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Gender Difference and Emotional Intelligence in Selected Hospitals - A Study

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ABSTRACT

Emotions in humans are subjective conscious experience characterized by psycho-physiological expressions and behavioral reactions. It may act as tool, if positively identified by complementing and enriching job performance but if negatively understood can ruin feelings and be a disaster. Emotions in healthcare organizations are important to be taken care of because in the service exchange process emotions of both the service provider and the receiver are directly involved. Although caring and curing patient by these employees is a professional activity but still, the empathetic and sympathetic behavior shown by these professionals influences their performance and success in hospital industry. Moreover, the behavior shown by these employees in the workplace is often discriminated on the basis of their gender as it influences the performance of health professionals. Based on above backdrop, the objective of the current study is to assess whether there exist difference in emotional intelligence of healthcare employees in hospitals with respect to their gender. A standardized questionnaire was used to conduct the study among 300 employees in hospitals with the help of scale developed by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2002). Data was analyzed through SPSS and results indicated that the level of emotional intelligence among females is higher than male employees.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence; Gender Difference; Male and Female Employees; Healthcare Organization

INTRODUCTION

For a long time in literature, gender was considered as simple, stable and trait like variable. But today, the psychology of gender has shifted from descriptive classification of “sex differences” to an exciting area of research. Similarly, studies on emotional intelligence are growing at faster pace and have emerged as interesting topic of research. It is believed that gender difference influence the emotional functioning of human beings. Individuals under the influence of emotion react in different ways because of the gender difference as male and female are often socialized to have different motives and goals depending on their age, cultural background and socialization histories. Though, the concept is widely documented but is inconsistent to provide concrete view on relationship between gender difference and emotional functioning of individuals in general and hospitals in particular. According to Goleman (1995), there exist ambiguous view on emotional intelligence and gender difference and it is believed that males who are high in emotional intelligence are socially balanced, friendly and happy.

He also pointed out that males with high emotional intelligence are not prone to unnecessary fear and worrisome; they have ability to take commitment and responsibility towards work and people, they carry ethical outlook along with sympathy and care in their relationships as their emotional life is rich, they are relaxing with themselves, others and the social universe they live in. On the other hand, female are more attentive of their feelings and those of others, relate better interpersonally and are considerably more socially responsible than male. Later, Goleman (1998) affirmed that no gender differences exists in emotional intelligence scores and added that men and women may have different profiles of strengths and weaknesses in different dimensions of emotional intelligence, their overall levels of EI are equivalent. According to Goleman (1995), the particular subcomponents in which female scored superior than male consist of interpersonal skill, empathy and social responsibility; and male scored higher than female consist of stress tolerance and self-regard.

In professional and personal settings, studies by Mayer and Geher (1996) and Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey (1999), found that women are more likely to score higher on measures of emotional intelligence than men. But interestingly, females more often are exposed to family and job related stressors than their male counterparts as a result of their dual roles as mothers and professionals (Roxburgh, 1996; Simon, 1995). They also tend to face gender-specific resistance in their efforts to reach the highest positions in organizational hierarchies (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, and Vanneman, 2001). The interesting point is family responsibilities and gender specific resistance does not emerge in the beginning of career, but towards the middle. Consequently, middle aged females are more likely face such challenges than their younger counterparts, which negatively affect their perceived job control and their attitudes towards the organization as a whole.

Katyal and Awasthi, (2005) assessed relationship between gender difference and emotional intelligence among 150 adolescents and concluded that girls were found to have higher emotional intelligence than that of boys. In another study Naghavi, (2012) studied the relationship between gender and early adolescent’s emotional intelligence among 234 Iranian students. The findings of the study indicated that the emotional intelligence of girls is higher than that of the boys. Ahmad, Bangash and Khan (2009) investigated emotional intelligence and gender differences and concluded that males scored higher than females on Emotional Quotient Inventory.

Similarly, Khalili (2011) assessed gender differences and emotional intelligence among 112 employees of small and medium enterprise (SME) to examine gender differences in four competencies of emotional intelligence (EI). The findings indicated that men have higher level of emotional intelligence than women. Shin, (2011) linked emotional intelligence (EQ) to positive aspects (e.g., self esteem, achievement, and psychological well-being) of an individual under the influence of gender. Findings indicated no significant gender difference in actual and self-estimated EQ level. However, both genders perceived males have higher EQ level compared to females. Kavana, et.al, (2012) studied gender differences and emotional intelligence among first year medical students. Results reveal that majority of males, females and the total sample (males and females) had good EI, but it was high in females compared to males. Culturally, girls are mostly expected to be more expressive of feelings as girls develop verbal skills earlier than boys means that they are more skilled at articulating their feelings and have greater expertise in the use of words. Hence, girls have more information about the emotional world and they therefore speak more about their emotional aspects and use emotional terms more often than boys (Brody and Hall, 1993; Fivush, 1991). On the above backdrop present study is a modest attempt to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and gender difference among the employees in selected hospitals under study.

Objective of the Study

Following are the major objective of the present study objectives:

- (i) To assess the influence of gender on emotional intelligence of employees in selected hospitals under study; and
- (ii) To assess the influence of gender in different components of emotional intelligence among employees of selected hospitals under study.

Hypothesis of the Study

Based on above objectives, following hypothesis was formulated:

H₁: There exists no difference in self awareness across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₂: There exists no difference in empathy across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₃: There exists no difference in self motivation across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₄: There exists no difference in emotional stability across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₅: There exists no difference in managing relations across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₆: There exists no difference in integrity across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₇: There exists no difference in self-development across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₈: There exists no difference in value orientation across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₉: There exists no difference in commitment across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

H₁₀: There exists no difference in altruistic behaviour across gender among selected post graduation students under study.

H₁₁: There exists no difference in emotional intelligence across gender among frontline employees of selected hospitals under study.

Sample

For the purpose of study, 300 service employees were randomly selected from the hospitals located in the state of Chhattisgarh constitute sample for the study. Among the total sample selected 78 were males and 222 were females.

Data Collection

For the purpose of the study primary data was collected with the help of Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Hyde, Pethe and Dhar (2002). It consists of 34 items to measure emotional intelligence. The scale measures emotional intelligence based on ten dimensions: These are self-awareness, empathy, self motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self-development, value orientation, commitment and altruistic behaviour. The scale was measured by 5 point likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale value ranges from 34-170 score. The reliability of the scale was found to be 0.824 (Cronbach's alpha).

Analysis of Data

Data was analyzed using Statistical Packages of the Social Science (SPSS). The independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare means for two groups of employees. Mean and Std. deviation of different components of emotional intelligence (EI) as well as emotional intelligence as a whole construct was measured to identify whether there exist difference in emotional intelligence on the basis of gender. Further, test for equality variance (Levene's Test) to find homogeneity of groups and test for equality on means to find out different between males and female employees were conducted.

Findings of the Study

Based on the analysis of data following are the findings of the present study:

Table 1. Mean of Emotional Intelligence Scores

	Gender of Employees	Mean	Std. Deviation
SA	Male	16.70667	2.685161

	Female	17.26126	2.159737
Empathy	Male	19.52000	3.394590
	Female	19.79279	2.895205
SM	Male	24.00000	3.727183
	Female	24.32883	3.142898
ES	Male	16.21333	2.631890
	Female	16.14414	2.428514
MR	Male	17.13333	2.418025
	Female	17.08108	1.993815
Integrity	Male	12.50667	2.009258
	Female	12.85586	1.858559
SD	Male	8.38667	1.195638
	Female	8.51802	1.397198
VO	Male	8.32000	1.347270
	Female	8.16216	1.338876
Commitment	Male	8.60000	1.078036
	Female	8.36937	1.279338
AB	Male	8.18667	1.411280
	Female	8.22973	1.364189
EITOTAL	Male	139.57333	17.647581
	Female	140.74324	14.591630

Table 1 shows differences between mean scores of emotional intelligence among hospital employees with respect to their gender. In terms of self awareness, female employees (mean=17.26126; S.D=2.159737) scored high in comparison to male employees (mean=16.70667; S.D=2.685161).

Likewise, in terms of empathy, female employees (mean=19.79279; S.D=2.895205) scored high in comparison to their male counterparts (mean=19.52000; S.D=3.394590). Similarly in terms of self motivation, female employees (mean=24.32883; S.D=3.142898) scored high in comparison to male employees (mean=24.0; S.D=3.727183).

Interestingly, with respect to emotional stability, male employees (mean=16.21333; S.D=2.631890) scored high in comparison to female employees (mean=16.14414; S.D=2.428514).

In terms of managing relationship, male employees (mean=17.13333; S.D=2.418025) scored higher than female employees (mean=17.08108; S.D=1.993815); whereas in terms of integrity female employees (mean=12.85586; S.D=1.858559) scored high as compared to male employees (mean=12.50667; S.D=2.009258). Similarly, for self development, male employees (mean=8.51802; S.D=1.397198) scored high in comparison to female employees (mean=8.38667; S.D=1.195638) and in terms of value orientation male employees (mean=8.32000; S.D=1.347270) scored high in comparison to their female counterparts (mean=8.16216; S.D=1.338876).

In terms of commitment male employees (mean=8.60000; S.D=1.078036) scored high in comparison to female employees (mean=8.36937; S.D=1.279338) and lastly, with respect to altruistic behavior female employees (mean=8.22973; S.D=1.364189) scored high in comparison to their female counterparts (mean=8.18667; S.D=1.411280).

Further Table 1 also shows mean of emotional intelligence score in totality and it was found that female employees (mean=140.74324; S.D=14.591630) are better in emotional intelligence in comparison to their male counterparts (mean=139.57333; S.D=17.647581).

Table 2. T-Test Showing Group Difference

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
SA	Equal variances assumed	1.662	.198	-1.803	295	.072	-.554595
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.620	108.152	.108	-.554595
Empathy	Equal variances assumed	5.485	.060	-.674	295	.501	-.272793
	Equal variances not assumed			-.624	112.564	.534	-.272793

SM	Equal variances assumed	2.185	.140	-.746	295	.456	-.328829
	Equal variances not assumed			-.686	111.665	.494	-.328829
ES	Equal variances assumed	.099	.754	.209	295	.835	.069189
	Equal variances not assumed			.201	119.386	.841	.069189
MR	Equal variances assumed	4.009	.056	.186	295	.853	.052252
	Equal variances not assumed			.169	109.957	.866	.052252
Integrity	Equal variances assumed	1.315	.252	-1.378	295	.169	-.349189
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.326	119.618	.187	-.349189
SD	Equal variances assumed	1.349	.246	-.729	295	.467	-.131351
	Equal variances not assumed			-.787	147.516	.433	-.131351
VO	Equal variances assumed	.029	.865	.881	295	.379	.157838
	Equal variances not assumed			.879	126.887	.381	.157838
Commitment	Equal variances assumed	1.613	.205	1.402	295	.162	.230631
	Equal variances not assumed			1.525	149.812	.129	.230631
AB	Equal variances assumed	.163	.687	-.234	295	.815	-.043063
	Equal variances not assumed			-.230	123.957	.818	-.043063
EITOTAL	Equal variances assumed	5.427	.060	-.568	295	.570	-1.169910
	Equal variances not assumed			-.517	110.163	.606	-1.169910

Table 2 shows Levenes test for homogeneity in group variances, which shows that self-awareness (p value = .198), empathy (p value = .060), self motivation (p value = .140), emotional stability (p value = .754), managing relations (p value = .056), integrity (p value =

.252), self-development (p value =.246), value orientation (p value = .865), commitment (p value = .205) altruistic behaviour (p value = .687) and emotional intelligence in totality (p value = .060) are all homogeneous with different gender groups, as variances are not different at .05 (level of significance).

Table 2 also shows t-test for Equality of Means, where self-awareness (p value = .072), empathy (p value = .501), self motivation (p value = .456), emotional stability (p value = .835), managing relations (p value = .853), integrity (p value=.169), self-development (p value = .467), value orientation (p value = .379), commitment (p value = .162), altruistic behaviour (p value = .815) and emotional intelligence in totality (p value = .570) are all beyond .05 (level of significance) which means that there is no significant differences in all the ten component and emotional intelligence as a whole construct across gender. Thus, it can be concluded that there exist no significant difference in emotional intelligence components and in totality based on their gender characteristics.

Table 3. Summary of Findings

H₀₁	Accepted
H ₀₂	Accepted
H ₀₃	Accepted
H ₀₄	Accepted
H ₀₅	Accepted
H ₀₆	Accepted
H ₀₇	Accepted
H ₀₈	Accepted
H ₀₉	Accepted
H ₀₁₀	Accepted
H ₀₁₁	Accepted

Table 3 shows the summary of findings of the study. Based on the findings of the study self awareness (H₀₁), empathy (H₀₂), self motivation (H₀₃), emotional stability (H₀₄), managing relations (H₀₅), integrity (H₀₆), self-development (H₀₇), value orientation (H₀₈), commitment (H₀₉) and altruistic behaviour (H₀₁₀) are accepted which concludes that there is no difference in male and female employees on the basis of their emotional intelligence.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the current study was to examine whether gender difference exists in ten components of emotional intelligence (EI) as well as EI as whole construct. The study revealed that female employees in hospitals have higher level of self awareness, empathy, self management, integrity, self development and altruistic behavior whereas the male employees scored higher in emotional stability, managing relationship, value orientation and commitment. Interestingly, the overall result indicates that female employees are relatively more emotionally intelligent as compared to male employees.

The findings of the present study are in line with commonly believed social perception in the society and the findings of Broady and Hall (1993), King (1999), Sutarso (1999), Wing and Love (2001) and Singh (2002) which revealed that women have higher level of emotional intelligence than men. Similarly, Kaur, (2013) examined the gender differences on different components of emotional intelligence viz. emotional competency, emotional maturity, and emotional sensitivity. Females scored significantly higher on emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity and male scored high in emotional competency. Stein, (2004) also supported that girls were more aware of their feelings and those of others and could therefore relate better interpersonally than boys. Meanwhile, on contrary Petrides and Furnham (2000), Shahzad and Bagum (2012) have demonstrated that boys self believed that they have higher emotional intelligence than girls.

Further, findings of the present study (t test) reveals that there does not exist significant difference in all components of emotional intelligence and EI as a whole construct could be due to increased participation of women in the workplace service industry in general and hospitals in particular. Now, females are educated, competitive and are ready to accept the challenge in every field. Although discrimination on the basis of gender still prevails in our society but socio-economic and cultural changes in society and family size and growth and exposure of females with the changing environment limits its ill effect.

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