



A STUDY ON THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE COGNITIVE STYLE OF MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES WORKING IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTORS

Sangeetha. M¹, Selvaraj, B. S.²

¹Department of Psychology, Government College of Arts and Science-Coimbatore, India

²Department of Psychology, Government College of Arts and Science-Coimbatore, India

ABSTRACT

A study on the role of emotional intelligence in the cognitive style on men and women employees working in government and private sectors was conducted (N=400, Male-265, Female-135, age group 25-55). The tools used were Schutte et al 's Emotional Intelligence Scale (1997) and Allinson and Hayes's The cognitive Style Index (2012) for measuring the emotional intelligence and cognitive style of the employees. The data was collected from the employees of well known private companies and government organizations working in various sectors from banking, management and service. ANOVA for emotional intelligence and cognitive style of the employees shows emotional intelligence does not significantly effect the cognitive style of the employees and there are no significant difference in the male and female employees in the cognitive style of the employees.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Cognitive Style, Private sector, Government sector

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of Emotional Intelligence was firstly introduced by Salovey and Mayer in the year 1990. They postulated that emotional intelligence consists of three categories of adaptive abilities: appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion and utilization of emotions in solving problems. The first category consists of the components of appraisal and expression of emotion in the self and appraisal of emotion in others. The component of appraisal and expression of emotion in the self in further divided into the subcomponents of non-verbal perception and empathy. The second category of emotional intelligence, regulation, has the components of regulation of emotions in the self and regulation of emotions in others. The third category utilization includes the components of flexible planning, creative thinking, redirected attention and motivation. Even though emotions are at the core of this model, it also encompasses social and cognitive functions related to the expression, regulation and utilization of emotion (Scutte et al, 1997)[1].

Daniel Goleman, a psychologist and science writer who has written on brain and behavior research for the New York Times, discovered the work of Salovey and Mayer in the 1990's and eventually wrote the landmark book Emotional Intelligence in 1995. Goleman's emotional intelligence model outlines four main constructs. The first, self-awareness, is the ability to read one's emotions and recognize their impact while using gut feelings to



guide decisions. Self-management, the second construct, involves controlling one's emotions, impulses and adapting to changing circumstances. The third construct, social awareness, includes the ability to sense, understand and react to other's emotions while comprehending social networks. Finally, relationship management, the fourth construct, entails the ability to inspire, influence and develop others while managing conflict (Goleman, 1998)[2].

Mayer and Salovey (1997)[3] formulated a revised model of emotional intelligence which gives more emphasis to the cognitive components of emotional intelligence and conceptualizes emotional intelligence in terms of potential for intellectual and emotional growth. Mayer and Salovey (1997) define emotional intelligence as "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". Cognitive components in emotional intelligence are stressed by various researchers such as Mayer and Salovey.

Cognition is a term referring to the mental processes involved in gaining knowledge and comprehension. These processes include thinking, knowing, remembering, judging and problem-solving. These are higher level functions of the brain and encompass language, imagination, perception and planning. One of the earliest definitions of cognition was presented in the first text of cognitive psychology published in 1967. According to Neisser (1967)[4], cognition is "those processes by which the sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered and used".

The notion of cognitive style was introduced by Klein and Schlesinger (1951)[5]. Klein (1951) [6] was the first to consider cognitive styles as patterns of adaptation to the external world that regulate an individual's cognitive functioning. Messick (1976) [7] defined cognitive styles as stable attitudes, preferences or habitual strategies that determine individuals' modes of perceiving, remembering, thinking and problem solving. Witkin, Moore, Goodenough and Cox (1977)[8] characterized cognitive styles as individual differences in the way people perceive, think, solve problems, learn and relate to others.

A research study in emotional intelligence has been found beneficial in many fields. However, the application of its usefulness has been most frequently documented in the professional workplace. Likewise, in the field of industrial and organizational psychology, cognitive psychology is considered a fundamental factor determining both individual and organizational behavior (Streufert & Nogami, 1989; Sadler-Smith & Badger, 1998; Talbot, 1989) [9, 10,11] and a critical variable in personnel selection, internal communications, career guidance, counseling and conflict management (Hayes & Allinson, 1994)[12].

The present study focuses on the role of emotional intelligence in cognitive style of men and women employees of private and government sector.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Wright and Elizabeth (2007)[13] was to examine the empirical and practical nature of emotional intelligence, cognitive style and personality in relationship to college students' academic achievement and life satisfaction. The study was conducted with the sample of 243 undergraduate students. The results indicated that personality is the most powerful predictor of student's academic achievement and life satisfaction. However, emotional



intelligence and cognition also had an important role in scholastic success. Sahin, Guler and Basim (2009) [14] aimed to determine the relationships between cognitive and emotional intelligence, coping and stress symptoms in the context of Type A personality pattern. The Raven Progressive Matrices, Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, Ways of Coping Inventory, Stress Symptoms Scale and Type A Personality Scale were administered to 271 university students. Two groups, Type As and Type Bs were created according to the Type A Personality Scale scores and were compared in terms of their scores on the other scales that were administered. Findings showed a positive relationship between cognitive intelligence and emotional intelligence. Chaffey and Fossey (2012) [15] in a study investigated the relationship between intuition and emotional intelligence among occupational therapists in mental health practice. Measures of cognitive style emotional competencies at work were used in the study. The survey was conducted with 400 members of national occupational therapy association. The results of 134 respondents showed moderate relationship between intuitive cognitive style and emotional intelligence.

Mandell and Pherwani (2003)[16] examined the predictive relationship between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership style and found significant differences in the emotional intelligence scores of male and female managers. Jorfi, Bin Yacco and Shah (2012) [17] conducted a research study that focused on examining the role of gender in emotional intelligence and its relationship with communication effectiveness and job satisfaction. The results found that women as compared to their male colleagues, had higher levels of emotional intelligence. Lofstrom (2008) [18] viewed individual differences in information processing through the concept of cognitive style. The author analyzed the relationships between demographic variables such as gender, age, level of education, work specific variables and cognitive style. Data was collected from 228 staff members in 100 small and medium sized enterprises in Finland. In the research findings women displayed more analytical cognitive style than men.

Review of the past research findings suggest that positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and cognitive style. Several studies have been conducted to find out the sex differences in emotional intelligence and they found that women are better than men emotional intelligence.

III. METHOD

3.1. PARTICIPANTS: The number of participants in the study was 265 male and 135 female comprising the total of 400. The sample was employees working in various districts of Tamilnadu state and Maharashtra state. Employees were from various sectors ranging from teaching, banking, service and IT.

3.2. MEASURES: Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Shutte et al. (1997) based on Salovey and Mayers' (1994) definition of emotional intelligence was used to study the emotional intelligence of the employees. The measure consists of 33 items that adopt a five point scale. The scale score range from 33 to 165. Higher score indicate higher emotional intelligence. Cognitive Style Index by Allinson & Hayes (2012) which consists of 38 items was used study the cognitive style of the employees. The five dimensions of the study are, intuitive, quasi-intuitive, adaptive, quasi-analytic and analytic. Each item has 'true', 'uncertain', and 'false' response options, and scores of 2, 1, or 0 are assigned to each response. The nearer the total score to the



maximum of 76, the more 'analytical' the respondent, the nearer to the minimum of 0, the more 'intuitive' the respondent.

3.3. HYPOTHESIS:

H1: There will be significant difference in the emotional intelligence between male and female employees.

H2: There will be significant difference in the cognitive style of male and female employees

H3: There is will be positive relation between emotional intelligence and cognitive style of the employees.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Emotional Intelligence of male and female employees.

| Variable | Employees' | <i>M</i> | Std.Deviation | <i>N</i> |
|------------------------|------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | Gender | | | |
| Emotional Intelligence | Male | 125.43 | 18.70 | 265 |
| | Female | 129.94 | 18.01 | 135 |

Table 2: Analysis of Variance for Emotional Intelligence of male and female employees.

| Source | <i>df</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
|--------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Gender | 1 | 5.33 | 0.021* |
| Error | 398 | | |
| Total | 399 | | |

* $p < .05$

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Cognitive style of male and female employees.

| Variable | Employees' | <i>M</i> | Std.Deviation | <i>N</i> |
|-----------------|------------|----------|---------------|----------|
| | Gender | | | |
| Cognitive Style | Male | 49.92 | 8.14 | 265 |
| | Female | 50.89 | 7.52 | 135 |



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Table 4: Analysis of Variance for Cognitive style of male and female employees.

| Source | <i>df</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
|--------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Gender | 1 | 1.338 | 0.248 |
| Error | 398 | | |
| Total | 399 | | |

* $p < .05$

Table 5: Relationship among emotional intelligence and cognitive style of the employees.

| Variable | | Emotional Intelligence | Cognitive Style |
|------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Emotional Intelligence | <i>r</i> | 1 | |
| | <i>Sig.</i> | . | |
| | <i>N</i> | 400 | |
| Cognitive Style | <i>r</i> | .015 | 1 |
| | <i>Sig.</i> | .758 | . |
| | <i>N</i> | 400 | 400 |

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Present study investigated the role of emotional intelligence in cognitive style of men and women employees of private and government sector. In order to understand the relationship that exist among these variables ANOVA and multiple correlations was worked out. Conclusion of the statistical analysis is explained in this chapter.

It was found that there were high significant differences in emotional intelligence, of male and female employees' . ($F_{(1, 398)} = 5.33, p < .05$; eta squared = .013). Analysis of male and female mean emotional



intelligence scores, showed that female employees are more emotionally intelligent ($M = 129.94$) than the male employees' ($M = 125.43$). Since the significant difference is noted between male and female employees' scores, the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the emotional intelligence of male and female employees is accepted.

It was found that there were no significant differences in cognitive style, of male and female employees' . ($F_{(1, 398)} = 1.338, p < .05$; eta squared = .003). Analysis of male and female mean cognitive style scores, showed that both male ($M = 49.92$) and female employees ($M = 50.89$) have quasi-analytic style as their cognitive style. Since there was no significant difference is noted between male and female employees' scores, the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the cognitive style of male and female employees is rejected.

There was no significant correlation between emotional intelligence and cognitive style of the employees ($r = -.015, N = 400, p = .758$, two tailed).

The results support many studies that say, women are more emotionally intelligent than men. Female employees scored more on emotional intelligence than male employees. On studying the cognitive style, it was noted that there was no difference in the cognitive style of male and female and employees. Men and women employees both used quasi analytic cognitive style, which denotes a tendency towards, but not the full adoption of analytic cognitive style, showing that, the employees adopt logic, linear and focus on detail cognitive style. The study results contradict the results of previous studies on the relation between emotional intelligence and cognitive style. Significant correlation was not found between emotional intelligence and cognitive style of the employees. The hypothesis stating that there will be positive relation between emotional intelligence and cognitive style is rejected. It is suggested that the study can be repeated with more sample with different backgrounds. The sample can include equal male and female participants to study the gender differences. In the application point, training the employees in emotional intelligence and educating them in the cognitive styles can help the organizations in a long run in improving employees commitment to the organization, retaining the employees, increasing productivity, managing conflicts, reducing turnover etc.,

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