

## **Role of emotional intelligence as a buffer effect in stress management of newly recruited employees**

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### ***Abstract***

*The purpose of this paper is to measure the role of emotional intelligence as a cushion or buffer that protects the employees from stress. The rising alertness on the part emotional intelligence play in work plays has made it popular in Human resource management emotionally intelligent people do extremely well at the work place. Emotional intelligent people do extremely well at the work place. Emotional intelligence is a capability to intellect, recognize, successfully pertain authority, information and expertise of emotions among human resource. Occupational stress exists everywhere in an organization and in all the level of its workers. Stress arises when a worker meets pressure while completing his job or unable to complete his job. This paper aims to observe the relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational stress. Emotional intelligence provides better understanding of work environment reduce occupational which reduce occupational stress. For this reason emotional intelligence and occupational stress are linked. The study examined the reviews of 300 newly recruited employees, out of which 255 responded. The study revealed there is positive relationship between emotional intelligence and occupational stress. It was found from the study that out of 18, 8 variables have significant effect and rest 10 variables have no significant effect. The findings help the academicians and practitioners of the same field to understand the impact of emotional intelligence in a better way and also help them to identify that which aspects of emotional intelligence are significantly tied up with the better handing of stress in the organization.*

**Key words:** *Emotional intelligent, effect of stress, newly recruited employee, job stress*

## 1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence is one of those topics which have been widely researched and discussed by the experts in the areas of psychology and human resource management in fact it is a topic of utmost importance when it comes to the newly recruited employees because for most of the newly recruited employees it is very difficult to handle their performance in the organizations along with coping up to the new environment.

The ultimate result of all this is stress. It is something which irritates an employee and reduces his or her productivity on continuous basis until and unless it is not managed. There are certain ways to manage stress which have been expressed, verified and suggested by the experts. But most of them external ways the only internal way is being emotionally strong and handle the stress on your own. For handling stress internally one must possess a very strong emotional intelligence. Nowadays the competition is increasing day by day and business processes are being more complex. Business houses are expecting more from the employees and as a result the pressure is no less on newly recruited staff.

Here simply, emotional intelligence play a very important role in the stress management of the newly recruited employees because organisation probably is not able to give them any special freedom just because they are newly recruited. The present study considers emotional intelligence as a buffer which helps employee who have newly recruited to handle the situation which occurs due to the organisational pressure and his novelty in the organization.

From the past decade researchers are showing big interest for conducting studies in emotional intelligence. The term emotional intelligence was foremost used by psychologists John Mayer and Peter Salovey in the year 1990. Emotional Intelligence is term, which was popularized by Goleman [1] in the organizational set up. There after many research studies added support to emotional intelligence in organizational context.

Emotional intelligence means understanding once own feeling and able to handling those feeling without disturbing them self. In the same way understanding what others feel and handling relationship effectively. Motivate one to complete job creatively and perform their pear. Many independent human beings join together and work under one roof for attaining one ultimate objective is and organization. Organization is a pool of human resource of different kind. Every human resource is dependent on one

other in terms of relationship as superior and subordinate. Every individual is unique in their talent, understanding, performance, attitude, competencies, and involvement and so on.

When human resources work in an organization for attaining a common objective, they face plenty of challenges. They undergo challenges in competing each other, communication, cultural difference, adaptability and many. High competitive environment make changes in every days organization. Human resources for their endurance in organization are needed to update now and then. Frequent changes in technology, risk, time constrain, ethical values, unity in team work, completion of target with in time, innovation, risk bearing these competition attributes lead to occupational stress. Emotionally intelligent human resource tackle these competitive attributes with spot, come over from stress. High emotional intelligence leads to mental fitness.

Although many emotions can be easily recognized, individuals differ in their ability to process and use emotional information. Differences in these abilities can affect the way we behave and make emotional decisions. For example, if a new male employee is unjustly fired in front of an entire law firm, it might be advantageous for him to control his anger until he is in the privacy of his home if he wants to be hired by another firm in the same city. In this way, emotional intelligence is critical for interacting in a social world and understanding oneself and others.

### **1.1. Emotional Intelligence and Buffer effect:**

Emotional intelligence is culturally laden and exists in a social and cultural context [2]. Thus, social and cultural norms dictate which emotions are most adaptive in a given situation and having an understanding of this is a demonstration of emotional intelligence. Trait emotional intelligence is a stable, trait-like, and predictive recognition of emotions, including emotional regulation, and understanding an emotion's effect on cognitions and actions. For example, emotions can assist in thought and impact decision-making. Emotional intelligence extends beyond just acting in socially acceptable ways, but also includes displaying emotional competence [2]. What this means is that while it may be socially acceptable to act in a certain way, it might not necessarily lead to the best or most adaptive outcome. For instance, it is acceptable and normal to be nervous before an important exam, however if you can turn your nervousness into drive or challenge rather than defeat, you are expressing greater emotional competence. As described in the opening example, utilizing emotional intelligence could lead to choosing a more effective and beneficial coping mechanism, such a creating a list of priorities and deadlines. Having

emotional competency can have implications for manipulating emotions in oneself and others to achieve a certain end.

It is always possible that the stress will impact any employee very badly to handle the stress not only in organizations but also in the real life in the normal life we have to have the good level of emotional power this emotional power is nothing but it is the buffer stock of the emotional intelligence which help employees to work in In such a situation where there is lot of stress because of degree behavior of superiors organizational culture work stress workload and not understanding the organization initially because we are studying in the context of newly recruited employees.

## **2. Literature Review**

EI affects one's goals, mood, and satisfaction from interpersonal relationships. For example, if one is better able to understand the emotions of others, they are more likely to have positive social relationships with others, thus increasing their social resources in achieving goals [3]. Occupational stress is a worldwide issue with implications for employees, organizations, and economies. This is particularly the case for nurses whose jobs involve emotional work due to pressures relating to the display and regulation of emotions when dealing with difficult situations in their daily work [4].

It has also been claimed that the stress-experiences of nurses in Australia and their negative consequences are similar to other nations [5]. Individuals with higher EI have more favorable outcomes such as lower levels of burnout, cynicism, engagement and psychological health [6].

There is a relationship between emotional intelligence and other variables influencing the employees performance such as work life balance and their satisfaction with job etc [7]. Emotionally intelligent people, who are able to understand and recognize their emotions, manage themselves to keep under control in stressful situation [8]. Emotional intelligence is a shield that prevents workers from negative health outcomes, especially from the symptoms of depression [9].

Regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress among medical professionals in their organizational lives, it has been found there is a negative relationship of emotional intelligence with

stress for both the genders of medical professionals [10]. Some studies have also revealed that the relationship between occupational stress and emotional intelligence significantly correlated with job performance [11].

Emotional intelligence is very important aspect for modern organizations. It provides organizations ability, with the help of which they recognize the emotions of their employees and further they can make their employees able to manage their emotions [2]. Emotional Intelligence is an ability to recognize the meanings of emotions and the relationships and to reason and problem solve on the basis of them [12].

**Reilly (1994)** studied the impact of emotional intelligence in hospitals setting and found that the nurses in hospitals had a negative relationship with the syndromes which were associated with some burnout. Since burnout diseases / syndromes are most of the times horrible so the nurses were not able to handle and accept them emotionally [13]. Similar responses in the similar settings were also found in some studies and it was identified that control on emotions is very important to minimize the stress of job and also the consequences which creates the stress of job [14].

Not only in business and hospitals but emotional intelligence is significantly associated with stress in the police also. This study found that those police officers, who had a high level of emotional intelligence, had less level of stress when measured [16].

EI is twice as important as technical skills and more important than IQ for success in jobs at all levels [1]. Emotional intelligence has a relation with work. It makes you successful if you are well with your emotional intelligence. However, the author also argued that the studies which have been conducted on relationship of emotional intelligence and stress are not so sufficient that a firm establishment of results can be done [17].

Those managers who had high level of emotional intelligence had less level of stress and they were also better in physical and psychological health [18]. Studies have been carried out on Emotional intelligence and mood impacting emotion outcomes, the buffering hypothesis involves factors that can reduce or protect from the negative affect associated with stressors [19]. High emotional intelligence is a heightened ability to understand, identify, and manage emotions, whereas alexithymia is difficulty in these facets, particularly describing emotions [2].

A term Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) was formulated by Gross and John, which measures expressive suppression and cognitive reappraisal. This means either changing how you are thinking about a situation or selectively not expressing an emotion [20]. **Ciarrochi et al. (2001)** found that individuals with high emotional regulation (a facet of EI) produced more positive stories when presented with either a positive or negative stimulus, relative to those with low emotion regulation.

### **3. Objectives of the Study:**

- To find out the level of stress management of newly recruited employees.
- To identify the role of emotional intelligent as a buffer effect in stress management of the newly recruited employees in Retail organization in Delhi-NCR.

### **4. Methodology:**

Study was descriptive in nature and found the association among different variable of emotional intelligent. Only newly joined employees (less than 1 yr.) are been taken as respondent. Hence, eight renowned retailers namely Spencer, Giovani, crocs, DLF, Lifestyle, Shopper stop, Croma and Vishal Mega Mart were chosen for the purpose of the study. All these retailers belong to the multi brand retail category. The respondents were chosen from all departments of these organization viz. accounting and finance, Human resource, store operations and management and information technology etc. so that the sample can be a true representative of the retail organization. A sample size of 300 was determined and finally 255 filled questionnaires were obtained from respondents. For analysis of data multiple regressions was applied. The software used for data analysis was SPSS 20.

Scope of the study is limited to Delhi and NCR only. Further, 'Newly recruited Employees' of this organization have been considered as respondents.

### **5. Data Analysis and Interpretation:**

#### **5.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents:**

Table 1 presents the demographic and education profile of the employees. Around 63.9% are males and 36.1% females. 58.3% of the respondents are between the age group of 26 to 40, 66.2% are 27.4% or below and only 6.4% employees are above the age of 40. This shows that retail industry is more filled with younger people.

Undergraduate and Postgraduate degree holders are almost equal 38.4% and 40% respectively whereas, some other diploma or professional courses are done by 21.6% employees.

**Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents:**

| <b>Gender</b>             | <b>No. of Respondents</b> | <b>% age</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| Male                      | 163                       | 63.9         |
| Female                    | 92                        | 36.1         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>255</b>                | <b>100</b>   |
| <b>Age Groups</b>         |                           |              |
| 25 or below               | 70                        | 27.4         |
| 26 – 40                   | 169                       | 66.2         |
| Above 40                  | 16                        | 6.4          |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>255</b>                | <b>100</b>   |
| <b>Qualifications</b>     |                           |              |
| UG degree                 | 98                        | 38.4         |
| PG degree                 | 102                       | 40.0         |
| Others                    | 55                        | 21.6         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>255</b>                | <b>100</b>   |
| <b>Level</b>              |                           |              |
| Managerial                | 80                        | 31.4         |
| Store Operation – General | 123                       | 48.2         |
| Technical Staff           | 52                        | 20.4         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>255</b>                | <b>100</b>   |
| <b>Experience</b>         |                           |              |
| Less than 1 month         | 30                        | 11.7         |
| Less than 3 months        | 85                        | 33.3         |
| Less than 6 months        | 98                        | 38.5         |
| Less than 1 yr.           | 42                        | 16.5         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>255</b>                | <b>100</b>   |

The level of employees was categories as managerial, operational and technical. There are 31.4% managerial level personnel, 48.2% are of general store operations and 20.4% belong to the technical profiles. Experience divided into four categories. 11.7% employees are less than 1 month old in the organization, 33.3% employees are less than 3 months old in the organization, 38.5% employees are less

than 6 months old in the organization, and rest 16.5% employees are less than 1 yr. old in the organization.

## 5.2 Factors Affecting EI

Emotional intelligence of newly recruited employees may depend upon a variety of factors. Basically 18 variables were taken into account as independent variables (refer table 4 for details).

Multiple regressions were applied to find out the impact of different variables on overall emotional intelligence of the employees. Table 2 presents the model summary, the overall R is .782 and R square is .611 which means that the model explains around 30% of the variation.

**Table 2 Model Summary**

| <b>Model</b> | <b>R</b> | <b>R Square</b> | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | <b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b> |
|--------------|----------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1            | .782(a)  | .611            | .576                     | .69351                            |

Table 3 presents the value of ANOVA and F value. The value in the significance column of the table 3 is .000 which means that few variables significantly affect the emotional intelligence. The impact of independent variables on emotional intelligence has been explained in the table 4.

**Table 3 ANOVA**

|            | <b>Sum of Squares</b> | <b>DF</b> | <b>Mean Square</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>Sig.</b> |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| Regression | 44.345                | 18        | 4.385              | 9.403    | .000        |
| Residual   | 105.356               | 236       | .365               |          |             |
| Total      | 157.148               | 254       |                    |          |             |



**Table 4 Coefficients (a)**

|  | Un-standardized Coefficients |             | Standardized Coefficients | T            | Sig.        |
|--|------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------|
|  | B                            | Std. Error  | Beta                      |              |             |
| Constant   | .435                         | .322        |                           | 1.203        | .284        |
| I know when to speak about my personal problems to others  | .32                          | .056        | .067                      | .108         | .719        |
| <b>I expect that I will do well on most things I try</b>   | <b>.078</b>                  | <b>.053</b> | <b>.098</b>               | <b>1.550</b> | <b>.048</b> |
| Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important | .036                         | .065        | .048                      | .636         | .257        |
| <b>Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living</b>                               | <b>.093</b>                  | <b>.073</b> | <b>.125</b>               | <b>1.380</b> | <b>.034</b> |
| <b>I am aware of my emotions as I experience them</b>  | <b>.126</b>                  | <b>.075</b> | <b>.148</b>               | <b>2.756</b> | <b>.008</b> |
| I like to share my emotions with others  | .066                         | .058        | .087                      | .782         | .682        |
| When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last                                   | .203                         | .047        | .226                      | .621         | .413        |
| I arrange events others enjoy  | .067                         | .071        | .077                      | 1.098        | .377        |
| I seek out activities that make me happy   | .075                         | .046        | .090                      | 1.590        | .166        |
| <b>I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others</b>                                      | <b>.135</b>                  | <b>.065</b> | <b>.159</b>               | <b>3.511</b> | <b>.000</b> |
| <b>I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others</b>                            | <b>.109</b>                  | <b>.069</b> | <b>.138</b>               | <b>1.614</b> | <b>.027</b> |
| When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me                                      | .170                         | .054        | .191                      | .840         | .102        |
| By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing           | .041                         | .044        | .057                      | .943         | .137        |
| <b>I have control over my emotions</b>   | <b>.156</b>                  | <b>.058</b> | <b>.178</b>               | <b>2.894</b> | <b>.000</b> |
| <b>I motivate myself by imagining a good</b>   | <b>.068</b>                  | <b>.47</b>  | <b>.101</b>               | <b>2.648</b> | <b>.005</b> |

|  |             |            |             |              |             |
|--|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>outcome to tasks I take on</b>                                  |             |            |             |              |             |
| <b>I compliment others when they have done something well</b>      | <b>.187</b> | <b>.63</b> | <b>.214</b> | <b>3.792</b> | <b>.000</b> |
| When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas | <b>.044</b> | <b>.77</b> | <b>.080</b> | <b>.449</b>  | <b>.157</b> |
| I help other people feel better when they are down                 | <b>.059</b> | <b>.51</b> | <b>.070</b> | <b>.465</b>  | <b>.276</b> |

(a) Dependent Variable – Your rating to yourself regarding your stress management. How you would rate yourself?

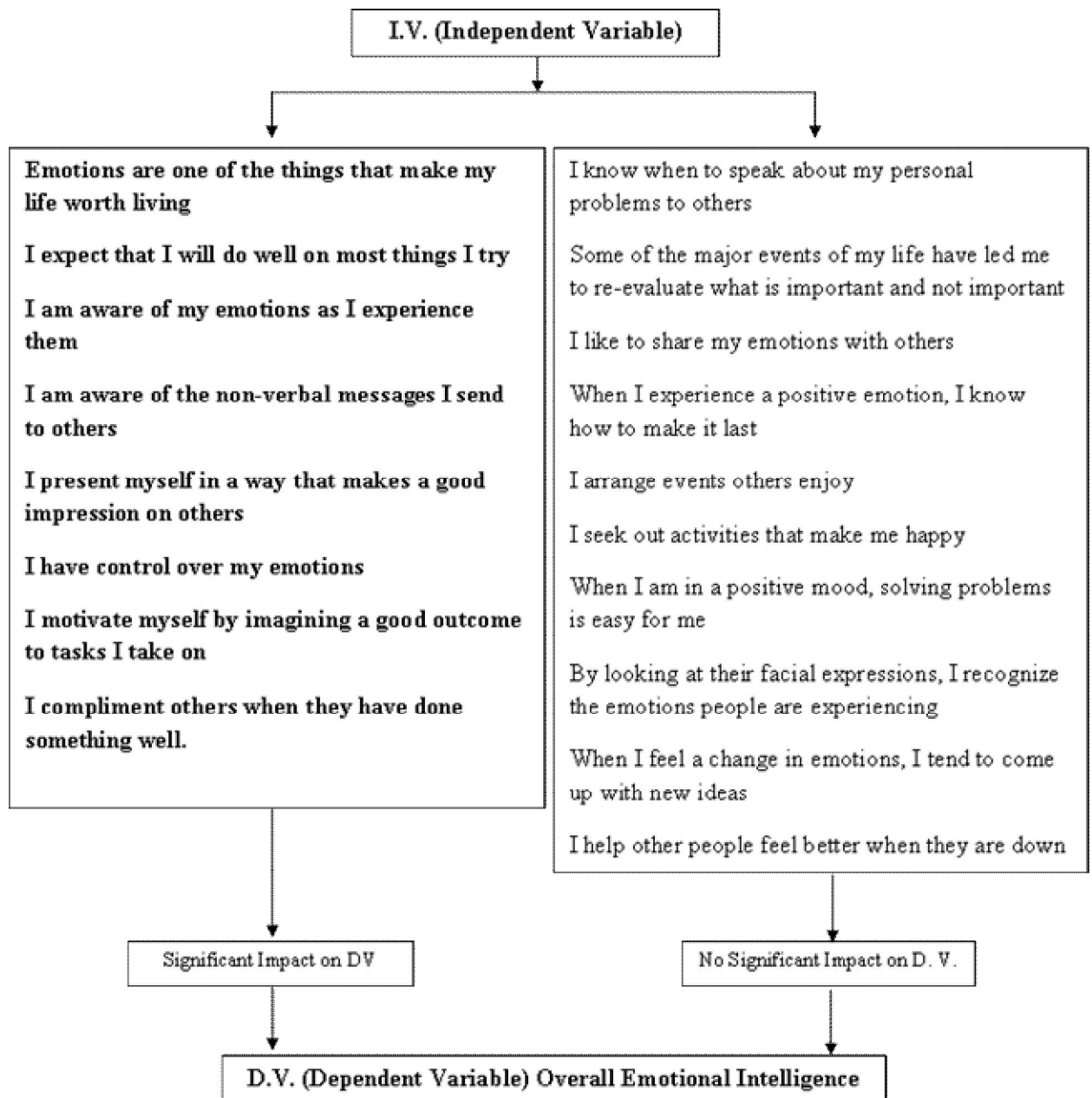
Table 4 presents that out of 18 variables, 8 variables namely Emotions are one of the things that make my life worth living, I expect that I will do well on most things I try, I am aware of my emotions as I experience them, I am aware of the non-verbal messages I send to others, I present myself in a way that makes a good impression on others, I have control over my emotions, I motivate myself by imagining a good outcome to tasks I take on, I compliment others when they have done something well. At the same time I know when to speak about my personal problems to others, Some of the major events of my life have led me to re-evaluate what is important and not important, I like to share my emotions with others, When I experience a positive emotion, I know how to make it last, I arrange events others enjoy, I seek out activities that make me happy, When I am in a positive mood, solving problems is easy for me, By looking at their facial expressions, I recognize the emotions people are experiencing, When I feel a change in emotions, I tend to come up with new ideas, I help other people feel better when they are down, have no significant impact on overall emotional intelligence of newly recruited employees.

## 6. Findings, Discussion and Conclusion:

There is no much difference among new recruited staff with respect to emotional intelligence and occupational stress. From the present study it cannot be assumed that emotionally intelligent people will always have low stress. Even though employees have high emotional intelligence they have moderate and high stress. Role overload and conflict were the main reason for the employees stress at the work place.

From the present study it can be concluded that emotionally intelligent people will also have stress in work place. Work pressure is the main reason for the stress of employees. Thus organizations must also focus on reducing stress of their employees by conducting stress control programs. The

increasing of EI skills (empathy, impulse control) necessary for successful job performance can help workers to deal more effectively with their feelings, and thus directly decrease the level of job stress.



**Figure 2 Factors Affecting Emotional Intelligence of newly recruited employees**

The results of the study indicate the need to develop intervention programs aimed at increasing the EI level and better coping with stress. Organizations that offer their employees a combination of EI and stress management training provide them with an opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to satisfy more effectively the requirements of their job. In present business scenario, a large number of activities are carried out to build up the emotional strength of the employees; yoga and meditation programmes are the most popular among these activities. Emotional intelligence is now considered as emotional capital and emotional asset.

Overall emotional intelligence has a significant association with the employee turnover. It has been determined that low emotional intelligence causes for high employee turnover [22]. This fact motivates the corporate to invest more upon to maintain a better emotional intelligence level of their employees.

## **7. Managerial Implications of the Research**

Emotional intelligence and work life balance together create organizational success and develop competitive advantage for organizations (Kannaiah and Santhi, 2015). In the present study a conclusive model in the context of emotional intelligence has been provided (figure 2), which shows the factors significantly affecting the emotional intelligence of newly recruited employees and those which are not affecting the emotional intelligence of newly recruited employees. This model may help the corporate to design their emotional intelligence programmes in a better manner.

The corporate may help employees to find their inner motivations and acquired need both in a better way, so that they can actually connect their personal goals to the organizational goals. As per the present study, employees like to complement each other, when the other employees do something well. This shows that team building and group cohesiveness is not difficult for employees if they are motivated to do so and a habit of complimenting each other is appreciated. Similarly, imagination of good outcomes also motivates the employees. This is a core motivational phenomenon, where employees need motivation from the rewards; hence their rewards must be clearly communicated to the employees.

## 8. References

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