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Emotional Intelligence and its Dimensions

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive, appraise and control one's emotions. It is the ability to motivate oneself even in stressful situations, to control impulsive behavior and to manage feelings in perfect way. Emotional intelligence can be considered as a set of skills which contribute to the proper assessment and regulation of emotions, and the utilization of feelings for best achievement in academics, profession and life. Emotional Intelligence is an important predictor of success in life and has significant role in stress management and academic achievement. **Students, who are high academic performers, usually have higher emotional intelligence scores compared with children with scholastic backwardness.** Individuals with high emotional intelligence will correctly understand emotional issues, manage stressful situations successfully and regulate emotions in the best way. They are balanced, empathetic, self-aware and sociable. They have very strong will-power and are intrinsically motivated. Emotional intelligence is also a crucial factor needed for successful leadership. It has significant role in academic and organizational success.

Key Words: Emotional Intelligence, stress management, academic achievement, empathetic, intrinsically motivated, successful leadership, organizational success

Introduction

Emotional intelligence refers to an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them. Researchers investigated dimensions of emotional intelligence by measuring related concepts, such as social skills, interpersonal competence, psychological maturity and emotional awareness, long before the term 'emotional intelligence' came into use. Teachers in schools have been teaching the rudiments of emotional intelligence since 1978, with the development of the Self Science Curriculum and the teaching of classes such as "social development," "social and emotional learning," and "personal intelligence," all aimed at raising the level of social and emotional competence" (Goleman, 1995). Social scientists are just beginning to uncover the relationship of emotional intelligence to other phenomenon, e.g., leadership (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995), group performance, individual performance, interpersonal/ social exchange, managing change, and conducting performance evaluations (Goleman, 1995).

Emotional intelligence represents an ability to validly reason with emotions and to use emotions to enhance thought. Emotional Intelligence encompasses the following five characteristics and abilities:

Self-awareness--knowing your emotions, recognizing feelings as they occur, and discriminating between them

Mood management--handling feelings so they're relevant to the current situation and you react appropriately

Saarth

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Self-motivation--"gathering up" your feelings and directing yourself towards a goal, despite self-doubt, inertia, and impulsiveness

Empathy--recognizing feelings in others and tuning into their verbal and nonverbal cues

Managing relationships--handling interpersonal interaction, conflict resolution, and negotiations

Studies Conducted Abroad

According to **Mayer and Salovey (1995)** emotional intelligence is the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth. Emotional intelligence is emerging as a critical factor for sustaining high achievement, retention, and positive behavior as well as improving life success. Increasingly, schools and educational organizations are turning emotional intelligence seeking a systemic solution to improve outcomes, both academic and social. The studies pertaining to emotional intelligence and academic achievement conducted abroad have been compiled and presented hereunder.

Farooq (2003) examined the effect of emotional intelligence on academic performance of 246 adolescent students and found that students with high emotional intelligence show better academic performance than the students with low emotional intelligence.

Drago (2004) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement in non-traditional college students. Since students differed in cognitive ability, with some students being better prepared for the collegiate environment than others, the role of emotional intelligence in academic achievement must be better understood. Non-cognitive factors such as emotional intelligence may supplement or enhance student cognitive ability. In this study, emotional intelligence, achievement motivation, anxiety, and cognitive ability were predictor variables. The criterion variable was academic achievement as measured by student GPA. Results demonstrated that emotional intelligence to be significantly related to student GPA scores, student cognitive ability scores, and student age.

Parker and others (2005) examined the impact of emotional intelligence on the successful transition from high school to university. Results revealed that academically successful students had significantly higher levels of several different emotional and social competencies. These findings suggest that emotional intelligence plays an important role in the successful transition from high school to university.

Mestre and others (2006) investigated in a sample of 127 Spanish adolescents, the ability to understand and manage emotions, assessed by a performance measure of emotional intelligence (the MSCEIT), correlated positively with teacher ratings of academic achievement and adaptation for both males and females. Among girls, these emotional abilities also correlated positively with peer friendship nominations. After controlling for IQ and the Big Five personality traits, the ability to understand and manage emotions remained significantly associated with teacher ratings of academic adaptation among boys and peer friendship nominations among girls. Self-perceived emotional intelligence was unrelated to

Saarth

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these criteria. These findings provided partial support for hypotheses that emotional abilities are associated with indicators of social and academic adaptation to school.

The study conducted by Hassan and others (2009) involved a sample of 223 form 1 and form 4 students. Process of data collection was administered by using a set of questionnaire which includes a self report measure of emotional intelligence adapted from Schutte Self-Report of Emotional Intelligence (SSRI) and Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI). T-test analysis showed that there were no significant differences for the emotional intelligence level within all students between ages 13 and 16. However, there were significant differences for the emotional intelligence level among female students in accordance to age. The results showed that there were significant differences for emotional intelligence level among all students between both genders. Mean score of emotional intelligence within female students appeared to be higher than male students. Pearson correlation analysis showed that emotional intelligence levels of all students were significant negatively in relation to anxiety level. Emotional intelligence was also significant positively in correlation with academic achievement of all variables including students' age and gender.

Tamannaifar and others (2010) conducted a study on 6,050 students at the University of Kashan to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence, self-concept and self esteem with academic achievement. Students as a sample were randomly chosen. It was found from the study emotional intelligence, self concept and esteem, of students was found to be significantly related to their academic achievement.

The study conducted by Yahaya and others (2011) investigated the relationship between the identified five dimensions of emotional intelligence, namely self-awareness, emotional management, self-motivation, empathy, interpersonal skills and academic performance. This study aimed to identify whether the five dimensions of emotional intelligence have been able to contribute to academic performance. Statistical inference of the Pearson-r and multiple regression was used to analyze the data. The results showed that the significant relationship between self-awareness ($r = 0.21$), emotional management ($r = 0.21$) and empathy ($r = 0.21$) at the level of $p < 0.05$ with academic performance. Findings from multiple regression analysis (stepwise) showed that only three dimensions of emotional intelligence which is self-awareness ($\beta = 0.261$), self motivation ($\beta = -0.182$) and empathy ($\beta = 0.167$) accounted for 8.7% of variation in criterion (academic performance). Research also presented a model designed to reflect the relationship between the dimensions of emotional intelligence and academic performance.

Studies Conducted in India

The emotional intelligence construct has important clinical and therapeutic implications because it has emerged from an amalgamation of research findings on how people appraise, communicate and use emotion (Malekari and Mohanty, 2011). Zeidner and others (2004) correctly pointed out that there hasn't been sufficient research to fully understand the impact emotional intelligence has on academic success. In line with the above views a few studies have been conducted in the Indian context.

Kattekar (2010) conducted a study to investigate the impact of emotional intelligence on the academic achievement in Kannada language of 500 standard IX students in the

Saarth

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Karnataka state. He found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and academic achievement of students.

The study conducted by Bai (2011) intended to examine anxiety proneness and emotional intelligence in relation to academic achievement of pre-university students. Study being an exploratory student performance in examination has been considered seriously to examine if there is any influence of anxiety proneness and emotional intelligence on their academic achievement or not. The study involved 500 Pre-University students selected from Bangalore Urban and Rural area who were studying in Science, Arts and Commerce stream by using stratified random sampling procedure. The study revealed that, Arts, Science and Commerce students of PUC have significant difference in academic achievement, anxiety proneness and emotional intelligence and its dimensions Arts and Science of PUC have significant difference in anxiety proneness and emotional intelligence. Commerce and Science students of PUC have significant difference in anxiety proneness and emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions. Some researchers suggest that emotional intelligence can be learned and strengthened, while others claim it's an inborn characteristic.

The ability to express and control [emotions](#) is essential, but so is the ability to understand, interpret, and respond to the emotions of others. Imagine a world in which you could not understand when a friend was feeling sad or when a co-worker was angry. Psychologists refer to this ability as emotional intelligence, and some experts even suggest that it can be [more important than IQ](#) in your overall success in life.

How Emotional Intelligence Is Measured

A number of different assessments have emerged to measure levels of emotional intelligence. Such tests generally fall into one of two types: self-report tests and ability tests.

[Self-report tests](#) are the most common because they are the easiest to administer and score. On such tests, respondents respond to questions or statements by rating their own behaviors. For example, on a statement such as "I often feel that I understand how others are feeling," a test-taker might describe the statement as disagree, somewhat disagree, agree, or strongly agree.

Ability tests, on the other hand, involve having people respond to situations and then assessing their skills. Such tests often require people to demonstrate their abilities, which are then rated by a third party.

If you are taking an emotional intelligence test administered by a mental health professional, here are two measures that might be used:

- [Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test \(MSCEIT\)](#) is an ability-based test that measures the four branches of Mayer and Salovey's EI model. Test-takers perform tasks designed to assess their ability to perceive, identify, understand, and manage emotions.
- [Emotional and Social Competence Inventory \(ESCI\)](#) is based on an older instrument known as the Self-Assessment Questionnaire and involves having people who know the individual offer ratings of that person's abilities in several different emotional competencies. The test is designed to evaluate the social and emotional abilities that help distinguish people as strong leaders.

Saarth

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Dimensions of EI

Researchers suggest that there are four different levels of emotional intelligence including emotional perception, the ability to reason using emotions, the ability to understand emotions, and the ability to manage emotions.

1. **Perceiving emotions:** The first step in understanding emotions is to perceive them accurately. In many cases, this might involve understanding nonverbal signals such as body language and facial expressions.
2. **Reasoning with emotions:** The next step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity. Emotions help prioritize what we pay attention and react to; we respond emotionally to things that garner our attention.
3. **Understanding emotions:** The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is expressing angry emotions, the observer must interpret the cause of the person's anger and what it could mean. For example, if your boss is acting angry, it might mean that they are dissatisfied with your work, or it could be because they got a speeding ticket on their way to work that morning or that they've been fighting with their partner.
4. **Managing emotions:** The ability to manage emotions effectively is a crucial part of emotional intelligence and the highest level. Regulating emotions and responding appropriately as well as responding to the emotions of others are all important aspects of emotional management.

The four branches of this model are arranged by complexity with the more basic processes at the lower levels and the more advanced processes at the higher levels. For example, the lowest levels involve perceiving and expressing emotion, while higher levels require greater conscious involvement and involve regulating emotions.

Impact of Emotional Intelligence

Interest in teaching and learning social and emotional intelligence has grown in recent years. Social and emotional learning (SEL) programs have become a standard part of the curriculum for many schools.

The goal of these initiatives is not only to improve health and well-being but also to help students succeed academically and prevent bullying. There are many examples of how emotional intelligence can play a role in daily life.

Thinking Before Reacting

Emotionally intelligent people know that emotions can be powerful, but also temporary. When a highly charged emotional event happens, such as becoming angry with a co-worker, the emotionally intelligent response would be to take some time before responding. This allows everyone to calm their emotions and think more rationally about all the factors surrounding the argument.

Greater Self-Awareness

Emotionally intelligent people are not only good at thinking about how other people might feel but they are also adept at understanding their own feelings. [Self-awareness](#) allows people to consider the many different factors that contribute to their emotions.

Saarth

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Empathy for Others

A large part of emotional intelligence is being able to think about and empathize with how other people are feeling. This often involves considering how you would respond if you were in the same situation.

People who have strong emotional intelligence are able to consider the perspectives, experiences, and emotions of other people and use this information to explain why people behave the way that they do.

How to Use

Emotional intelligence can be used in many different ways in your daily life. Some different ways to practice emotional intelligence include:

- Being able to accept criticism and responsibility
- Being able to move on after making a mistake
- Being able to say no when you need to
- Being able to share your feelings with others
- Being able to solve problems in ways that work for everyone
- Having [empathy](#) for other people
- Having great listening skills
- Knowing why you do the things you do
- Not being judgemental of others

Emotional intelligence is essential for good interpersonal communication. Some experts believe that this ability is more important in determining life success than IQ alone. Fortunately, there are things that you can do to strengthen your own social and emotional intelligence.

Understanding emotions can be the key to better relationships, improved well-being, and stronger communication skills.

Tips for Improving EI

Being emotionally intelligent is important, but what steps can you take to improve your own social and emotional skills? Here are some tips.

Listen

If you want to understand what other people are feeling, the first step is to pay attention. Take the time to listen to what people are trying to tell you, both verbally and non-verbally. [Body language](#) can carry a great deal of meaning. When you sense that someone is feeling a certain way, consider the different factors that might be contributing to that emotion.

Empathize

Picking up on emotions is critical, but you also need to be able to put yourself into someone else's shoes in order to truly understand their point of view. Practice empathizing with other people. Imagine how you would feel in their situation. Such activities can help you build an emotional understanding of a specific situation as well as develop stronger emotional skills in the long-term.

Reflect

The ability to reason with emotions is an important part of emotional intelligence. Consider how your own emotions influence your decisions and behaviors. When you are thinking about how other people respond, assess the role that their emotions play.

Saarth

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Why is this person feeling this way? Are there any unseen factors that might be contributing to these feelings? How to your emotions differ from theirs? As you explore such questions, you may find that it becomes easier to understand the role that emotions play in how people think and behave.

[Habits of Emotionally Intelligent People](#)

Potential Pitfalls

Having lower emotional intelligence skills can lead to a number of potential pitfalls that can affect multiple areas of life including work and relationships.

People who have fewer emotional skills tend to get in more arguments, have lower quality relationships, and have poor emotional coping skills.

Being low on emotional intelligence can have a number of drawbacks, but having a very high level of emotional skills can also come with challenges. For example:

- Research suggests that people with high emotional intelligence may actually be less [creative](#) and innovative.²
- Highly emotionally intelligent people may have a hard time delivering negative feedback for fear of hurting other people's feelings.
- Research has found that high EQ can sometimes be used for manipulative and deceptive purposes.

Why EQ Matters in the Workplace

Why is emotional intelligence such a valued workplace skill? According to [one survey](#) of hiring managers, almost 75% of respondents suggested that they valued an employee's [EQ more than their IQ](#).

Emotional intelligence is widely recognized as a valuable skill that helps improve communication, management, problem-solving, and relationships within the workplace. It is also a skill that researchers believe can be improved with training and practice.

People with High EQ

- Make better decisions and solve problems
- Keep cool under pressure
- Resolve conflicts
- Have greater empathy
- Listen, reflect, and respond to constructive criticism

People with Low EQ

- Play the role of the victim or avoid taking responsibility for errors
- Have passive or aggressive communication styles
- Refuse to work as a team
- Are overly critical of others or dismiss others' opinions

Why EQ Is Important for Success

Interest in emotion psychology and the concept of emotional intelligence really caught fire with the 1995 publication of Daniel Goleman's book "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ." In the book, Goleman argued that emotional intelligence was critical for predicting success in life. Emotional competencies, he argued, also played a particularly important role in the workplace.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

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The concept quickly attracted the attention of the public, including human resource managers and business leaders. Researchers have suggested that emotional intelligence influences how well employees interact with their colleagues, and EQ is also thought to play a role in how workers manage stress and conflict. It also affects overall performance on the job. Other studies have linked emotional intelligence with job satisfaction.

Studies have shown that employees with higher scores on measures of EQ also tend to be rated higher on measures of interpersonal functioning, leadership abilities, and stress management.

Goleman suggested that while [traditional intelligence](#) was associated with leadership success, it alone was not enough. People who are successful at work aren't just smart—they also have a high EQ.

But emotional intelligence is not just for CEOs and senior managers. It's a quality that's important at every level of a person's career, from college students looking for internships to seasoned employees hoping to take on a leadership role. If you want to succeed in the workplace and move up the career ladder, emotional intelligence is critical to your success.

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