Gender Differences in Emotional Competency and Self-Efficacy among Indian Job Aspirants

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ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to investigate the emotional intelligence and Self-efficacy of male and female job aspirants in India. The participants comprised of 465 job aspirants appeared in the Service Selection Board including both males (n=264) and females (n=201). Participants belong to various part of India and their age range was between 20 to 27 years with Mean of 21.85 years and SD 1.15 years. The mean age of males was 21.82 and SD 1.13 and the mean age of female was 21.87 and SD 1.17. They were randomly selected and administered Emotional Competence Inventory and Generalized Self-efficacy Scale. To test the hypotheses, descriptive Statistics (Mean, SD), 2x2 ANOVA and regression have been employed. The results showed that Self-management, Social-awareness and social skills were positively related to Self-efficacy. Self-awareness was positively related to Self-management, Social Awareness, and Social Skills. Self-management found to be related with Social Awareness and social skill. There was no significant difference on Emotional Competency with respect to male and female job aspirants. High self-efficacy was found irrespective of gender.

Keywords: Emotional Competency Inventory, Self-Efficacy.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence refers to a set of acquired skills and competencies that predict positive outcomes. Sincerity, earnestness, warmth and persistence are characteristics of people who have high level of emotional Intelligence[1]. Emotional intelligence is conceptualized as either ability[2] or a personality trait[3]. Emotional intelligence as the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and use this information to guide one's own thinking and actions[4]. Later on emotional intelligence refined and defined as the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thoughts, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge and reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth[5]. Emotional intelligence along with high Intelligence Quotient plays a vital role in determining the success of students. Emotionally intelligent are more resilient to stress and tend to develop positive attitude within them. Optimistic person achieve higher levels in walks of life than with pessimistic person. There are two models of Emotional Intelligence viz., the ability model that was first developed by Salovey & Mayer[6] and the mixed model of emotional intelligence popularized through the works of Daniel Goleman[7]. One of the differences in the two models of emotional intelligence calls for measurement in the context of correctness (i.e. right/wrong answers); the mixed model relies solely on self-description of traits and dispositions. The main reason for popularity (and academic criticism) of the mixed model of emotional intelligence has been the ease of measurement through self-report questionnaires.

Mixed Model

The model introduced by Daniel Goleman focuses on Emotional Intelligence as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. Goleman's model outlines of five main emotional intelligence constructs are given below: Daniel Goleman[8] defined EQ "as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others for motivating ourselves, for managing emotions well ourselves and in our relationships". Goleman includes a set of emotional competencies within each construct of emotional intelligence. Emotional competencies are not innate talents but rather learned capabilities that must be worked on and can be developed to achieve outstanding performance. Goleman posits that individuals are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potential for learning emotional competencies. Goleman's[9] revised model of emotional intelligence (ECI 2.0) includes 18 competencies in four clusters: Self- Awareness, Self-management, Social Awareness and Relationship Management. All of these competencies work in conjunction and have a synergistic effect on overall effectiveness. Furthermore, the emotional competencies in order to form a baseline understanding of where we are in each respective

domain in order to implement training practices to improve our abilities in each category to improve effectiveness in work, life, leadership and in education. The way to improve on these social and emotional dimensions is to become self-aware of where we are situated in relation to these concepts and to aspire to improve our competencies to become more effective at life processes.

Emotional Intelligence and Success

Goleman[9] focused to a large extent on the power of emotional intelligence to help individuals achieve success and he closely equated success with money and earning power. He claimed that 20% of success in life is down to IQ and 80% to EQ, although critics argue that he had little or no scientific evidence to back this up. Whilst Mayer and Salovey claim that there is research to show that IQ contributes 25% of the success achieved by individuals, they can make similar quantifiable estimates about the impact of emotional intelligence on achievement. Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence includes interpersonal (understanding other people) and intrapersonal (understanding the self) intelligence. In studying individual adaptation to the social world, social intelligence forms the cognitive aspects of personality and consists of declarative and procedural knowledge that is relevant to social life; Schneiden, Ackerman and Kanfer suggested that social intelligence is only one of several dimensions constituting the global construct of Social competence. Song et al[10] studied the impact of General Mental Ability (GMA) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) on college students' academic and social performance. The GMA and EI both had an influence on academic performance. GMA was found to be a stronger predictor of academic performance than emotional intelligence. However, only EI not GMA was related to the quality of social interactions with peers. Emotional intelligence may predict stress responses and coping strategies in a variety of applied settings. This study compares Emotional intelligence and the personality factors of the Five Factor Model (FFM) as predictors of task induced stress responses. In this study, the participants (200) were randomly assigned 1 to 4 tasks conditions; 3 of which were designed to be stressful. Results confirmed that low emotional intelligence was related to worry state and avoiding coping, even with the FFM statistically controlled. However, emotional intelligence was specifically related to task induced changes in stress state. Results also confirmed that neuroticism related to distress worry and emotion-focused coping and conscientiousness predicted use of task-focused coping. Lyons and Schneider examined the relationship of ability based emotional intelligence facets with performance under stress. The authors expected high levels of emotional intelligence would promote challenge appraisals and better performance, whereas low emotional intelligence levels would foster threat appraisals and poor performance. The authors found that certain

dimensions of emotional intelligence were related more to challenge and enhanced performance after controlling for cognitive ability, demonstrating incremental validity. Emotional intelligence may contribute to work performance (as reflected in salary, salary increase and company rank) by enabling people to nurture positive relationship at work, work effectively in teams, and build social capital. Work performance often depends on the support, advice and other resources provided by others. Emotional intelligence enhances work performance by enabling people to regulate their emotions so as to cope effectively with stress, perform well under pressure and adjust to organizational change. Jordon and Troth examined the utility of emotional intelligence of for predicting individual performance, team performance and conflict resolution styles. 350 participants working in 108 teams were administered a measure of team members' emotional intelligence. Respondents then completed a problem solving task, individually and as a team member and afterwards reflected on the conflict resolution tactics used to achieve the team outcome. In line with expectations, emotional intelligence indicators were positively linked with team performance and were differently linked to conflict resolution methods. In organizational settings, Emotional competence and self-efficacy have been extensively investigated in combination with many other variables. For instance, Self-efficacy in relation to work environment can be defined as "one's conviction about his or abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, courses of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within the given context". It should be understood that self-efficacy does not mean actual skills possessed by a person, rather than it implied that one believes that one can accomplish something[11]. Efficacy uses inventiveness and resourcefulness to impact performance, which makes efficacy a generative capacity[12]. It was found out by Staw that higher self-efficacy levels relate to enhanced creative performance. Highly self-efficacious persons are likely to take up challenging goals and being challenging and risky qualifies one of them[12]. It has been mentioned that self-efficacy effects a person's choices regarding behaviour and activities[13]. Therefore, efficacious individuals take joy in approaching mastery goals[11]. During this process, motivation is increased side by side; a more creative approach in problem solving is triggered due to high self-efficacy. According to Bandura[11] self-efficacy refers to a people's judgement of their capabilities to organize and execute a course of action required to attain designated type of performance. Strong self-efficacy belief results in enhancement of human achievement[14]. It has been found that a strong sense of personal efficacy is related higher achievement and better social integration. . The construct of self-efficacy represents one core aspect of Bandura's social cognitive theory[11]. In a unifying theory of behaviour change, Bandura hypothesizes that expectations of self-efficacy determine whether instrumental

action will be initiated; how much effort will be expended; and how long it will be sustained in the face of obstacles and failures[13]. According to theory and research, self-efficacy makes a difference in how people think, feel and act[11]. Persons with low self-efficacy also have low self-esteem and they harbour pessimistic thought about their accomplishments and personal development[13]. Several studies indicated emotional intelligence plays an important role in enhancing self-efficacy of employees[15,16]. Positive and significant impact of Emotional intelligence on employees' self-efficacy has been found in many studies[16]. Also four dimensions of emotional competency (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and social skills) have a positive and significant impact on employees and teachers' self-efficacy[17]. Emotional competence and its dimensions play an important role in employees' self-efficacy and influence of training Emotional competency components at the workplace could have a considerable impact on improvement of employees' self-efficacy beliefs[16]. Positive correlation was indicated in relation to variables of emotional competency and self-efficacy. Moreover, job seekers in Armed Forces have to face lot of challenges and their emotional competencies (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and social skills) and their beliefs about being able to carry out various tasks in specific time limits are also important; therefore making Emotional competency and Self-efficacy important and relevant issues to explore.

Hypotheses

Keeping in view the earlier literature and theories, following hypotheses were phrased for the present study. H_1 Emotional Competence would be positively related with Self-Efficacy of Male and female job aspirants. H_2 There will be significant difference between Emotional competency of Male and Female Job aspirants. H_3 There will be significant difference between Self-Efficacy of Male and Female Job aspirants. H_4 Self-Efficacy would predict Emotional Competency of job aspirant.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The participants comprised of 465 (264 males, 201 females) job aspirants randomly selected during the selection process at SSBs. The consent was taken from participants before the start of the trial. Participants belong to various part of India and their age ranges were between 20 to 27 years with Mean of 21.85 years and SD 1.15 years. The mean age of male was 21.82 and SD 1.13 and the mean age of female was 21.87 years and SD 1.17 years.

Measures

Emotional Competency Inventory:

The ECI measures of 18 competencies organized in to four clusters: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social-Awareness and Social Skills. Cronbach alpha internal consistency

coefficients for the ECI clusters and competencies range from .73 to .92 with an overall average internal consistency coefficient of .85. Criterion validity, concurrent validity and predictive of each of the ECI competencies were established[18].

General Self-efficacy Scale:

The GSE having 10 items used to measure employee's self –efficacy[19]. There were no negatively phrased items. Possible responses ranged from not at all true (1), hardly true (2), moderately true (3), exactly true (4), yielding a total score between 10 and 40. High reliability, stability and construct validity of the scale were confirmed in earlier studies, whereas, alpha coefficient of .85 was acquired for the current sample.

Statistical Analysis

a. Descriptive statistics such as Mean, Standard Deviation were worked for the total sample for all groups (high/low and male/female).

b. Two- way ANOVA was performed to test the significant difference between groups (male/female) job aspirant on Emotional Competence and Self-Efficacy.

c. Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to test the relationship between the variables. Regression analyses were performed to determine the role of self- efficacy as a mediator in the relationship with Emotional intelligence (Self-awareness, Self-management, Social awareness and Social skills).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the study variables (n=465)

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Emotional competence	286.41	18.58	-.039	.191
Self-efficacy	35.16	3.16	-.78	1.11

The mean score of Emotional Competence of participants was found to be 286.41 with the SD of 18.58 and the skewness of -.039 and kurtosis value of .191; which shows very least variations in the emotional competency. General Self-Efficacy mean score 35.16 and SD of 3.45 where we find moderate variation in the General Self-Efficacy. The skewness is .733 and kurtosis value found to be 1.11 and sample distribution is normal.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Self-Efficacy	35.16	3.45	1				
2. Self –Awareness	41.38	2.93	312**	1			
3. –Management	98.45	7.29	524**	435**	1		
4. Social Awareness	49.46	4.44	487**	413**	627**	1	
5. Social Skills	97.12	7.59	450**	470**	687**	602**	1

*p < .05. **p <.01

Table 2. Pearson Product Moment correlation was computed to measure the direction and degree of the relationship between self-efficacy and emotional competency (four clusters). The results shows that self- efficacy has a positive correlation with emotional competencies viz., self-awareness (r=.312, p<.01), Self-Management (r.524, *p*<.01), Social Awareness (r.487, *p*<.01), and Social Skills (r.450, *p*<.01) at .01level. Self-management (r.435, *p*<.01), Social awareness (r.413, *p*<.01) and Social Skills (r.470, *p*<.01) are also showing positive relation with Self-awareness. With respect to Self-Management it was found Social Awareness (r.627, *p*<.01) and Social Skills (r.687, *p*<.01) are positively correlated. Social Awareness is significantly correlated to Social Skills (r.602, *p*<.01).

Table 3: Summary of 2X2 ANOVA (2 groups X 2 gender) on Emotional Competency

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df.	Mean Square	F. Ratio	Sig
Group	839.425	1	839.425	2.443	.119 (ns)
Gender	303.835	1	303.835	.884	.348 (ns)
Group X Gender	66.314	1	66.314	.193	.661 (ns)
Error	158433.372	461	343.673	-	-

n.s. *p < .05. **p <.01

Table 3 shows the 2x2 ANOVA ((2 groups X 2 gender) on Emotional Competency. In this table, group (.119), gender (.338) and Group X gender wise comparison (.661) shows an insignificant difference among the variable at .05 and .01 level. The results show that there were no significant variance between high performer and low performer with respect to Emotional Competency of male and female Job aspirants.

Table 4: Summary of 2X2 ANOVA (2 groups X 2 gender) on General Self Efficacy

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df.	Mean Square	F. Ratio	Sig
Group	27.616	1	27.616	2.315	.129 (ns)
Gender	2.877	1	2.877	.241	.624 (ns)
Group X Gender	.432	1	.432	.036	.849 (ns)
Error	5547.344	465	11.930	-	-

n.s., *p < .05. **p <.01

Table 4 shows the 2x2 ANOVA ((2 groups X 2 gender) on General Self Efficacy. In this table group (.12), gender (.62) and Group X gender wise comparison (.84) shows an insignificant difference among the variables at .05 and .01level. This indicates that job aspirants of high and low performing male and female groups were not differing of their General self-efficacy.

Table 5: Showing Regression summary of Emotional Competence as predicted variable and Self-Efficacy as significant predictor

Model	Predictor	Constant	R^2	β	F-value	Significance
1	Self-Efficacy	181	0.30	.55	208.3	.01

Dependent Variable: Emotional Competency

Table.5 shows Regression summary of Emotional Competence as predictor of Self-Efficacy. The result of Self-efficacy regressed on Emotional Competency. Self-efficacy is significantly positively correlated and predicting Emotional Competency $\{R^2 = 0.30$ ($\beta = .55$, $p<.01$)$\}$. Findings of the study show that Emotional Competence is high among job aspirants (Table.1). The present results supported to the findings of Yate[20], that high emotional quotient individuals are on the higher level of success and satisfaction and it is significantly correlated with job performance. Diaz[21] reported that that there were a relationship between individual performance and emotional intelligence. Some other studies findings were that, there was no significant relationship between Emotional intelligence and academic performance. In this study participants were almost equal in their eligibility criteria to become a part of the organization and this may reinforce the participants to show that they are adequate enough to perform their job (i.e., emotionally competent) in the competitive scenario. It is the main reason all participants irrespective of gender or performance scored high in the emotional competency scale. Self-efficacy is positively associated with emotional competency, there by supporting the H2. Earlier evidence has shown the relationship between Emotional Intelligence, components of EI and self-efficacy have also found to be significant[17, 22]. Self-efficacy helps the individuals to keep up their efforts for accomplishing their goals as well as making conscious decisions to pursue a certain course of action. Higher Self-efficacy indicates higher level of career commitment, perceived workplace environment and physical activity was partially mediated by Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy was related positively with resources (i.e., mental and emotional competence and superior social support) which, in turn, lead to work engagement and performance. Self-efficacy is a significant determinant of job performance. The study results proved that emotionally intelligent people likely to have more mastery experiences and social persuasion as well which is likely to boost their self- efficacy. Results of the present study not supporting H2 and H3 showed insignificant differences among the male and female job aspirants. It has been observed that job aspirants with higher emotional competency have higher self-efficacy. Some of the studies are supporting the hypotheses and some studies are contradictory to our findings. The present finding has been supported that employees with greater EI has higher self-efficacy[23]. Lyons & Tamera examined the relationship of ability based EI facets with performance under stress of undergraduates' students. Results revealed that EI differed somewhat for males and females. Pathan and Bansibihari[24] studied the level of EI in secondary school teachers in relation to gender and age. The result revealed that there was no significant difference between EI of male and female teachers and EI is independent of age. This study supported our findings of the present study. Jyothika & Sukhjinder study the role of sex differences and

EI of B.Ed., students of Jalandhar city. Results reveal that there was no interaction effect of EI and sex on any transactional style. Similarly Indu[25] studied the EI of college students. Results were indicated that (i) there were no significant difference between the EI of male and female College students (ii) post graduates are more emotional intelligence than the under graduates students. The self-efficacy turned out to be significant at.01 level in the regression equation. It is indicating that this variable is the best predictor of job aspirants' emotional competency. Higher self-efficacy also provides people with the motivation to search for challenging tasks and to create them if these are not available in the environment[13]. Chan found that many components of EI significantly predict self-efficacy[26].

Limitations and Recommendation for Future Research

The present study has some potential limitations. Firstly, the instruments of self-efficacy and Emotional Competency are self- report measures, thereby, increasing the element of social desirability. A qualitative approach on the phenomena of emotional competency and self-efficacy would provide a deep insight into the phenomena. Secondly, the study was limited to only participants of AFSB. As a future endeavour, more Service Selection Boards participants can be included so that variability could be better explored. Finally other related variables such as personality, motivation, vocational preference of the participants and its relationship with candidates' success can assist in grasping the larger picture.

CONCLUSION

This study clearly brings out that emotional competence is high among job aspirants and positively correlated with self efficacy. Self efficacy is the best predictor of emotional competence. Individuals with high self efficacy will show high emotional competence. The findings of this study can be gainfully utilised by job aspirants, career counsellors and recruiters.

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