

Original Research Paper

Influence of Demographic Variable of Emotional Intelligence with Conflict Management Styles in IT Based Organization

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ABSTRACT

Demographic variables such as age and gender, was earlier reported to Influenced Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Conflict Management (CM) Styles. However, a comprehensive study on Indian population in the IT sector has not been done yet. We have studied this aspect on 100 volunteers of both genders in the age ranging from 25 to 50 years serving in Human Resource and Administration wing of an IT based organisation. Standard questionnaire was used to measure Emotional Quotient Index (EQI) (Self Rating) and EQI (Observer Rating) and Conflict level using Rahim Organisational Level Conflict Inventory II. The findings indicated that there was no influence of age on both EI and CM Styles. However, subjects in the age group of above 40 years, tend to have higher score of emotional intelligence. This was more evident in self-awareness, empathy and social skills. Similarly the age group of above 40 years adopted more collaborative and compromising style of Conflict Management as compared to other two age groups below 30 and 30-40 years of age. Similarly there was no significant gender difference in various domains of emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management Style. Though we are reporting the negative findings of age and gender influence on EI and CM which is important in the context of existing reports available in the field of other study populations. The study findings are discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Conflict management

Information Technology (IT) revolution in India brought significant impact on Indian economy by contributing to large GDP with above 60% from IT Sector. This IT Industry/organization employed a large number of youngsters both male and female genders. The behavior of an individual or group is guided by Emotional Intelligence (EI) irrespective of culture they belong to the British seem to be expecting personnel working in service sector to display more positive behavior than those employed in other fields. Whenever individuals interact, such as employees within a project team or managers during a negotiation, interpersonal conflicts are possible. If not resolved, these conflicts may negatively impact the

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respective outcome of interactions (Thomas, 1992). Conflict handling styles, which constitute the elements of a classification of different modes for handling interpersonal conflicts (Rahim, 1983) have been identified as a source of reaching more favorable outcomes in a broad spectrum of different conflict situations (e.g., Blake and Mouton, 1964 and Rahim, 1983). In an earlier study we found good correlation of EI with CM styles in IT based organization (Goodwill & Selvamurthy 2016). Cross cultural impact on CM has been reported with research was also carried out to understand the association CM styles with gender role, organizational status and age. It was observed that integrating style was usually adopted by androgynous employees in handling conflict (Brewer, Mitchell & Weber, 2002). With regard to gender, female employees generally used avoiding style while their male counterparts adopted mostly the dominating style. It was also observed that the employees in lower status adopted mostly obliging and avoiding styles while those in higher status applied more integrating styles. Havenga (2010) assessed the CM styles in different age groups and found a close correlation between compromising and obliging styles, but for the dominating styles with other CM styles were applied to the same extent by personnel in various age groups.

RESEARCH METHOD

With Reference to the earlier study done by (Goodwill & Selvamurthy 2016) this aspect of the study was conducted on 100 volunteers in Human Resource Division and Administration Division of an IT based corporate sector organization. Of these 100 participants who responded to the questionnaire survey 57 were males and 43 were females. They were of age from 25 to 50 years with 44% in the age group of 30-40 years. They were well educated with 20% of the subjects having doctoral qualification, 63% a master's degree and the rest were graduates. Among the participants 42 were Supervisors while 58 were subordinates working with them.

Research Instruments

1. Emotional Quotient Index (EQI) (Self-rating) Survey

It is a standardized survey tool for self-assessment which can be used for both the supervisors and subordinates to assess the EI level by themselves. This tool is based on Goleman's five domains of Emotional Intelligence "Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills. There are 14 items in the survey with 7 point likert scale ('7' indicating 'strongly agree') and ('1' is rated as strongly disagree). Some example of the questions in the survey are:

- **As source of wisdom I take both positive and negative emotions to take my life**
- **From moment to moment I can monitor my life**

2. Emotional Quotient Index (EQI) (Observer) Survey

Supervisors EQ was measured using the tool at the organization, as against their personality profile whereas Goleman's five domains of EI formed the basic of the survey tool as

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mentioned above. Generally questions in EQI(observer) are the same as in EQI (self rating) substituting “I” to “my supervisor” sample of the questions are as follows”

- **Under pressure my boss keep him/herself calm**
- **Depending to whom my boss is interacting he/she adjust his/her behavior.**

3. Rahim Organisational Conflict Inventory-II (ROCI-II) Form A Survey

This inventory was developed by Rahim (1983b) with 28 items for assessing CM styles. It is a survey tool developed by Rahim et.al. (2002a) which can evaluate Emotional Index Quotient (EQ) of supervisor at work against their personality profile. It is used for all five domains of EI described by Goleman. This survey also contains 14 items and uses 7 point likert scale with ‘1’ being ‘strongly disagree’ and‘7’ being ‘strongly agree’.

Some of the sample items are given below:

- **To understand the True and genuine feelings of other's I readily tell my boss**
- **To smoothly handle multiple demands and shifting priorities I help my boss**

Data collection procedure:

The above mentioned survey questionnaires were carefully prepared for ease of use by volunteers of the study. All subjects were briefed about the objectives and the methods to be adopted in the study and were given a consent form for the confirmation that they were briefed about the study procedure and objective (refer to Appendix A). They also have been given details regarding the salient features of the consent form as well as instructions regarding the procedure to undertake the survey. Debriefing form was also given to each participant with essential information regarding different aspects of this survey that is given in Appendix B. One week was provided to employees to complete these forms.

DATA ANALYSIS

Raw data was systematically processed digitally on a Excel sheet for purposes of referencing. Appropriate methods were applied to analysis the data using graphic statistics: distribution, central tendency and spreading of in quantitative images inconvenient form. Subsequently multiple regression method was applied to establish significant relationship if any of EI and CM style.

Table -1, Gender Comparison of domains of Emotional intelligence:

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Awareness_SR	Male	54	14.69	2.958	.402
	Female	46	14.35	2.854	.421
Regulation_SR	Male	54	15.76	2.314	.315
	Female	46	15.89	2.775	.409
Motivation_SR	Male	54	10.48	2.072	.282
	Female	46	10.33	1.886	.278
Empathy_SR	Male	54	16.24	2.599	.354
	Female	46	15.28	3.563	.525

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	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SocialSkill_SR	Male	54	16.44	2.675	.364
	Female	46	16.22	2.867	.423
Awareness_OR	Male	54	15.57	2.477	.337
	Female	46	15.83	3.079	.454
Regulation_OR	Male	54	15.89	2.369	.322
	Female	46	16.57	2.257	.333
Motivation_OR	Male	54	10.54	1.745	.237
	Female	46	10.83	2.111	.311
Empathy_OR	Male	54	15.81	2.570	.350
	Female	46	16.02	2.687	.396
SocialSkill_OR	Male	54	16.50	2.626	.357
	Female	46	16.48	3.167	.467

SR- Self Rating ; OR –Observer Rating.

Five domains of EI did not show any significant difference between male and female subjects either in Self Rating or Observer Rating (Table-1). For example, Awareness SR score was 14.69 in males while it was 14.35 in females. Similarly empathy SR score was 16.24 in males while it was 15.28 in females. Motivation OR score in males was 10.54 in males and 10.83 in females. Similarly there was good coherence between SR and OR scores as there was no significant difference between the values of all domains of EI.

Table- 2: Conflict Management style in Male and Female subjects

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Collaborating	Male	54	25.96	3.981	.542
	Female	46	26.35	5.280	.778
Accommodating	Male	54	21.41	4.376	.596
	Female	46	21.63	3.555	.524
Competing	Male	54	18.94	3.012	.410
	Female	46	18.09	3.379	.498
Avoiding	Male	54	19.67	5.799	.789
	Female	46	17.65	5.301	.782
Compromising	Male	54	17.09	5.242	.713
	Female	46	18.00	5.147	.759

Five Conflict Management styles did not exhibit any significant difference between males and females (Table-2).For instance, collaborating style scores was 25.96 in males while it was 26.35 in females. SD and SEM values in all these were somewhat high. Perhaps a larger sample size could have brought out even subtle differences if any.

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Table 3, Influence of age on emotional intelligence

Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Awareness_SR	below 30	30-40	-.020	.661	1.000	-1.62	1.59
		above 40	.119	.783	.998	-1.78	2.02
	30-40	below 30	.020	.661	1.000	-1.59	1.62
		above 40	.139	.800	.997	-1.81	2.08
	above 40	below 30	-.119	.783	.998	-2.02	1.78
		30-40	-.139	.800	.997	-2.08	1.81
Regulation_SR	below 30	30-40	-.141	.573	.993	-1.53	1.25
		above 40	-.595	.679	.765	-2.24	1.05
	30-40	below 30	.141	.573	.993	-1.25	1.53
		above 40	-.454	.694	.885	-2.14	1.23
	above 40	below 30	.595	.679	.765	-1.05	2.24
		30-40	.454	.694	.885	-1.23	2.14
Motivation_SR	below 30	30-40	-.323	.449	.854	-1.41	.77
		above 40	-.476	.532	.753	-1.77	.82
	30-40	below 30	.323	.449	.854	-.77	1.41
		above 40	-.153	.544	.989	-1.47	1.17
	above 40	below 30	.476	.532	.753	-.82	1.77
		30-40	.153	.544	.989	-1.17	1.47
Empathy_SR	below 30	30-40	-.989	.692	.400	-2.67	.69
		above 40	-1.500	.821	.197	-3.49	.49
	30-40	below 30	.989	.692	.400	-.69	2.67
		above 40	-.511	.839	.905	-2.55	1.53
	above 40	below 30	1.500	.821	.197	-.49	3.49
		30-40	.511	.839	.905	-1.53	2.55
SocialSkill_SR	below 30	30-40	-1.073	.616	.233	-2.57	.42
		above 40	-.976	.730	.457	-2.75	.80
	30-40	below 30	1.073	.616	.233	-.42	2.57
		above 40	.097	.746	.999	-1.72	1.91
	above 40	below 30	.976	.730	.457	-.80	2.75
		30-40	-.097	.746	.999	-1.91	1.72
Awareness_OR	below 30	30-40	-.918	.621	.370	-2.43	.59
		above 40	-.762	.736	.661	-2.55	1.03
	30-40	below 30	.918	.621	.370	-.59	2.43
		above 40	.156	.752	.996	-1.67	1.98
	above 40	below 30	.762	.736	.661	-1.03	2.55

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Dependent Variable	(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
		30-40	-.156	.752	.996	-1.98	1.67
Regulation_OR	below 30	30-40	-.019	.531	1.000	-1.31	1.27
		above 40	-.238	.629	.975	-1.77	1.29
	30-40	below 30	.019	.531	1.000	-1.27	1.31
		above 40	-.219	.643	.981	-1.78	1.34
	above 40	below 30	.238	.629	.975	-1.29	1.77
		30-40	.219	.643	.981	-1.34	1.78
Motivation_OR	below 30	30-40	-.459	.430	.640	-1.50	.59
		above 40	.452	.510	.758	-.79	1.69
	30-40	below 30	.459	.430	.640	-.59	1.50
		above 40	.911	.521	.230	-.35	2.18
	above 40	below 30	-.452	.510	.758	-1.69	.79
		30-40	-.911	.521	.230	-2.18	.35
Empathy_OR	below 30	30-40	-.230	.593	.973	-1.67	1.21
		above 40	.381	.703	.931	-1.33	2.09
	30-40	below 30	.230	.593	.973	-1.21	1.67
		above 40	.611	.719	.781	-1.13	2.36
	above 40	below 30	-.381	.703	.931	-2.09	1.33
		30-40	-.611	.719	.781	-2.36	1.13
SocialSkill_OR	below 30	30-40	-.115	.654	.997	-1.70	1.47
		above 40	.024	.775	1.000	-1.86	1.91
	30-40	below 30	.115	.654	.997	-1.47	1.70
		above 40	.139	.793	.997	-1.79	2.07
	above 40	below 30	-.024	.775	1.000	-1.91	1.86
		30-40	-.139	.793	.997	-2.07	1.79

Multiple comparisons done for Emotional Intelligence in three different age groups studied did not reveal any significant difference among the young and middle aged groups (Table-3).However, there is a definite trend of higher scores of mean difference in higher age group i.e. above 40 years. For example, Awareness SR score of below 30 years age group when compared with 30-40 yrs had a mean difference of -0.141 however, the mean difference with above 40 years was -0.595 exhibiting similar trend in SR as well as in OR scores.

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Table 4, Multiple Comparisons of Conflict Management style scores in different age groups

Collaborating	below 30	30-40	.232	1.036	.994	-2.28	2.75
		above 40	-1.643	1.227	.456	-4.63	1.34
	30-40	below 30	-.232	1.036	.994	-2.75	2.28
		above 40	-1.875	1.255	.360	-4.92	1.17
	above 40	below 30	1.643	1.227	.456	-1.34	4.63
		30-40	1.875	1.255	.360	-1.17	4.92
	below 30	30-40	.176	.910	.996	-2.04	2.39
		above 40	-.357	1.079	.983	-2.98	2.26
Accommodating	30-40	below 30	-.176	.910	.996	-2.39	2.04
		above 40	-.533	1.103	.949	-3.21	2.15
	above 40	below 30	.357	1.079	.983	-2.26	2.98
		30-40	.533	1.103	.949	-2.15	3.21
Competing	below 30	30-40	.126	.728	.997	-1.64	1.89
		above 40	.333	.863	.973	-1.76	2.43
	30-40	below 30	-.126	.728	.997	-1.89	1.64
		above 40	.207	.882	.994	-1.94	2.35
	above 40	below 30	-.333	.863	.973	-2.43	1.76
		30-40	-.207	.882	.994	-2.35	1.94
Avoiding	below 30	30-40	.798	1.282	.899	-2.32	3.91
		above 40	.286	1.519	.997	-3.41	3.98
	30-40	below 30	-.798	1.282	.899	-3.91	2.32
		above 40	-.512	1.553	.983	-4.29	3.26
	above 40	below 30	-.286	1.519	.997	-3.98	3.41
		30-40	.512	1.553	.983	-3.26	4.29
Compromising	below 30	30-40	.241	1.168	.996	-2.60	3.08
		above 40	-1.833	1.385	.466	-5.20	1.53
	30-40	below 30	-.241	1.168	.996	-3.08	2.60
		above 40	-2.075	1.416	.377	-5.51	1.37
	above 40	below 30	1.833	1.385	.466	-1.53	5.20
		30-40	2.075	1.416	.377	-1.37	5.51

There was no significant difference in Conflict Management styles among different age groups studied (Table-4). As observed in EI for different age groups presented in the previous paragraph, values of mean difference in age group above 40 years was higher when compared with other two age groups.

RESULTS

Demographic variables i.e age and gender showed interesting trend of comparison both in EI and CM, Self-rating (SR) scores of Self regulations, Empathy and social skills were relatively

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higher in older age group (> 40 years) indicating that the older age group perceived themselves to be higher in these domains of EI (Table-1). On the other hand the observers rating (OR) scores of self-awareness, motivation and empathy were higher in the elder age group (>40 years) this suggests that subordinates perceived that their supervisors were higher in these domains of EI (table-1) self Awareness (OR) scores for supervisors was 16.359 +.

DISCUSSION

In today's world, we are facing several challenges in our daily life. There is so much of competition in all the areas and now the competition is not only in among male gender and its getting in between male and females too. There are many reports suggesting existence of gender difference regarding EI manifested with warmer feelings expressed by females while genuine application of feelings was adopted by males (Sergio, R.P, Dungco, A.L & Ormita, L.A, 2015). In literature some studies report higher emotional intelligence in females (Pandey, S., Sajjanapa, S. & Sangwan, G., 2015) while others did not find any significant gender difference in EI (Sergio, R.P. et.al., 2015). The present study did not exhibit any gender difference in EI (Table-3). Even CM styles did not show any significant difference between males and females (Table-4). However. Pandey, S., Sajjanapa, S. & Sangwan, G., (2015) reported that since women had higher EI, they were able to use varied CM styles; while men resort to avoiding style.

Age: Results of this study did not indicate a significant change in EI in the different age groups of subjects though there was a trend of higher EI among the older group of subjects (Table-4). The findings of the present study is in consonance with those of Pandey, Sajjanapu & Sangwan (2015). They also found highest EI scores for the age group 30-40 and declining after the age of 40. This is slightly deviant from the present study. But in the present study EI did not show any significant gender difference between males and female subjects either in self-rating or observer rating. Even the results of the conflict management styles did not exhibit any significant difference between male and females.

In another study done on age and emotional intelligence (Lorenzo fariselli, Massimillano Ghini, Joshua freedman, 2008) the results showed that emotional intelligence seems to be higher in older people. In this study Multiple comparisons done for Emotional Intelligence in three different age groups did not reveal any significant difference among the young and middle aged groups. However, there is a definite trend of higher scores of mean difference in higher age group i.e. above 40 years (Table-5). This shows that older people have greater self-awareness than the younger people. A study was done in University of Johannesburg, South Africa which reported that age factor could show a significant difference only with the dominating style' where as people in different age groups used other CM styles almost to the same extent. Positive correlation was established between younger age groups. However, compromising and obliging styles of CM were more dominant in younger persons (Werner Havenga, 2010, Vol.6 pp 32-41), where as in the present study there was no significant difference in Conflict Management styles among different age groups (Table-6).

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