

Emotional Intelligence Training Workshop and its Impact on Employee Performance: an Empirical Evaluation



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Abstract: Purpose: The primary focus of present research was to examine the effects of an emotional intelligence (EI) training workshop on participants' performance. It entailed to evaluate whether the EI training workshop bring about a change in the performance of participants. The present study also encompasses the gender differences and the relationship of emotional intelligence with it.

Research Design: The present research used primarily the quantitative techniques and succinctly presents the effects of enhanced emotional intelligence to the success of organization by using the data from a sample of 89 marketing managers from two selected organizations of the solar sector. In order to examine the gender differences in the emotional quotient, data was collected using Schutte's Self Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) from 158 employees of the marketing department of the selected organizations of the solar sector. The reliability of the data collection tool was calculated using Cronbach alpha and the value for present study was 0.817. Paired sample t-test, independent sample t-test, and descriptive statistics were used for data analysis.

Findings: The results of the statistical analysis provide significant support to the hypothesized relationships between enhanced emotional intelligence and employee performance. Study results suggest that the conduct of Emotional Intelligence Workshop does increases the productivity of the employees. The study conducted also brings out the fact that the gender differences are significant with respect to emotional competencies and the findings suggested that females are more emotionally competent as compared to males.

Implications: The research implications of the present research suggested that organizational success beckons upon employee performance which can be enhanced by focusing on creating HR system that ensures high emotional quotient in employees. The present research also suggests that organizations can move ahead on the path of success by remodeling recruitment mechanisms and building a strong training methodology to increase the emotional intelligence level of employees. It is likely that this occurs because employees with high emotional quotient are found to perform better than their counterparts.

Originality/value: This study furthers the research in the field of emotional intelligence by providing an empirical evidence to support the positive impact of emotional intelligence training workshop on performance of marketing managers.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Employee performance, Marketing managers.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The current economic scenario is pushing the organizations to do more than make profit for themselves. The Indian market is greatly influenced by the inflation, low labor costs and high volume, capital intensive output from the developed countries. This makes it important for organizations to create their own niche in this competitive era. Besides these economic pressures, if the organizations are to succeed, they need to think about enhancing the performance and productivity of their employees, one of the important stakeholders. On the other hand, customers are increasingly aware, organized and insistent on their demands.

One of the first studies to understand the skills required by managers to be successful, Katz (1955) classified managerial skills as technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills. Numerous researchers focused on understanding the importance of the three set of skills in affecting managerial performance. The results of many studies highlighted that along with intellectual ability, managers need to have sensitive human relations skills with interpersonal sensitivity and extremely good listening and verbal expression skills in this turbulent environment (Graham, 1983; Penley et al., 1991). While the managers are functioning in this new and different present day context, the challenge to achieve results through people within the allocated resources remains the same. The increasing degree of complexity, uncertainty and change in the business environment demands the managers to approach their jobs in an analytical manner and learn to integrate with the various stakeholders for achieving the organizational goals. In light of the above highlighted market scenario, the present study focused on understanding the effect of Emotional intelligence training on performance of marketing managers of selected organizations of the solar sector. The fundamental purpose of the present research was to understand and delve into the role played by emotional intelligence in affecting the employee performance. The study was conducted with the marketing managers from two selected organizations of the solar sector involved in installation of solar power plants in different parts of India.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Emotional Intelligence

The theory of emotional intelligence is based on the work of the psychological researchers like Thorndike, Wechsler, Leeper and Gardner who looked beyond the cognitive aspects of intelligence and proposed the multidimensional view of intelligence that includes the non-cognitive aspects. The learning theory of Thorndike (1920) proposed the three forms of intelligence namely intelligence related to the analytical and verbal abilities; the mechanical and visual-spatial intelligence; and social or practical intelligence (Landy, 2005). Thorndike's research on social intelligence is considered to be the foundation behind the emotional intelligence concept. Similarly, Wechsler (1940), Doll (1935) and Leeper (1948) also emphasized on the non-cognitive aspects of intelligence that lead to the development of emotional intelligence concept as articulated by Salovey, Mayer, and other researchers. However, it was the Gardner's (1983) view on multiple dimensions of intelligence that served as a turning point in the development of emotional intelligence concept as it proposed that success is based not only on monolithic or cognitive aspects of intelligence but a wide spectrum of intelligences is necessary. Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences asserted total human intelligence to be a mélange of various forms of intelligences that function together to play their distinct role in problem solving. Their view of intelligence presented a holistic approach for understanding human intelligence. Gardner (1999) also suggested every individual to showcase a unique concoction of intelligences and the key to success for both individuals and organizations is to make the best of this uniqueness.

The term emotional intelligence however gained popularity in 1990 when two professors viz. John Mayer and Peter Salovey published their first article. They emphasized the significant role played by emotions in determination of an individual's success and purported that the existing standards for measuring intelligence were inadequate. Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences was the base of the four dimensional ability-based model of emotional intelligence developed by Salovey and Meyer. The ability model of emotional intelligence as proposed by Salovey & Mayer, integrated the key concepts from the areas of both emotion and intelligence whereby emotions relate to the information about relationships (Mayer et al., 2004) and intelligence involves the mental ability to undertake abstract reasoning (Sternberg, 1997). They looked primarily at the four components or areas of emotional intelligence i.e. emotional perception, emotional assimilation, emotional understanding and emotional management. These branches are considered as hierarchical since the complexity increases from branch one to branch four.

Although, Goleman's view of emotional intelligence was derived from the work of Salovey and Mayer, Daniel Goleman (1995), a psychologist and author of a 1995 best-selling book, *Emotional Intelligence*, is often given the credit of introducing the emotional intelligence concept to the general public. Goleman's mixed model of emotional

intelligence interpreted emotional intelligence to be composed of 25 emotional and social competencies grouped into five key branches including (a) Self-awareness i.e. knowing one's emotions and feelings by self-awareness (b) Self-regulation i.e. managing one's emotions by handling own feelings (c) Motivation i.e. motivating oneself by regulating emotions, (d) Empathy i.e. recognizing emotions in others through social awareness, and (e) Social skills i.e. managing relationships through the ability of handling emotions. Goleman and his colleagues later standardized four key branches of emotional intelligence based on the combination of personal and social competencies with their recognition and regulation i.e. self-awareness, self management, social awareness and relationship management (Goleman et al., 2002a).

Later, Bar-On (1997) provided another broader view of emotional intelligence wherein he asserted emotional intelligence to be a blend of intrapersonal and interpersonal skills and competencies composed of a wider array of personal traits and social skills. Bar-On's (2006) model emphasized that an individual's general intelligence is based on both emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence and they equally contribute to success. His mixed social-emotional intelligence model combines social, emotional, cognitive, and personality dimensions into 15 elements that are further labeled as five broad meta-factors.

Although the above discussion highlighted a number of models proposed by researchers, present research utilized Goleman's Refinement Model (2001) for measuring emotional intelligence.

B. Emotional intelligence and organizational performance

There had been a number of studies which exemplify that the productivity of the companies had been inflated magnificently due to the higher emotional intelligence competency of their employees. AT&T participated in the study and the results highlighted that increased emotional intelligence accounted for 20% more productivity in all levels of management. The study also reported top-performers to have high emotional quotient and that 60% of job performance could be attributed to emotional intelligence.

One of the leading companies Google runs a life changing course on emotional intelligence for its employees. It had been found that employees at Google experience enhanced mindfulness and emotional intelligence due to which they are found to advance in their life and career. Similarly, Blocker, C. P. (2009) also highlighted the case of Coca-Cola wherein they found that the leaders after given training in emotional intelligence exceeded their performance targets by 15% whereas those who did not developed emotional intelligence competencies missed their targets with a huge 30% gap. Blocker C. P. (2009) also presented the example of American Express wherein after undergoing a training programme on emotional intelligence, the sales performance of the company's salespeople increased significantly. Due to the success achieved, American Express started providing emotional intelligence training to all incoming salespeople.

Cavallo and Brienza's (2006) conducted a study at J&J Consumer Companies wherein they reported a robust linkage between superior performing leaders and their emotional competence. In a study on employees from diverse organizations of Israel, Carmeli and Josman (2006) highlighted that a positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and employee's work outcomes. Druskat V U et al. (2013) also reiterated a number of studies providing a compelling evidence of the link of emotional intelligence with individual and organizational performance.

In another study Mshellia P.S. et al. (2016) assessed the linkage between factors of emotional intelligence and contextual performance of nursing professionals of Nigeria. The study results highlighted that emotional intelligent competencies are considerably important for nursing professionals. Also, the study asserted that emotional intelligence bears positive and significant relationship with contextual performance of the nursing professionals.

Wilburn L. T. et al. (2016) also analyzed the linkage between emotional intelligence and academic performance of the postgraduate students of a hotel management school. The study results highlighted that amongst other factors, one of the key factors affecting the grade points of the students is their emotional quotient. The results however also emphasized that only emotionality component of the four components i.e. sociability, well-being, self-control and emotionality, had significant relationship with the academic performance of students. In a similar study conducted on school teachers, Myint A.A. & Aung A.A. (2016) investigated the strength of emotional quotient and its components. They also explored the linkage between job performance and the level of emotional intelligence of school teachers. The study results emphasized emotional intelligence and its components specifically optimism and expression of emotion to be a moderate predictor of job performance. One of the statistics published by United States General Accounting Office also revealed that the recruiter turnover in the US Air Force lessened by incorporating high emotional quotient as one of the criteria for selecting candidates (GAO Archive, 1998). In another review on EQ, Johnson, J., & Erb, D. (2003) demonstrated couple of examples showing whether emotional intelligence affects financial performance. They quoted the case of L' Oreal wherein the company was benefitted by introducing EQ program for its salesforce. The company also experienced 63% less turnover in their sales staff. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to examine the effect of enhanced emotional intelligence on performance in Indian context. In the above context, the present study focuses on analyzing the effects of enhanced emotional Intelligence on the success of organization and make recommendations to enhance the emotional quotient in employees by formulating the right HR strategies. Thus, based on the above discussion, the present study hypothesizes that:

H1: The performance of the marketing managers of the selected companies would improve after the EI training workshop.

Null Hypothesis (H1o): There is no impact of the EI training workshop on the performance of the marketing managers of the selected companies

C. Gender and emotional intelligence

Understanding the relationship between gender and emotional intelligence had been the focus of researchers in numerous studies. However, results of recent research studies exploring the effect of gender on emotional intelligence (Patel, K. R., & Kumar, S., 2016; Mankus, A. M et al., 2016; Kumar, A et al., 2016; Sharma, D., 2016; Srivastava S. et al., 2016; Khan, M. A et al., 2016) have been mixed. Although a couple of studies found no difference in the emotional intelligence scores of males and females (Srivastava S. et al., 2016), numerous studies recognized significant different in the EQ levels based on gender. Some empirical studies reported females to have higher EQ levels (Mayer & Geher 1996, Mandell & Pherwani, 2003) while a few revealed males to possess higher emotional quotient compared to females (Petrides & Furnham, 2000). Goleman (1998) reported no significant difference in the EQ levels of men and women. However, the most common view regarding gender and its relationship with emotional intelligence proposes females to possess better competencies to handle emotions when compared to males. This is attributed to the emotional tendency of females and their intimacy in relationships (Ryff, C. D et al., 2001). The above view is supported by the fact highlighted by Baron Cohen in his brain theory which postulates that the structure of brains is different in men and women. This theory indicates that the brain of females has higher tendency to act empathetically whereas the male brains are structured to act based on facts and the underlying constructs (Baron-Cohen, 2002). Although some of the studies posit that women are superior in emotional intelligence, it is also found that males have higher scores on some specific EI dimensions as compared to females (Castro-Schilo & Kee, 2010). Joseph & Newman (2010) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis of emotional intelligence. It also emphasized that emotional quotient of women is higher than men. Thus, the analysis of the empirical studies reveals that females do possess higher emotional quotient than males. So, based on the existing literature, we can predict that gender and emotional intelligence have effect on each other.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance to examine the effect of gender on emotional intelligence of marketing professionals in Indian context. In the above context, the present study focuses on analyzing the effects of gender on emotional Intelligence and make recommendations so as to formulate the right HR strategies. Thus, based on the above discussion, the present study hypothesizes that:

H2o: There is no significant difference in the emotional intelligence of the male and female employees from the marketing department of the selected companies.

Alternate Hypothesis (H2): There is a significant difference in the emotional intelligence of the male and female employees from the marketing department of the selected companies.

III. PURPOSE & NEED FOR THE STUDY

A. Need and significance of the study

As highlighted above, a great deal of research is conducted in the field of emotional intelligence and its relationship with demographic variables. Various studies have also investigated the indirect relationship between high emotional quotient and performance or productivity of students and employees in different contexts. However, despite the fact that the turbulent change in business environment and highly demanding customers also impinges upon high emotional

quotient in employees, the focus on understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance with special reference to marketing managers is missing. Also, the research studies with their focus on understanding the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance specifically in the Indian context are limited. The results of the present research are significant as they will assist the organizations in designing and transforming the training and development plans and tactics for enhancing the employee performance so as to improve the organizational effectiveness.

B. Purpose and research questions:

The key purpose for conducting this study is to explore the effects of an emotional intelligence (EI) training workshop on employee performance. The present study investigated the following research questions:

RQ1: Was there a difference in the performance of the participating marketing managers of the selected companies prior to and after the EI training workshop?

RQ2: Did gender make a difference in the EI scores of the employees of the marketing department of the selected companies.

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The present research used quantitative approach and briefly outlines the effects of enhanced emotional intelligence to the success of the organization. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting the organizations for conducting the study. Data was collected from employees of two selected organizations of the solar sector involved in installation of solar power plants in different parts of India. In order to study the critical importance of emotional intelligence, data was drawn from a sample of 89 marketing managers from the selected companies. In order to examine the gender differences in the emotional quotient, data was collected using Schutte's Self Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) from 158 employees of the marketing department of the selected organizations of the solar sector.

B. Instrumentation for data collection

Emotional Intelligence: EI was measured using Schutte's Self Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte, N.S. et al., 1998). It is a self-report measure of emotional intelligence based on the original model of EI proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It is a 33-item self-report inventory with a 5-point Likert scale focused on measuring trait or characteristic

emotional intelligence. Various factor analytic studies identified four sub-factors within the scale (Petrides & Furnham, 2000; Saklofske, Austin, & Minski, 2003). Emotional intelligence was found to be composed of four sub-factors by various researchers i.e. perception of emotion, managing own emotions, social skills or managing others' emotions, and utilization of emotions. SEIS was found to be reliable for the present research with a Cronbach alpha value of 0.817.

Performance: In order to measure the performance of the 89 marketing managers from the selected companies, they were observed during first quarter for their Quarterly target accomplishment. Their performance in terms of revenues generated (compared to the target of 30 Lakhs quarterly) was recorded for the first quarter. Thereafter, a workshop was conducted for the marketing managers wherein they were provided with the inputs to make them learn the ability to release emotions constructively and handle the negative feelings of frustration, misery, anger, sadness etc. in a positive manner. Workshop was designed and provided by experts who focused on increasing the emotional control of the managers. Post workshop, the performance of the trainee marketing managers was again documents for next quarter performance in terms of revenues generated and the results were compared with the pre- workshop performance.

C. Study Variables & Data analysis

The two key variables in the study are emotional intelligence and its components as the independent variable and the post training performance of participating marketing managers as the dependent variable. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, Paired sample t-test and independent sample t-test using SPSS (20.0).

V. RESULTS

Data was analyzed to find the solution to the two research questions using inferential statistics.

A. Strength of Each sub factor of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence of the employees of the marketing department of the selected companies was measured using Schutte's Self Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) which included four sub-factors of emotional intelligence i.e. perception of emotions, managing own emotions, social skills or managing others' emotions, and utilization of emotions. On the basis of the descriptive statistics corresponding to each sub-factor of emotional intelligence (Table I), the mean score for managing own emotions is the highest ($M=3.8868$) among the four sub-factors of EI. However, it was observed that the perception of emotions is lowest ($M=3.4722$). It may thus be interpreted that the selected employees of the marketing department are weakest in their ability to identify and recognize emotions in others and adopting appropriate behavior. Thus, according to the result, EI training workshop for the marketing employees should incorporate special session focused on improving perception of emotions skills of the employees of the marketing department.

Table I: Mean and Standard Deviations for the four sub-factors of emotional intelligence

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perception of emotion	158	2.40	4.40	3.4722	.35474
Managing own emotions	158	2.56	5.00	3.8868	.37716
Social skills	158	2.25	4.75	3.8172	.45094
Utilization of emotions	158	1.50	5.00	3.8281	.53913
Valid N (listwise)	158				

B. Impact of emotional intelligence (EI) training workshop on employee performance

Our first research question was postulated to ascertain if there was a difference in the performance of the participating marketing managers of the selected companies prior to and after the EI training workshop. The objective was to understand the effect and importance of emotional intelligence in positively influencing the employee performance. Thus, in order to find out the effect of EI training workshop on the performance of the participating marketing managers, a paired sample t-test (table III) was applied in which comparison of the pre-training performance and post training performance was done. A significant difference was found in the pre-training performance (M=17, SD=4.29) and post-training performance (M=18.73, SD=4.18); $t(88) = -9.15, p = 0.000$. Thus, it can be concluded that emotional intelligence (EI) training workshop had a significant impact on the employee performance.

Table II: Mean and Standard Deviations for the pre and post workshop performance

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pre-workshop performance	17.0000	89	4.28793	.45452
Post-workshop performance	18.7303	89	4.17178	.44221

Table III: Paired Samples t-Test for comparing the pre and post workshop performance

	Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean			
Pre-workshop performance - Post-workshop performance	-1.73034	1.78226	.18892	-9.159	88	.000

As indicated by Table III, the test of significance indicated that the pre and post workshop performance mean differences were statistically significant ($p < .05$). The results demonstrated a significant difference in the pre workshop performance and post workshop performance of participants.

C. Relationship between gender and emotional intelligence

One of the secondary objectives of the present research was to understand if gender makes a difference in the emotional intelligence scores of the employees of the marketing department of the selected companies. Independent sample t-test (table IV) was conducted to identify the relationship between gender and the emotional intelligence scores of the

employees of the marketing department of the selected companies. Since SPSS output shows that Levene's tests for equality of variances for all the components of emotional intelligence and total emotional intelligence are non-significant, the independent t-test statistics in the rows labeled Equal variances assumed are presented in Table IV. The results revealed that significant differences exist on total emotional intelligence $t(156)=2.133, p < .05$ and two of the four components of EI by gender i.e. Perception of emotions $t(156)=2.240, p < .05$ and Social skills $t(156)=2.438, p < .05$. However, there was no significant difference between the scores on the managing own emotions $t(156) = 1.70, p=.090$ and utilization of emotions $t(156) = .025, p=.980$ components of EI of males and females.

The mean differences in the EI scores of male and female employees also indicate that females had a larger mean on total EI as compared to males, thereby highlighting the premise that females tend to be high on emotional intelligence as compared to males.

Table IV: Independent Sample t-tests for Emotional Intelligence and its components by Gender

	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	Male		Female	
			Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total EI	-2.133	.034*	122.7679	11.07304	126.6957	8.98856
Perception of Emotions	-2.240	.026*	3.4321	.37614	3.5696	.27638
Managing own emotions	-1.706	.090	3.8542	.38520	3.9662	.34812
Social Skills	-2.428	.016*	3.7623	.44265	3.9511	.44758
Utilization of emotions	-.025	.980	3.8274	.57078	3.8297	.45878

^a Note. df = 157. * $p < 0.05$

VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The primary focus of the present research was to examine the effects of an emotional intelligence (EI) training workshop on participants' performance. It entailed to determine whether EI training workshop had a significant impact on the performance of participating employees by comparing their performance prior to and after the EI training workshop. The results suggest that the participating marketing managers are highest in managing their own emotions and are lacking in identifying and understating others' emotions. The results also highlight significant difference in the pre workshop and post workshop performance of the marketing managers. Females are also found to be higher in emotional intelligence and two of its components as compared to males. The present study has far reaching implications for the HRD theory and practice in the modern organizations.



One of the core theories that form the base of the HRD theory is the psychological theory that acknowledges the important and key role played by human behavior at individual, group and organizational level in affecting the work processes and the organizational performance. Psychological theory recognizes the need to develop human behavior. EI research supports the psychological theory as it provides support to the premise that emotional quotient of the human being does affect their behavior. The present study highlighted that performance of the marketing managers improved after the EI workshop, which forms a strong base for all HRD interventions. The present study thus contributes in enhancing the HRD theory and practice. One of the key outcomes expected from any HRD practitioner is improvement in performance of the employees by employing different HRD interventions. This study provides a framework for the HRD practitioners to enhance employee performance by focusing on using various interventions to increase the emotional quotient of the employees. Moreover, in order to increase the overall organizational performance, HRD practitioners can explore the EI at the individual, team and organizational level.

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