

**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PREDICTOR
VARIABLE FOR DIFFERENT LIFE CONTEXTS-A
LITERATURE REVIEW**

Nanda T G S*

Sree Devi K K**

Abstract

The present paper examined the various theories of emotional intelligence and the different empirical studies conducted on EI as a predictor variable. An extensive review of researches on emotional intelligence as a predictor variable were carried out based on which critical life contexts were identified. The outcome led us to seven major life contexts which had direct influences of Emotional Intelligence. Key findings and relevance of the studies with respect to life context has been portrayed. The paper also makes an attempt to analyze and understand TEIQue. The study also recommends scope for further research in seven different life contexts where EI can contribute significantly.

Keywords: EI, Predictor Variable, Life Contexts, TEIQue.

* Assistant Professor & Student Counselor, School of Management, Hindustan University, Chennai

** Teaching Research Associate, School of Management, Hindustan University, Chennai

Introduction

When psychologists began research on intelligence, they focused on non – emotional aspects such as thinking, cognition, intellect, memory and problem solving (Intelligence Quotient). However, there have been very little research and only recently the researchers recognized that, emotional aspects such as feelings, moods, and non – cognition were equally important in every context of life situations (Emotional Quotient). The main objective of this study was to analyze the influence of emotional intelligence in varied life contexts. An elaborate review of literatures on research progresses of emotional intelligence directed us to concentrate on seven important life contexts of Self- Image, Suicide, Social Competence, Organizational Variables, leadership, Creativity and Happiness which is portrayed here.

Emotional intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is defined as an ability to use and understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and ought to be measured using tests of maximal performance (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Trait EI (or trait emotional self-efficacy) is defined as a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies (Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki, 2007). In essence, trait EI concerns people's self-perceptions of their emotional abilities. While such self-perceptions are prima facie important for the development of body image and psychological well-being more generally (Mikolajczak, Petrides, & Hurry, 2009), only a few broadly relevant studies have been carried out to date.

The construct of trait emotional intelligence (trait EI or trait emotional self-efficacy) refers to a constellation of emotional self-perceptions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies (Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki, 2007). The conceptualization of EI as a personality trait is in accordance with the subjective nature of emotional experience (Watson, 2000) and leads to a construct that lies wholly outside the taxonomy of human cognitive ability (Carroll, 1993).

TEIQue

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue; Petrides, 2009) is a self-report questionnaire that has been developed to cover the trait EI sampling domain comprehensively (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Questionnaire measures of EI have been proliferating over the past few years, and it is important to mention three advantages of the

TEIQue over them to justify the focus of this research. First, the TEIQue is based on a psychological theory that integrates the construct into mainstream models of differential psychology. In contrast, other measures are based on the misconception that intelligence or competencies can be measured through self-report items such as “I’m good at understanding the way other people feel.” Second, the TEIQue provides comprehensive coverage of the 15 facets of the trait EI sampling domain. In contrast, other measures typically overlook a large part of this domain and often include irrelevant facets. Third, the full TEIQue has excellent psychometric properties. In contrast, most other self-report measures tend to have problems affecting their reliability, their factor structure, or both.

The 15 Adult Sampling Domain of Trait Emotional Intelligence
(According to Dr. K. V. Petrides, TEIQue)

Facets	High scorers perceive themselves as...
<i>Adaptability</i>	...flexible and willing to adapt to new conditions.
<i>Assertiveness</i>	...forthright, frank, and willing to stand up for their rights.
<i>Emotion perception (self and others)</i>	...clear about their own and other people’s feelings.
<i>Emotion expression</i>	...capable of communicating their feelings to others.
<i>Emotion management (others)</i>	...capable of influencing other people’s feelings.
<i>Emotion regulation</i>	...capable of controlling their emotions.
<i>Impulsiveness (low)</i>	...reflective and less likely to give in to their urges.
<i>Relationships</i>	...capable of having fulfilling personal relationships.
<i>Self-esteem</i>	...successful and self-confident.
<i>Self-motivation</i>	...driven and unlikely to give up in the face of adversity.
<i>Social awareness</i>	...accomplished networkers with excellent social skills.
<i>Stress management</i>	...capable of withstanding pressure and regulating stress.
<i>Trait empathy</i>	...capable of taking someone else’s perspective.
<i>Trait happiness</i>	...cheerful and satisfied with their lives.
<i>Trait optimism</i>	...confident and likely to “look on the bright side” of life.

Emotional Intelligence and Self Image

VirenSwamy et al.(2010) in their study titled “Associations between trait emotional intelligence, actual–ideal weight discrepancy, and positive body image” made an interesting finding of associations between trait emotional intelligence (trait EI) and two measures of body image, namely actual–ideal weight discrepancy and body appreciation. Correlations showed that all trait EI factors were significantly associated with both actual–ideal weight discrepancy and body appreciation. Based on the above conceptual postulations, a number of recent studies have begun to examine the association between emotional intelligence (EI) and body image or eating disorders.

Emotional Intelligence and Suicide

Numerous studies have proved the unique contribution of EI in understanding the relationship between stress and three important mental health variables, depression, hopelessness, and suicidal ideation. In a cross sectional study conducted by Joseph Ciarrochiet, al on university students that involved measuring life stress, objective and self-reported emotional intelligence, and mental health. Regression analyses revealed that stress was associated with: (1) greater reported depression, hopelessness, and suicidal ideation among people high in emotional perception (EP) compared to others; and (2) greater suicidal ideation among those low in managing others' emotions (MOE). Both EP and MOE were shown to be statistically different from other relevant measures, suggesting that EI is a distinctive construct as well as being important in understanding the link between stress and mental health. Several other studies also confirmed the results that EI is a protective factor for suicidal ideation and attempts. The scope for further research include testing the moderating influence of EI on a wider range of stressful life events and self-injurious behaviors, as well as conducting experimental studies to determine whether enhancing EI decreases the subsequent occurrence of these behavioral problems.

Emotional Intelligence and Social Competence

Stella Mavroveli et al.(2009) in their study conducted on Dutch adolescent, strongly supported that the adolescents with high trait EI scores received more nominations from their classmates for being co-operative and girls gave significantly more nominations to classmates with high trait EI

scores for having leadership qualities. Several other studies conducted in this area also supported that EI plays an important role in deciding one's social competency level.

Emotional intelligence and Organizational Variables

K. V. Petrides and Adrian Furnham the two professors from University of London, Investigated whether any relationships between trait emotional intelligence (“trait EI” or “emotional self-efficacy”) and 4 job-related variables (perceived job control, job stress, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment). They adopted a gender-specific perspective in order to take into account existing gender differences in work-related variables as well as in perceptions of EI (Furnham, 1994; Petrides, Furnham, & Martin, 2004). But the study did not lend empirical support to claims that EI is crucially important in the workplace (e.g., Goleman, 1998). Nevertheless, high trait EI was related to lower levels of stress and higher levels of perceived control, satisfaction, and commitment. These results are in line with previous findings in the literature (e.g., Abraham, 1999; Wong & Law, 2002). The significant paths from trait EI into perceived job control and stress corroborate that high trait EI individuals see themselves as flexible and in control of their emotional reactions (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The study also suggested that the relationship between trait EI and (Organizational Variables) OV is not necessarily direct (Abraham, 1999), but mediated via intervening variables, such as perceived job control and perceived job satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence and leadership

Leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence positively apply social skills to influence others, create strong relationships with clients and employees, and are effective motivators by controlling their emotions and understanding their weaknesses (Feldman, 1999; Noyes, 2001; Chastukhina, 2002).

Singh (2007) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness among 340 software professionals of a large company in India. Emotional intelligence was found to be positively and significantly related to organizational leadership for both genders. The results revealed no significant differences between male and female software professionals in terms of emotional intelligence and overall leadership effectiveness. The

relationship management aspect of emotional intelligence was found to be the most important predictor of leadership. The study laid emphasis on employees to develop their relationship skills in order to become effective leaders. It is worth exploring this link further, as it may be symptomatic of a more generalized sense of control permeating many different life contexts (interpersonal, occupational, etc.). The overall picture emerging from the data suggests that the effects of trait EI in occupational settings are of a similar magnitude to those of other personality traits. This means that the construct is likely to have predictive power and exploratory utility only in specific occupational contexts and with respect to specific work-related outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence and Creativity

M. J. Sa'nchez-Ruiz et,al [2011] investigated the association between two creativity indicators: Divergent Thinking (DT) and Creative Personality (CP), and key aspects of cognitive ability, personality (Big Five), and trait emotional intelligence (trait EI or trait emotional self-efficacy). The results found that Trait EI predicted both CP and DT, with its Sociability factor being the strongest constituent predictor. One novel contribution of this study was the exploration of trait EI in relation to the two creativity criteria. At the global level, there was no relationship between trait EI and DT. As can be seen in the correlations, and also in the regression analysis, this was largely due to the differential effects of the four trait EI factors.

Taken together, the four trait EI factors [Well-being, Self-control, Emotionality, and Sociability] successfully predicted both CP and DT. Sociability was the best predictor in both cases, a finding which seemingly contradicts the view of creative people as being introverted, cold, and asocial (Eysenck 1993, 1995; Feist 1998). However, the findings do not indicate that creative people are socially warmer or more empathic (these facets are collected in the trait EI Emotionality factor, which was unrelated to the creativity criteria in the total sample). In contrast, the Sociability factor involves the qualitatively different aspects of Social awareness, Emotion management (in others), and Assertiveness. Social awareness and Emotion management are necessary characteristics for creative people to communicate their ideas and persuade others, while Assertiveness covers the non-conformist and autonomous element associated with creativity (Eysenck 1993).

Trait Emotional Intelligence and Happiness

Adrian Furnham and K. V. Petrides professors from University of London explored the relationship between the EI and human Happiness. The findings confirm that well-being is a salient component of trait EI. It is important to recognize, however, that it is neither the sole nor the most important component of the construct. Thus, Petrides et al. (in press) demonstrated that trait EI predicts important life outcomes, such as exclusions from school and truancy, incrementally over the Giant Three, even when its general mood/ well-being component has been removed. Such findings provide empirical answers to questions about whether the associations between trait EI and certain external criteria are simply due to the well-being component of the construct (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000).

This study showed that a large amount of variance in happiness is determined by emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions like, for example, emotion regulation, relationship skills, and social competence. A point to note is that the strength of this relationship could vary across different cultures (Schimmack, Radhakrishnan, Oishi, Dzokoto, & Ahadi, 2002). The researchers of these study also recommended that the important task for future research is to examine the relationship between trait EI and real life criteria that have been variously linked to happiness (e.g., creativity, job productivity, health, etc.), which could be an important step towards the development and implementation of research-based assessment systems and intervention programs designed to improve performance, relationship quality, and general well-being.

Scope for further study

More researches could concentrate on the association between emotional intelligence (EI) and body image or eating disorders and self- image & personality. Further, to identify the moderating influence of EI on a wider range of stressful life events, self-injurious behaviors and suicides. Experimental studies may be conducted to determine whether enhancing EI decreases the subsequent occurrence of these behavioral problems. Empirical studies to claim that EI is crucially important in the workplace can be carried out.

Studies may fill the gap of employee's interpersonal relationship skills permeating many different life contexts. Social awareness and Emotion management are necessary characteristics

for creative people to communicate their ideas and persuade others, further studies can be directed towards exploring this link. Future researches may be directed towards examining the relationship between trait EI and real life criteria that have been variously linked to happiness (e.g., creativity, job productivity, health, etc.) to improve performance, relationship quality, and general well-being.

Conclusion

The review of literature supports that Emotional Intelligence plays a significant role in predicting major life contexts. The literature throws light on the gaps which requires further research analysis. The literature acknowledges TEIQue model and tools in various studies in the area of Emotional Intelligence. Thus, Emotional Intelligence as a predictor is associated with both actual-ideal weight discrepancy and body appreciation in terms of Self- image as a life context. EI as a distinct construct induces suicidal ideation in those who were high in emotional perception (EP) compared to others; and low in managing others' emotions (MOE). High EI trait scores reflected higher social competence among adolescents being more co-operative and having leadership qualities. Trait EI significantly supports Organizational variables - perceived job control, job stress, job satisfaction, and Organizational commitment as key variables of EI. On Leadership as an important life context, relationship management was found to be the most important predictor. Sociability formed a key variable influencing a Creative Personality rather than others. Amount of variance in happiness is determined by people's emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions like emotion regulation, relationship skills, and social competence.

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