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Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Job Performance of IT employees: A gender study

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Abstract

IT industry has made a significant contribution to the Indian economy both in terms of GDP and employment and thus it makes it important to study the factors influencing the performance of IT employees. The Purpose of this study is to investigate the nature and extent of the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Job performance with respect to the gender of the respondents. The results of this study show significant gender differences in Emotional Intelligence and Job performance, suggesting that female employees score more on EI than their male counterparts. This study also reveals that females are better performers than men.

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1. Introduction

National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) reported that IT sector has become the most important factor for growth in Indian economy and it has contributed towards growing international presence in India. IT sector is also influencing the lives of people as it is contributing towards various socioeconomic parameters like employment and helping people improve their standard of living [1]. The growth and contribution of IT sector makes it an important area of study particularly with respect to enhancing the performance of employees and selecting the right candidates for important jobs [2]. Research suggests that IQ accounts for only 20-25% variance in predicting one's personal and professional success and factors like Emotional Intelligence are more essential than academics [3]. Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to

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perceive emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions, and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth [4,5].

Gender Differences in Emotional Intelligence have been given blended reactions from various analysts. It was noticed that when Emotional Intelligence was taken as a competence there were no huge contrasts in the EI of men and women though EI varied with gender at whatever point Emotional Intelligence was dealt with as an ability. Analysts like Goleman [3], Bar-on [6], Petrides and Furnham [7], Alumran and Punamaki [8] proposed that Emotional Intelligence did not vary with gender while researchers like Mayer et al. [9], Schutte et al. [10], Brackette and Mayer [11], Ciarrochi et al. [12], Palmer et al. [13], Mandell and Pherwani [14] recommended that Emotional Intelligence is different among men and women. As the researchers in the current paper have taken Emotional Intelligence as an ability, we expect contrasts among EI scores of male and female respondents, which characterizes the first and second hypothesis of this research.

H₀₁ = There are no gender differences in Emotional Intelligence.

Confirmation of gender differences at workplace can be found in numerous fields [15,16]. The embodiment of gender differences is that when confronted with a decision between similarly qualified men and women, bosses want to select men. Therefore, gender difference prompts a higher obstacle for ladies, and henceforth ladies who can cross the obstacle would outperform than their male counterparts. A few researchers propose that gender difference is a huge indicator of job performance among workers. Burlson et al. [17] recommended that a specific gender performs better in specific jobs over the other gender and said that gender is a critical indicator of execution at working environment. This suggests that gender difference exists in job performance which makes us define our second hypothesis.

H₀₂= There are no gender differences in Job Performance.

Emotionally Intelligent individuals will probably be dedicated towards their occupation [3] and Emotional Intelligence is important for achievement in many occupations [18]. In 2004, Zeidner et al. [19] recommended that the effect of Emotional Intelligence on Job performance is huge however the outcomes are restricted. Employees capacity to utilize feelings encourages their execution, positive feelings help a person to perform better while adverse feelings like uneasiness impedes the execution of the workers [20]. Emotional Intelligence predicts the execution on task performance [21] and deals execution of supervisors and expert's [22]. Van-Roon and Viswesvaran [23] likewise proposed that Emotionally Intelligent workers are better performers over their partners and numerous researchers concurred with the outcome like Carmeli and Josman [24] and Rosete [25]. These reviews helped us draw our third and fourth hypothesis.

H₀₃= Emotional Intelligence does not impact Job Performance of male employees.

H₀₄= Emotional Intelligence does not impact Job Performance of female employees.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The sample consists of 157 middle level IT managers from Delhi-NCR. There were 82 (52.2%) males and 75 (47.8%) females in the sample. The employees under study who belonged to the age group of 20-30 were 91 (58%), 31-40 were 36 (22.9%), 41-50 were 25 (15.9%) and 51-60 were 5 (3.2%). 59.2% (93) of the employees under study were married and 40.8% (64) were single; 37.6% (59) employees were graduates and 62.4% (98)

employees were post graduates. Employees whose income was less than 5 lacs comprised of 50.3% (79) of the sample, 29.9% (47) employees earn 5 lacs to 10 lacs per annum and 18.5% (29) employees earn more than 10 lacs.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Deepa Krishnaveni Emotional Intelligence test (DKEIT)

The self-report emotional scale developed by Deepa and Krishnaveni [26] called Deepa Krishnaveni Emotional Intelligence test (DKEIT) was used to measure the EI of IT employees, this questionnaire has been designed to measure the EI of the Indian population. It consists of 18 items that reflects the EI of the respondents. Every item in the questionnaire has been tailored to predict a work-related behaviour. High score of Emotional Intelligence shows that the respondent is able to perceive his emotions and emotions of others and is able to use them for best results. Deepa and Krishnaveni [26], defined EI as the ability of an individual to perceive emotions associated with himself and his environment, appraise and regulate them, in order to produce appropriate behavioural responses, which results in improved intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes. DKEIT is split into three dimensions of EI emotional perception, emotional appraisal, and emotional regulation.

2.2.2. Job Performance Inventory (JPI)

Job Performance Inventory (JPI) was used to gauge the performance of the IT employees. The authors formulated this tool to measure the overall job performance of the employees. In this inventory, 14 items were used to evaluate the job performance of the employee where the immediate supervisor or manager assessed these behaviours on a 5-point scale ranging from 2 (always) to -2 (never). Higher the score, better is the employee when it comes to his performance at work. JPI is divided into four dimensions namely accuracy, competence, punctuality and teamwork, the scores of these four components precisely predict an individual's job performance.

2.3. Procedure

Questionnaires were given to over 200 employees in various organizations out of which 157 completed questionnaires were finally selected. The data was collected from August 2015 to July 2016.

3. Results and Analysis

To test the first hypothesis i.e. to find whether there is a significant difference between the EI scores of male and female respondents, independent sample t-test was conducted. It was found that there was a significant difference in the EI scores for male ($M = 44.13$, $SD = 8.067$) and female ($M = 51.83$, $SD = 8.011$) respondents; $t = -5.988$, $p = .000$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate was accepted suggesting that females are more Emotionally Intelligent than their male counterparts. To test the second hypothesis i.e. to find whether there is a significant difference between the Job Performance of male and female respondents, independent sample t-test was conducted. It was found that there was a significant difference in the scores for male ($M = 10.22$, $SD = 6.72$) and female ($M = 15.28$, $SD = 6.78$) respondents; $t = -4.691$, $p = .000$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected and alternate was accepted suggesting that women are better performers than men. The results of t-tests are given in table 1.

Table 1. Gender Difference in Emotional Intelligence and Job performance.

| Variables | Mean (male=82) | S.D | Mean (female=75) | S.D | t | Sig. |
|------------------------|-------------------|------|---------------------|------|--------|------|
| Emotional Intelligence | 44.13 | 8.07 | 51.83 | 8.01 | -5.988 | .000 |
| Job performance | 10.22 | 6.72 | 15.28 | 6.78 | -4.691 | .000 |

Since the t-tests revealed significant differences between the two gender groups, the data of male and female respondents was analysed separately in the future procedures. To check the third and fourth hypothesis correlation was found between EI and Job Performance of males and females separately. The results of correlation between EI and Job Performance for male and female respondents are given in table 2.

Table 2. Correlations among variables of Emotional Intelligence and Job performance.

| | | Job Performance |
|------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | Male | .565** |
| | Female | .517** |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It was found that for male respondents EI is positively correlated with job performance ($r = .565$, $p = .000$). The results of the correlation made the researcher reject the null hypothesis 3 and to find the cause effect relationship between EI and Job performance linear regression was done. To find how much variance does EI produce in the Job Performance of male employees EI was used as independent variable and job performance was taken as the dependent variable. A significant regression equation was found; $F = 37.431$, $p = 0.000$ with an R^2 of 0.319, which means that EI produces 31.9% variance in the Job performance of male employees. Table 3 shows the results of regression for the male respondents.

Table 3. Results of Linear Regression Analysis obtained with the male sample.

| Dependent Variable | Predictors | R ² | Beta | Sig. |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|
| Job Performance | Emotional Intelligence | 0.319 | 0.471 | 0.000 |

The correlation between EI and job performance was done to test the fourth hypothesis, it was found that for female respondents EI is positively correlated with job performance ($r = .517$, $p = .000$). The results of the correlation made the researcher reject the null hypothesis 4 and to find the cause effect relationship between EI and Job performance linear regression was done. To find how much variance does EI produce in the Job Performance of female employees EI was used as independent variable and job performance was taken as the dependent variable. A significant regression equation was found; $F = 26.654$, $p = 0.000$ with an R^2 of .267, which means that EI produces 26.7% variance in the Job performance of female employees. Table 4 shows the results of regression for the female respondents.

Table 4. Results of Linear Regression Analysis obtained with the female sample.

| Dependent Variable | Predictors | R ² | Beta | Sig. |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------|------|-------|
| Job Performance | Emotional Regulation | 0.267 | .438 | 0.000 |

4. Conclusion

Goleman in 1995 proposed that Emotional Intelligence, in future will turn out to be one of the most important factors in predicting personal and professional success [27] as people with high Emotional Intelligence can perceive their emotions and emotions of others; they can evaluate these emotions and further manage them to get a positive and desired result [39]. The results of the study demonstrate a huge connection between EI and job performance, proposing that EI produces 31.9% difference in the performance of men and 26.7% in women's job performance. This demonstrates however women are more Emotionally Intelligent than men, different components like age, salary, capability, identity qualities and so on may contribute more to their work performance. It drives the author to suggest the organisations to additionally examine components like personality traits, sociodemographic factors, and so forth alongside EI to discover what makes women better performers than men. The author suggests that the organizations should not differentiate between their employees on the basis of gender as the results of this research demonstrate that women are better performers than men. Organisations should consolidate EI as a part of recruitment and selection to employ individuals with high EI as it predicts better job performance, they ought to likewise incorporate EI as a part of training and development to improve the EI of the current employees to additionally enhance their individual performance which would lead to the growth of the organization.

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