.107	.899
	Within Groups	13.579	103	.132		
	Total	13.607	105			

ANOVA test was run to study the variance in emotional intelligence on the basis of educational qualification among IT professionals of the tri-city. There was no statistically significant difference between groups as determined by one-way ANOVA ($F(2,103) = 0.107$, $p=0.899$) as shown in Table Eight. Therefore, qualification has no impact on Emotional intelligence as the value of p is 0.899 which is greater than 0.05,

(i) Hypothesis Testing for H4

Thus, it can be concluded that H4 is rejected as there is no statistically significant difference in the level of emotional intelligence among IT professionals working in the tricity on the basis of educational qualification.

VII CONCLUSION

The results of the current study indicate that emotional intelligence has an impact on the psychological well-being among working professionals. These results can be of significance for organisations, HR managers, team leaders and individuals themselves. Further, the study also concludes that emotional intelligence of an individual shows no variance on the basis of major demographic factors such as gender, age and educational qualification. However, psychological well-being that an individual experiences is dependent on a number of factors along with emotional intelligence. Further research can be pursued to explore other predictors of psychological well-being.

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