

IMPACT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON OCCUPATIONAL SELF-EFFICACY AMONG WOMEN EXECUTIVES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN BANKING INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) is of vital importance in the personal as well as the professional life of individuals. It has been identified as one of the important behavioural constructs considered to be a major contributor to performance (Goleman, 1995, 1998, and Hay Group 2003). The notion of EI has created an interest among the scholars and management practitioners because of its wide applicability to a host of workplace issues that includes job satisfaction, absenteeism, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviour (Cooper and Sawaf, 1997, Megarian and Sosik, 1996, Sosik and Megerian, 1999, and Wright and Staw, 1999).

Occupational self-efficacy is another important construct taken in this study. Self-efficacy beliefs of people are critical determinants of their performance on various tasks. It has been shown by the studies that there is a positive relation between self-efficacy and both individual and organizational performance (e.g. Bandura (1997), Gist (1989), Stajkovic and Luthana, 1998a, Tierney and Farmer, 2002, and Wood and Bandura, 1989). From the research conducted, it has been shown that the above mentioned variables namely EI and self-efficacy beliefs are crucial for the optimal performance of individuals and organizations. Considering the relevance and importance of these factors in personal and the working life of individuals, an attempt has been made in this study to examine the relationship between EI and occupational self-efficacy.

Occupational self-efficacy denotes one's belief in one's own abilities or mastery in one's own occupation. In the present study, increased general self-efficacy occupational self-efficacy has been studied. The latter is more appropriate to study the efficacy beliefs aimed towards some entity. Bandura (1997) also relates efficacy to some context or situation and stated that 'an efficacy belief is not a decontextualized trait'.

Emotional Intelligence

The term EI was developed and introduced for the first time by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It was defined as, 'the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions'. Although, the construct of EI was initially proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990). It was Goleman (1995) who popularized the concept with his famous and best selling book. Emotional Intelligence Goleman (1998) defined EI as, "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions

well in ourselves and in our relationship”. Further, he suggested that EI is made up of five general components - self awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

EI models have generally been classified under two categories. The first category includes the activity model proposed by Mayer and Salovey (1997), which argued that EI is the ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate it in thought, understand and reason with it and regulate it in self and others. The second category includes Goleman (1995) and Bar-On (1997) model in his model of EI, Goleman (1995) defined EI on the basis of traits that includes self-control, zeal, and persistence and the ability to motivate oneself. While Bar-On (1997) maintained that EI is, ‘an array of non-cognitive capabilities, competences, and skills that influences one’s ability to succeed in coping with the environmental demands and pressures’. He includes five major areas of skills-interpersonal skills, intra-personal skills, adaptability skills, stress management skills, and the general mood.

Research on EI does suggest that individuals who show higher levels of EI are more likely to experience performance-related success than the individuals who exhibit lower EI levels (e.g. Goleman, 1995, 1998. Schutte et. al., For and Spector, 2000, and George, 2000). EI is important not only for the managerial jobs, but is also crucial for the highly technical jobs such as scientists or engineers. In one study on scientists/ engineers by Kelley and Caplan (1993). EI was found a better predictor than academic talent and IQ for on the job productivity. In another study, Gundlach et al., (2003) highlighted the role of EI in the development of self-efficacy, and pointed out that (EI) has an impact on self efficacy through its influence on the casual reasoning processes and emotions involved in reacting to important workplace outcomes.

Occupational Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy beliefs hold the key to human achievement, attitude and performance on specific task as well as overall performance levels (Bandura, 1977 and 1997). Stajkovic and Luthans (1998b) define self-efficacy - ‘it refers to individual’s conviction (or confidence) about his or her abilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources and course of action needed to successfully execute a specific task within a given context’. Here we can observe that the concern of self-efficacy is with the judgements of what an individual can do with the skills that he/she possesses.

Bandura (1997) has described self-efficacy as, ‘the belief one’s capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments’. Self-efficacy as a specific construct has been understood as the belief about the level of competence in particular situations. The concept of self-efficacy is normally treated as a general construct and self-efficacy is regarded as generalized self-efficacy instead of contextual or specific self-efficacy. However, Bandura (1997) argued that general measures of efficacy create problems of predictive relevance and is difficult to just understand what

is being assessed. He opined that efficacy should be viewed in some particular context or situations or with respect to some specific entity.

Research on the construct of self-efficacy indicates that the self-efficacy levels influence how individuals perceive their own skill sets as well as how they subsequently utilize these skills (Chemers et al., 2000). It has been proved through research that the specific self-efficacy belief's are positively associated with the individual and organizational performance (Stajkovic and Luthans, 1998a, and 1998b). Self-efficacy has been studied in relation to creativity and productivity (Tierney and Farmer, 2002), and management effectiveness, performance, and idea generation (Gist, 1989, Luthana and Peterson, 2002; and Wood and Bandura, 1989).

EI is an important factor that constitutes to the formation of self-efficacy beliefs. Bandura (1997) believed that both self-awareness and control of emotions are critical to the development of self-efficacy perceptions such that individuals who exhibit higher self awareness and higher control of their emotions are likely to develop stronger efficacy benefits. Goleman states that self-efficacy is the underlying construct for emotional intelligence (Luthans, 2005).

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are confined to (i) to measure the level of emotional intelligence and the occupational self-efficacy among women executives; (ii) to findout the linkage between the emotional intelligence and occupational self efficacy among them.

Hypotheses

Based on the objectives of the study the following hypotheses have been formulated for empirical testing.

- H₁ : EI will exhibit a positive and significant relationship with occupational self-efficacy.
- H₂ : Dimensional of EI will exhibit a positive and significant relationship with the dimensions of occupational self efficacy.
- H₃ : EI will exhibit a significant effect on occupational self-efficacy.
- H₄ : Dimensions of EI will exhibit a significant effect on occupational self-efficacy.

The Sample

Data was collected from the women executives working in different bank branches located in Tirunelveli district, Tamilnadu. The sample size was determined with the help of the given formula $n = \frac{N}{Ne^2 + 1}$ (Adcock, 1997). The sample size came to 189. The applied sampling procedure of the study is judgement sampling.

Instruments and Measures

Emotional Intelligence Scale (SI)

The EI of the employees was measured by an emotional intelligence scale developed by Hyde et al., (2002). This is a 34 item scale with ten dimensions. The dimensions of EI Scale are - self awareness, empathy, self-motivation, emotional stability, managing relations, integrity, self development, value orientation, commitment, and altruistic behaviour. A sample item includes, 'I am able to make intelligent decisions using a healthy balance of emotions and reason'. Participants were asked to respond on a five point Likert Scale, ranging from, five for 'strongly agree' to one for 'strongly disagree'. The split half reliability co-efficient of the scale was found to be 0.91.

Occupational Self-Efficacy Scale (OSE)

For measuring the efficacy beliefs of the respondents in their occupations, an occupational self-efficacy scale was used. This scale was developed by Pethe et al., (1999). This is a 19 item scale comprising six factors. The six underlying dimensions of the scale are confidence, command, adaptability, personal effectiveness, positive attitude, and individuality. A sample item used in the scale is - 'I always set targets higher than those set by my organization'. The items were rated by the respondents on a five point Likert scale with the responses range varying from five for 'strongly agree' to one for 'strongly disagree'. The reliability co-efficient of the scale is 0.93.

Analysis and Results

The data collected was analysed by using SPSS 12.0 version. The results of the study were analysed on the basis of different correlation values between the variables and also by using regression analysis method. As depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 Correlation among Demographic variables, Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Self-Efficacy

Demographic Variables	Age	TO	EQ	B	OSE
Age	1	0.948(")	-0.278(")	-0.064	-0.055
Tenure in organization (TO)	0.948(")	1	-0.304(")	-0.026	-0.028
Educational Qualifications (EQ)	-0.278(")	-0.304(")	1	-0.006	0.078

There is no significant correlation between demographic variables and EI or occupational self-efficacy.

Table 2 Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Occupational Self-Efficacy

	Emotional Intelligence	Occupational Self Efficacy
Emotional Intelligence	1	0.673(")
Occupational Self Efficacy	0.673(")	1

Note: " Significant at 0.01.

Strong positive correlation of 0.673 (significant at the 0.01 level) exists between EI and occupational self-efficacy (Table 2) the first hypothesis that is therefore accepted.

Positive correlation (significant at the 0.01 level) exists between most of the dimensions of EI and the dimensions of occupational self-efficacy Table 3.

Table 3 Correlations between the Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence and the Dimensions of Occupational Self Efficacy

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence	Dimensions of Occupational Self Efficacy					
	Con.	Comm.	Ad.	PE	PA	Ind.
Self awareness	0.481	0.460	0.331	0.407	0.275	0.272
Empathy	0.447	0.311	0.353	0.361	0.351	0.211
Self Motivation	0.459	0.515	0.460	0.478	0.333	0.332
Emotional Stability	0.407	0.399	0.371	0.357	0.402	0.353
Managing Relations	0.481	0.445	0.373	0.367	0.192	0.322
Integrity	0.384	0.433	0.371	0.349	0.439	0.348
Self-Development	0.352	0.360	0.327	0.424	0.368	0.388
Value Orientation	0.225	0.228	0.353	0.154	0.373	0.217
Commitment	0.336	0.297	0.381	0.316	0.337	0.176
Altruistic behaviour	0.312	0.306	0.242	0.330	0.137	0.168

Positive correlation of 0.211, 0.192, 0.225, 0.228, 0.217 and 0.242 (significant at the 0.05 level) exists between empathy and individually, managing relations and positive attitude, value orientation and confidence, value orientation and command, value orientation and individually and altruistic behaviour and adaptability respectively. Weaker correlation values (non-significant) of 0.154, 0.176, 0.137 and 0.168 were obtained between value orientation and personal effectiveness, commitment and individually, altruistic behaviour and positive attitude, and altruistic behaviour and individually respectively. It can be concluded that except for a few cases, most of the dimensions of both the variables have positive and significant relationship with each other. Thus, to a large extent, the fourth hypothesis is acceptable.

To test the their hypothesis, a regression model was worked out, taking EI as on independent and occupational self-efficacy as a dependent variable. The results of the regression analysis (Table 4) show that occupational self-efficacy can be predicted from EI and $R^2 = 0.8043$ $F = 90.97$ ($p < 0.01$) and B value = 0.673. Findings indicate that 80 per cent of variance in the dependent variable could be predicted by the independent variable. Hence the third hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4 Emotional Intelligence as a Predictor of Occupational Self Efficacy

Regression Model	R ²	F-value	DF	Beta value (B)	t-value	Significance
D.V.OSE	-	-	-	-	-	-
Emotional Intelligence	0.8043	90.971*	121	0.673	9.538	0

Note: Significant at $p < 0.01$ level OSE = Occupational Self Efficacy.

The fourth hypothesis was tested through a regression model, taking dimensions of EI as independent variables and occupational self-efficacy as a dependent variables.

Table 5 Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence as Predictors of Occupational Self Efficacy

Regression Model	Beta value (B)	t-value	Significance
Self awareness	0.039	0.399	0.6910
Empathy	0.056	0.587	0.5590
Self Motivation	0.233	2.390	0.0190
Emotional Stability	0.048	0.469	0.6400
Managing Relations	0.171	1.928	0.0270
Integrity	0.183	1.8409	0.0230
Self-Development	0.096	0.960	0.3390
Value Orientation	0.075	0.919	0.3600
Commitment	0.122	1.496	0.0138
Altruistic behaviour	0.002	0.028	0.9780
$R^2 = 0.879$, $F(112 \text{ df}) = 9.271$, significance 0.000.			

Note: OSE - Occupational Self Efficacy.

Results from regression analysis as above Table 5 reveal that there are only four variables having significant standardized B weights, i.e. self-motivation ($\beta=0.233$, $t = 2.390$, $p < 0.05$) commitment ($\beta=0.122$, $t=1.496$, $p < 0.05$, integrity $\beta=0.183$, $t=1.8409$, $p < 0.05$); and managing relations ($\beta=.171$, $t=1.928$, $p \leq 0.05$). The analysis suggests that out of the ten dimensions of EI, only four dimensions show significant effect on the occupational self-efficacy. Thus, the fourth hypotheses are partially accepted.

Discussion

Major objectives of the present research were to explore the relationship between EI and occupational self efficacy and also to see the effect of EI on occupational self-efficacy. Results of the study have shown a positive correlation between EI and occupational self efficacy and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level EI has also shown a significant impact upon occupational self-efficacy. Findings of this research are in line with the results of earlier studies, except for relationship with demographic variables. Nikolaou

and Tsaousis (2002) found a negative correlation between age and EI, Bar-on and Parker (2000) has reported that EI is positively related to age Chan (2004) conducted a study on Chinese secondary school teachers and found that EI significantly predicted self-efficacy beliefs of the teachers. Results of this and other studies indicated a strong relationship between EI and efficacy beliefs. It has been mentioned earlier that Bandura (1997), himself called EI an important constituent in the development of self-efficacy.

Results of this study have certain practical implications. It is believed that individuals with higher level of EI are better employees. For example, Goleman (1995) contends that EI should become increasingly valued in the workplace in future. The results indicate that emotionally intelligent employees show a higher level of occupational self-efficacy. It has already been shown by many researchers that EI is a major contributor in the individual and organized performance. Results also indicate that emotionally intelligent employees develop emotional attachment to their organizations and are more committed to their organization (Carmeli, 2003).

Conclusion

Through this study and after a review of literature we become familiar with the relevance and usefulness of the three constructs - EI and occupational self efficacy for the individual as well as organizational outcomes. Besides, the study shows the importance of EI even for the employees whose job requires a high technical or scientific expertise. Thus, an understanding of the constructs will help recruiters to select persons with a higher level of EI occupational self efficacy. It is suggested that organizations should focus on finding the levels of EI and self efficacy beliefs of their prospective employees besides other characteristics, during the personnel selection process. Organizations should conduct development or training programs in order to develop or enhance these competencies among their employees. This will lead to building better organizations and employees.

Limitations and Recommendations

- A sample of 123 is not large enough to generalize the findings of this research. Moreover, the sample was confined to Tirunelveli district, Tamilnadu it is desirable to have a study with a larger sample taken from all regions of the country.
- EI and occupational self-efficacy were measured in this study by self report method. In all cases of self report measures, common method variance and social desirability bias are the concerns for the researchers (e.g. Bagozzi, and Yi, 1990, and Williams and Brown, 1994).
- The sample does not include employees of different age groups.
- Further, research needs to be conducted to include (i) diverse age groups (ii) both genders, (iii) different levels of work experience, (iv) different types of the

organizations (public sector, private sector, non-profit organizations) and (v) different types of professions.

- Research should also focus on the techniques for enhancing competencies.
- Relationship of EI and occupational self efficacy with quality of work life and human well being needs to be studied.

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