



Gender Differences in Emotional Quotient among Professional Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study is aimed to analyze the differences in emotional quotient among professional male and female students. A total of 452 students from Kanchipuram district took part in the study between the age group of 18-21 years. It comprises of 247 engineering and 205 medical students among which 156 were male students and 296 were female students. The questionnaire was administered to the students and assessed using the Emotional intelligence scale. There was no significant difference in the emotional quotient between the male and female population among professional students.

Keywords: Emotional quotient, Emotional intelligence, Professionals

INTRODUCTION

Emotional Quotient is defined as the “the ability to perceive and express emotions, to use emotions to facilitate thinking, to understand and reason with emotions, and to effectively manage emotions within oneself and in relationships with others”. Goleman defines 5 main competencies of emotional intelligence, which can be grouped into 2 main categories: personal and social skills. Goleman has asserted that emotional intelligence abilities were about 4 times more important than IQ in determining professional success and prestige, even for those with a scientific background [1]. Since the late 1980’s emotional intelligence has been widely researched and has emerged as an important attribute for predicting success. Salovey and Mayer defined EQ as ‘a form of social intelligence that involves 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 action.’ [2]. Leaders who have high EI are better able to manage the impressions they give others and, through transformational leadership, use those impressions to guide their subordinates to achieve the desired goals [3,4]. The objective of the following discussion of literature is to establish whether any gender difference prevails in the emotional quotient among professional students.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was a cross-sectional study of random sampling method conducted at Melmaruvathur Adhiparasakthi Institute of Medical Science and Research, Adhiparasakthi Engineering College and Meenakshi Medical College both belonging to Kanchipuram district. The study group comprised of 247 engineering students and 205 medical students between the ages of 18-21 years among which 156 were male students and 296 were female students. Students who were under psychiatric treatment and incompletely answered questionnaires were excluded from the study. The survey was conducted using an emotional quotient questionnaire which was based on the Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSETT). It uses a 5-point Likert scale and comprises of 33 questions. The scoring of the responses was categorized into the following scale of low (0-55), moderate (56-110), and high (111-165).

This scale measures 4 facets of emotional intelligence as defined by Salovey and Mayer are:

- The appraisal of emotions in self and others
- The expression of emotion
- The regulation of emotion in self and others
- The utilization of emotion in problem-solving

Institutional ethical clearance was obtained and informed consent was taken from the students following which the questionnaire was administered over a total period of 40 minutes. The scoring of the test was obtained by interpreting the answers given by the students to a standardized key scoring scale (Emotional intelligence scale) for the questionnaire.

RESULTS

The total number of students who scored high in the test was 417 equal to a percentage of 92.3%. The students who scored moderately in the test were 35 equal to a percentage of 7.7%. There were no low scorers among the total population of test takers (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1 Results showing the emotional quotient levels

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
High scorers	417	92.3%
Moderate scorers	35	7.7%
Total	452	100.0%

Table 2 Results showing the scores with respect to the gender

Variables	High scorers	Moderate scorers	Chi-Square value	p-value (Significance<0.05)
Males	89.74% (n=140)	10.26% (n=16)	2.106	0.104
Females	93.58% (n=277)	6.42% (n=19)		

There was no significant difference in the emotional quotient between the males and females among the professional students of 18-21 years. The chi-square tests had the statistical value of 2.106 which corresponded to the p-value as 0.104. The data was significant when the p-value was less than 0.05. Thus there is no significant difference in the Emotional quotient scores calculated among the population of male students and female students (Figure 1).

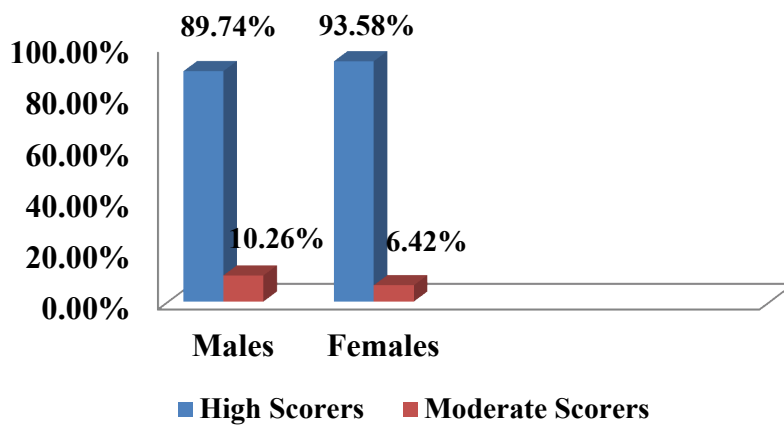


Figure 1 Gender differences in emotional quotient among professional students

DISCUSSION

According to Peggy J. Wagner, in ‘Does high EI (emotional intelligence) make better doctors?’ published in the opened page of American Medical Association Journal of Ethics Emotional intelligence (EI) is a theoretical construct that has mass appeal. First developed in the business world, EI is now viewed as an essential element for effective functioning in the market place. Exposure of students equally to varying stress makes them stronger to face obstacles in both their professional and personal life.

Since the 1960s and 70’s women have been entering the workforce at increasing rates, creating social and economic changes and working towards equal rights. Women in today’s developing world face equal competition as men to prove themselves. Women are breaking the stereotype barriers all around to take a stand in the global front which is evident from the increase in competitive leadership and workforce in the female population. Male managers are considered confident, task-oriented, competitive, objective, decisive and assertive [5]. Sometimes male management characteristics are referred to as “transactional” and involving contingent rewards based on compliance [5], whereas female management characteristics were referred to as “transformational” which is more closely related to consideration and motivation [3].

As older and typically “command and control” type leaders leave the workforce for retirement, the opportunity is made available for fresh thinking leaders, many of whom are women. As this generation of women enters the workforce, it seems they feel less pressured to adopt accepted “masculine” or transactional management traits. Their style involves collaborating with subordinates during decision making, being empathetic and self-aware and using other cooperative approaches, such as supportive team building, rather than simply self-interest.

Experts sometimes refer to this new branch of leadership as interactive leadership, where interactions with subordinates are valued and regarded as sharing of power, generating trust and motivating workers to achieve their own goals [6,7]. This fresh new way of leading should not be attributed to females alone since many men have adopted this more emotionally intelligent style as well. Thus, emotional quotient is a necessary factor in the success of a person’s social, personal and professional life. Thus, the importance of emotional quotient needs to be known to today’s students who are the future workforce and the creators of a new generation. A good level of emotional quotient leads to emotional stability thus creating effective leadership and better job performance [8,9].

CONCLUSION

The study showed no significant difference in the emotional quotient between the male and female population. However, even though the majority of the students were high scorers, some students had moderate scores. It also showed that there are no low scorers. So the various negative factors that influence the professional and social life of the students emotionally need to be identified. In this process, since the majority of them are high and moderate scorers, they should be encouraged to make the best out of their own emotional intelligence skills.

DECLARATIONS

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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