EFFECTS OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS ON TRAIT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WITH RESPECT TO AZAD UNIVERSITY IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been one of the debating topics in the field of industrial and organizational psychology. It is one of the successful predictor of job performance, contributing the success in one's life. Earlier research indicated no evidences were reported on this aspect especially in Iranian population. The present study intends to explore the relationship between demographical characteristics and emotional intelligence in the employees of Iranian Islamic Azad University. Emotional Intelligence was measured by using the questionnaire developed by Petrides & Furnham (2001), where 266 employees of Islamic Azad University Iran were participated in the study. The demographic information was also collected from the employees. It was found that EI was significantly correlated with gender, organizational units and level of education of the employees.

Keywords: Demographic Characteristics, Emotional intelligence, Islamic Azad University

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays organizations have gained high and prominent position in the social and communities' structures. To achieve success with holistic development providing welfare and tranquility is not possible mere by the existence of organizations, however, efficient and effective organizations are very much needed. In this scenario, organizations both public and private sectors have to manage by themselves to bring the change in an effective way. Emotional Intelligence (EI) plays an important role in helping the supervisors and employees to cope with this dynamic change in the business environment (Kulkarni, Janakiram, and Kumar 2009).

Apart from that the application of emotional intelligence that includes the areas like personnel selection, development of employees, teams and the organization (Bar-On, Maurice& Elias, 2007) are becoming prominent with the use of EI.

Trait emotional intelligence refers to a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies (Petrides, Pita, and Kokkinaki 2007). It is the only operational definition in the field that recognizes the inherent subjectivity of emotional experience (Petrides, 2010). It is revealed that same genes are responsible for the development of individual differences in personality traits and also in the development of individual differences of trait EI. It was observed was that the demographical characteristics (age, gender, designation, educational level, and work experience) have shown positive relationship with emotional intelligence (Jorfi, Yaacob and Shah, 2011; Jeya and Balakrishnan, 2012).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Male and female learn different lessons in managing their emotions. Parents mostly talk to their girls, rather than boys, about their emotions (except for anger). Also they provide more information about feelings to their girls. It may be due to mastering of language faster than male by females may cause them to become more experienced at precisely expressing their feelings ,and more skilful in using words . Male, for whom emotions expression has not been emphasized, are probably unaware of their and others' emotional states to a large extent (Brudy and Hall (2000), Naghavi, Redzuan, Asgari, Mirza (2012). It was found that women scored significantly higher TEIQue-SF than the men (Cooper and Petredes 2010). Few studies indicated that male shows better adjustment than females .However, it was observed some differences between males and females in the level of emotional intelligence (Sanchez-Ruiz, Perez-Gonzales, & Petrides, 2010).With regard to the relationship between gender and emotional intelligence, it was observed that woman scored higher than the man on the "social skills" factor of trait emotional intelligence. However, it was indicated that the man believed they had higher general emotional intelligence than the woman (Petrides and Furnham, 2000).

It is believed that older people are more aware, rational and restrained. So far, researches show a slight relationship between emotional intelligence and age (Lorenzo, Massimiliano, Joshua, Stein, 2007). Lorenzo et al., (2007) found that there are many young people with high EQ, and many older people with lower EQ. Mikolajczak, Luminet, L eroy, Roy (2006) founded TEIQue scores were dependent on gender but relatively independent of age. Goleman (2004) claimed that there is relationship between age and level of emotional intelligence. Van Rooy, Alonso, and Viswesvaran, (2005) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and age .that there were positive correlation between emotional intelligence and age. Quite a few researches that have examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and work experience. Generally, it is assumed that emotional intelligence increases as work experience increases.

Yelkikalan, Hacioglu, Kiray, Ezilmez, Soylemezoglu, Cetin, Sonmez and Özturk, (2012) indicated that the emotional intelligence scores were compared with demographic qualities (age, sex, family income, education level of parents, and place of residence) of the individuals. The findings revealed that there was a positive relationship of emotional intelligence with sex and education levels of parents. No any significant relationship between emotional intelligence and place of residence in teenagers. There were significant differences between emotional intelligence scores of female and male. Female have higher levels of emotional intelligence. The important difference is confirmed to be based on

emotional intelligence for educational status of the family. There was no a significant difference between emotional intelligence score and age, place of residence and family income. The level of emotional intelligence improves with the increased level of education. In studies revealed that demographic qualities are also associated with emotional intelligence.

Yelkikalan, et al (2012) revealed that there was a significant relationship between the emotional intelligence and academic achievements and that almost 11% of change in academic achievements can be explained by emotional intelligence. Similarly, Seher and Engin, 2008; Yılmaz and Ahin, 2004; Kaya and Keçeci, 2004) found there was significant difference regarding to the grade variable.

This study mainly deals with the influence of demographical characteristics on trait emotional intelligence. It is further intend to examine the level of EI and the differences of EI in different groups (age, gender, marital status, residence, organization unit, organizational experience, income and academic qualification) the purpose of this study is to evaluate the levels of emotional intelligence of the employees of Islamic Azad University based on their demographic profiles. The study also tends to investigate the overall emotional intelligence based on the self- perceived or rated emotional intelligence inventory. The demographic profiles studied were gender, age group, residence, marital status, organizational experience, organizational unit, income and academic qualification.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study mainly deals with Trait Emotional Intelligence and Demographic features. After assessing the available related literatures the following research questions were formulated to assess the effect of demographic feature on emotional intelligence.

1. What is the level of emotional intelligence among the employees?

2. Is there a significance difference in emotional intelligence trait between the demographic groups: age group, gender, marital status, residence, organization unit, organizational experience, income and educational qualification?

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the present study were:

1. To assess the level of emotional intelligence among employees at Azad university

2. To assess the influence of demographic variables on emotional intelligence.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

The study is based on a survey using standard questionnaires which were distributed to six various sections in five constituents (located at different places) of the Islamic Azad University in the one district of Iran. The questionnaires were distributed based on the number of employees in every section of Islamic Azad University. Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF), (Petrides and Furnham, 2006) was used to measure trait emotional intelligence. It is a 30-items questionnaire designed to measure global trait emotional intelligence that is based on the full form of the trait emotional intelligence. Two items from each of the 15 facets of the TEIQue were chosen for

inclusion, based primarily on their relationship with the corresponding total facet scores (Cooper & Petrides, 2010). TEIQue provide scores on four factors: well-being, sociability emotionality and self-control (Petrides, 2001).

The instrument is based on 7 points Likert- scale where each item in the scale is a belief statement of people about the trait emotional intelligence with which he/she may agree or disagree. Besides each statement there is a response scale which ranges from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (7). Scores of 1, 2 and 3 indicate the extent to which an individual disagrees. Score of 4 indicate no opinion. Scores of 5, 6 and 7 indicate the extent to which an individual agrees. The range of scores is between 30 and 210. Score above 170 means the high emotional intelligence and 112 score indicates the low emotional intelligence.

The questionnaires were distributed to a total of 350 employees. From the mentioned participants a total of 266 (76%) questionnaires were returned and entered for data analysis. Descriptive method (mean, Standard Deviation), Pearson Chi-squire, Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal - Wallis test and regression were used for data analysis.

RESULTS

Reliability of the scale

The internal consistency of the scale was measured in order to determine the reliability of the scale. It is found that Cronbach reliability coefficient of the scale used for this research is 0.868. A reliability coefficient above 0.70 confirms that the scale used in the study is reliable.

Demographic Profile

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents. It provides the personal details about the respondents such as age, gender, residency, grade education, level of income, organizational experience, organizational unit etc.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondent

	Variables	frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Gender	Male	179	67.3	67.3	67.3
	Female	87	32.7	32.7	100.0
	Total	266	100.0	100.0	
Age group	20-30	82	30.8	31.2	31.2
	31-40	105	39.5	39.9	71.1
	41-50	61	22.9	23.2	94.3
	51-up	15	5.7	5.7	100.0
	Total	263	98.9	100.0	
	Missing	3	1.1		

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondent (Contd….)

	Variables	frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Residence	Inside city	229	86.1	87.4	87.4
	Outside city	33	12.4	12.4	100.0
	Total	262	98.5	100.0	
	Missing	4	1.5		
Marital status	Single	57	21.4	21.8	21.8
	Married	205	77.1	78.2	100.0
	Total	262	98.5	100.0	
	Missing	4	1.5		
Organizational experience	0-5 years	58	21.8	22.2	22.2
	5.1-10 years	96	36.1	36.8	59.0
	10.1-15 years	41	15.4	15.7	74.7
	15.1-20 years	43	16.2	16.5	91.2
	20.1-up years	23	8.6	8.8	100.0
	Total	261	98.1	100.0	
	Missing	5	1.9		
Organizational unit	Educational	90	33.8	33.8	33.8
	Student welfare	33	12.4	12.4	46.2
	Administrative	90	33.8	33.8	71.1
	Overdevelop	14	5.3	5.3	78.6
	Cultural	20	7.5	7.5	83.8
	Research	43	16.2	16.2	100.0
	Total	266	100.0	100.0	
Income	0-200000	28	10.5	10.5	10.5
	201000-400000	63	23.7	23.7	34.2
	401000-600000	115	43.2	43.2	77.4
	601000-800000	44	16.5	16.5	94.0
	Up 801000	16	6	6	100.0
	Total	266	100.0	100.0	
Education qualification	Diploma and below	76	28.5	28.5	28.6
	Degree	148	55.6	55.6	84.2
	Masters Degree	34	12.8	12.8	97.0
	PhD	8	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total Number of Respondents		266	100.0	100.0	

Influence of demographic profile on emotional intelligence

a. Gender and emotional intelligence. As shown in table 2, Pearson chi-square test revealed a significant difference between emotional intelligence and gender (n=266) =9.809 p=.044 and also emotionality with gender (n=266) =17.441p=.004. Further, the data was analyzed by using a Mann-Whitney U test which revealed a significant difference between male and female employees' emotional intelligence. The test scores for male is (Md=127.43) and female is (M=145.99); conditions are U=6.700, Z=-.-1.847, p=.030. As the p value is less than 0.05, there is a significant difference between genders. These results indicate that emotional intelligence varies with the gender of the employees.

b. Age groups and emotional intelligence. As per table 2, Pearson Chi-square (n=266) =22.780, p=.120. The value indicated that there is no significant difference between wellbeing and age groups (n=266) =39.202, p= .006. The similar findings were found by Kruskal - Wallis test which revealed no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence levels across the four different age groups. The age group 31-40 years recorded the highest score (Md =141.37) and the lowest score was recorded by the age group 51-60 years (Md=117.7).

Table 2. Relationship between Demographic features and Emotional Intelligence (Pearson Chi-squire test)

Variables independent / dependent	Gender	Age	Residence	Marital status	Organizational experience	Organization unit	Income	Educational qualification
well-being	4.646	39.202*	4.646	5.573	16.048	36.942	20.022	47.225*
Self-control	1.188	10.964	1.507	5.577	13.384	35.870	17.255	36.627
Emotionality	17.441*	15.898	9.607	4.888	17.210	36.935	19.621	30.437
Sociability	3.179	26.897	2.684	7.080	10.518	30.270	22.356	45.436*
Global EI	6.304	14.544	3.208	7.463	11.841	22.169	15.379	57.332*
Total EI	9.809**	22.780	4.910	2.415	11.927	54.736*	18.576	39.804 *

Note: * indicates significant at p≤ 0.01, ** indicates significant at p≤0.05

c. Residence and emotional intelligence. As shown in table 2, a Pearson chi-square test revealed no significant difference between emotional intelligence and different residence, Chi-square (n = 266) = 4.910, p = 0.297.A Mann-Whitney U test showed no significant difference between residency of employees and emotional intelligence. The test scores for male (Md=127.43) and female (M=145.99) conditions are U= 3.766, Z= -.032, p=.487. As the p value is greater than 0.05, therefore there is no significant difference between residences. These results suggest that emotional intelligence does not vary with the residence of the employees.

d. Marital status and emotional intelligence. As per table 2, Pearson chi-square test revealed no significant difference between emotional intelligence and Marital status Chi-square (n = 266) = 2.415. The similar results found by Kruskal-Wallis test which found no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence levels across the three different groups, The single group recorded the highest score (Md =135.16) and the lowest score was recorded by married group (Md=110).

e. Organizational experience and emotional intelligence. As per table 2, Pearson chi-square test found no significant difference between emotional intelligence and Organizational experience Chi-square (n = 266) = 11.927, p = 0.919. The similar observation was made by Kruskal-Wallis test which also revealed no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence levels across the six different organizational experience groups. The group of 10.1-15 years experience respondents recorded the highest score (Md =134.26) and the lowest score was recorded by the age group 15.1-20 years experience respondents (Md=120.67).

f. Organization unit and emotional intelligence. As per table 2, Pearson chi-square test found statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence between designation employees, Chi-square (n = 266) = 54.736, p = 0.000. Similar observation was found in Kruskal-Wallis test which revealed statistically significant difference in organization employees across the six different organizational sections. The Overdevelop section recorded the highest score (Md =158) and the lowest score was recorded by the Student welfare section (Md=116.91).

g. Income and emotional intelligence. As shown in table 2, Pearson chi-square test revealed no significant difference between emotional intelligence and income (Chi-square (n = 266) = 18.576, p = 0.291). Similar result was found by Kruskal-Wallis test that revealed no statistically significant difference in emotional intelligence levels across the six different income groups. The income group above 801000 recorded the highest score (Md =174.41) and the lowest was recorded by the income group 401000-600000 (Md=**125.63**).

h. educational qualification and emotional intelligence. As shown in table 2, Pearson chi-square test found significant difference between emotional intelligence and education qualification (Chi-square (n = 266) = 39.804, p = .005) and also revealed different wellbeing (n = 266) = 47.225, p = 0.005), sociability (n = 266) = 45.436, p = 0.007 and global EI (n = 266) = 57.332, p = .000 with education. Similar result also found by Kruskal-Wallis test which revealed statistically significant difference between the education qualifications of the employees. The highest median score was recorded by PhD qualified groups (Md = 188.31), followed by Masters (Md = 165.32), Degree (Md = 137.64), up Diploma (Md = 117.40) and Diploma and below diploma (Md =108.79). Therefore, the level of emotional intelligence increases with the advancement of academic grades.

Table 3 shows level of emotional intelligence of the employees. 76.7 percent of the respondents were having average emotional intelligence, 17.7 percent of respondents were having low emotional intelligence and the rest 5.6 percent of the respondents were having high emotional intelligence. Hence, employees with average level of emotional intelligence are dominated in the work force of Islamic Azad University.

Table 3. Level of Emotional Intelligence of the Employees of the Islamic Azad University

Level of emotional intelligence	Frequency	Percentage
High	15	5.6
Medium	204	76.7
Low	47	17.7

Table 4 shows the regression equation between emotional intelligence and the independent variables (gender, organization unite and educational qualification). With emotional intelligence in order to understand the importance and the magnitude of the various predictor variables on emotional intelligence. It is found that there is a statistically strong association between education grades with emotional intelligence.

Table 4. Regression between Demographic Features and Emotional Intelligence

Variable	estimate	Std .error	Wald	Df	sig	Lower bound	Upper bound
Gender	.420	.273	2.364	1	.124	-.115	.954
Organization unit	.013	.071	.035	1	.852	-.127	.153
Educational qualification	.448	.104	18.380	1	.000	.243	.653

The study examined that there is a significant difference in the employee emotional intelligence based on gender. In other words, women have significantly higher emotional intelligence than men. In addition, it is also found that there is significant relation between emotionality and gender. These findings are similar to the various empirical studies like Naghavi et al., (2012); Brudy and Hall,(2000), Cooper and Petredes, (2010), Sanchez-Ruiz et al., (2010), Petrides and Furnham, (2000); Goleman, (1995); Mikolajczak et al., (2006); Yelkikalan et al., (2012); Harrod and Scheer, (2005).

Even though, Van Rooy et al.,(2005), Goleman (2004) and Bar-On (2003) found that there is relationship between emotional intelligence and age; and also age have an impact on level of emotional intelligence but this study observed that the level of emotional intelligence does not increases with the age except well- being which is similar to the findings of Yelkikalan et al. (2012); Seher and Engin, (2008) , Lorenzo et al,(2007), Mikolajczak et al,(2006).

Further, it is found that there was no significant difference between marital status with emotional intelligence and organizational experience with emotional intelligence. Furthermore, it is found that designation was positively correlated with levels of emotional intelligence of the employees and there were strong relationships between emotionality and grade educations. Similarly, there is significant difference between the well-being, sociability and global emotional intelligence with educational qualification.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results and discussion of the present study the following conclusion and recommendation are given. The study portraits that the level of emotional intelligence of the employees is positively associated with the education qualification. The employees' having average emotional intelligence dominates the workforce of Islamic Azad University. Based on the result, it is suggested that emotional intelligence in the organization can be improved by selecting employees having higher educational qualification. Enhancing EI of the employees enables all the managers and employees to ensure success, higher job performance and higher effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

Future Direction

This study has been conducted to assess the impact of demographic feature on emotional intelligence. Based on the result of the present study the educational qualification was strongly associated with emotional intelligence in non management employees of Azad Universities. If such study conducts in other organization it will bring significant results for the consideration of staff recruitment. Therefore, I recommend researchers to conduct similar research in other organization and industries.

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