

Original Research Paper

Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

The stressful correctional organization always needs emotionally intelligent officers for maintaining safety and security through effective team functioning. In this regard, the present study had aimed to find out the impact of emotional intelligence on team effectiveness of correctional officers of West Bengal correctional homes. For such purpose, data were collected from 100 correctional officers of correctional homes of West Bengal by using three tools - i) General Informational Schedule, ii) Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte, 1998) and iii) Team Effectiveness Scale (Pareek, 2002). Responses were treated for correlational analysis, regression analysis, etc. The data based facts revealed that the emotional intelligence along with its four components had positive correlation with the levels of team effectiveness. The results also stated that team effectiveness was successfully predicted by emotional intelligence.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence and team effectiveness*

Every organization is changing at a faster pace to meet diverse challenges. The crux of the matter is that situation demands effective human resources to run the organization successfully. For improving organizational performance, embracing high group morale and increasing job satisfaction emotional intelligence is very essential personality attribute. It is very essential to predict job performance, personal excellence (Pittaro, 2017). Like other organization, the stressful correctional organization needs emotionally intelligent officers to harness various emotional situations as well as mitigate and resolute the crisis. The correctional officers attempt to create humane environment by preventing violence through the development of proper infrastructure and organizational commitment, confronting with crisis situation, setting up good relationship with the inmates, providing trustworthy advice for the reformation of the lives of the offenders, etc. For regulating such vital job responsibilities within the correctional atmosphere,

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the correctional officers are to be competent with emotional intelligence for increasing adequate leadership qualities, problem solving abilities, team collaboration, cooperation, effective team performance, etc. The team work is needed in the jail environment for increasing security and safety, strengthening the communication and improving organizational effectiveness (Bergner, 1997). The emotional intelligence is very important for regulating team work successfully. With this theoretical base, some of the important review based facts related to emotional intelligence and team effectiveness had been presented in the following section.

Emotional Intelligence

The term ‘emotional intelligence’ was first introduced by Goleman (1995) in the book “*Emotional Intelligence, why it can matter more than IQ*”. Salovey and Mayer (1990) first tried to define emotional intelligence as “the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth”. They provided a model of emotional intelligence which delineates several areas of emotional intelligence precisely. These areas are –

- 1. Perceiving Emotion:** It is the ability to perceive one’s own and other’s different types of emotion.
- 2. Using Emotions:** It is the ability to think during positive emotional state. The positive emotions promote creativity.
- 3. Understanding Emotions:** It is the ability to understand different colours of emotion and emotional message.
- 4. Managing Emotion:** It is the ability to regulate and manage one’s own and other’s emotions.

These four dimensions of emotional intelligence help the individual as well as the group of individuals for successful regulation of the organization (Cherniss, 2010). Within the stressful workplace environment, emotional intelligence competencies are very important to understand and control different emotions which in turn help to improve decision making style, organizational performance, interpersonal effectiveness and team effectiveness (Mayer, Salovey, & Coruso, 2000).

The individuals with high level of emotional intelligence are able to understand their own and others’ emotion which is helpful for generating cooperative and collaborative environment. Emotionally intelligent officers are able to perform effective leadership activities, solve critical problems efficiently, bring innovative ideas for the betterment of the organizational activities, and foster good interpersonal relationship through collaboration, cooperation, mutual trust which results in the improvement of team effectiveness (Harmer, & Lutton, 2007; Druskat, & Wolff, 2001).

Team Effectiveness

A team consists of two or more individuals to enhance performance and achieve common objectives of an organization (Tannenbaum, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 1996). Teams are most effective element which functions adequately in an organization. The members of effective teams are skilful enough to achieve necessary goals. Team effectiveness is a goal directed behaviour for performing organization specific activities through effective communication, cohesion, collaboration, cooperation (Nieve, Fleishman, & Rieck, 1978; Sundstrom, 1999). Team effectiveness has two components like, *team functioning* and *team empowerment* (Pareek, 2002; Verma, Rangnekar, & Barua, 2012).

The *team functioning* consists of three important characteristics; these are

1. **Cohesion:** It means closeness among the team members. Cohesive team increases cooperation and positive bonding (Mullen, & Copper, 1994).
2. **Confrontation:** It refers to solve immediate problems either constructively or destructively. Constructive confrontation is systematic and decreases team conflict (Hoover, & DiSilvestro, 2005).
3. **Collaboration:** It symbolizes togetherness among team members for enhancing effective team communication (Kirkman et al., 2004).

The *team empowerment* has four characteristics, like

1. **Task Clarity:** It means that the members have clarity in their performing roles. Task clarity increases team performance and team effectiveness as well (Verma, Rangnekar, & Barua, 2012).
2. **Autonomy:** It provides freedom to the members to work independently and it can enhance group innovativeness (Ozaralli, 2003).
3. **Support:** This characteristic feature creates a favourable environment through promotion of integrity within the team (Erez, Lepine, & Elms, 2002).
4. **Accountability:** It is required to achieve group goal and purpose of the group (Price, Harrison, & Gavin, 2006).

For performing effective team functioning and maintaining team empowerment successfully within an organization, well developed emotional intelligence is very important among the team members (Harmer, & Lutton, 2007).

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness

Emotionally intelligent team is very important to build trust, efficacy and mutual understanding. Many researchers investigated that team performance and leadership activities are effectively mediated by emotional intelligence (Koman, & Wolff, 2008, Prati et al., 2003; Jordana, et al. 2002; Feyerherm, & Rice, 2002) and an emotionally intelligent group leader can increase team effectiveness and team performance (Cherniss, & Adler, 2000) as they can regulate their own

Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

and other's emotions (Sy, Tram, & O'Hara, 2006). A team with emotional intelligence competent members can develop trust, identity, feeling of efficacy through active participation, collaboration and cooperation which results in better decision making, embracing innovative ideas for problem solving and increase productivity (Druskat, & Wolff, 2001). Strong emotional bonding among the members of a team increases good interpersonal relationship, elevates healthy and safety working environment and thus, bring organizational success (Luca, & Tarricone, 2011). Some researchers showed that emotional intelligence and transformational leadership behaviour enhance team effectiveness within the organization (Viswanathan, 2015; Polychroniou, 2009). Emotionally intelligent team leader with their charismatic nature is supposed to maintain team-established norms which results in the improvement of team performance (Prati et al., 2003).

In jail or penitentiaries, the correctional officers enforce rules and regulations, detain as well as rehabilitate inmates, maintain security and safety by preventing disturbances, assaults, and escapes of prisoners and many other supervisory activities. For regulating such critical job responsibilities, the prison officers are needed to work collaboratively. Team work is very important for maintaining peace within the prison system. Such team effectiveness helps to achieve possible economic benefits and organizational success through high performance by introducing transformational steps (Downen, 2011). The emotional intelligence is one of the abilities of an individual which helps to monitor one's own and others' emotion and to regulate emotional thinking (Salovey, & Mayer, 1990). The emotionally intelligent professionals can regulate team effectiveness to confront with change and challenges for establishing humane environment within the correctional organization. In this challenging workplace context, correctional officers' emotional intelligence is very important because it helps to deal with the diverse offenders daily and to utilize interpersonal communication skills for effective performance and maintaining healthy atmosphere (Pittaro, 2017). Thus, utilizing emotional intelligence by the efficient officer can bring safety for themselves, co-workers, inmates and visitors and can effectively perform teamwork for the betterment of the law enforcement organization.

Considering these conceptual issues and review based facts, the present study had tried to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and team effectiveness. The study also aimed to find whether emotional intelligence can predict team effectiveness of the correctional officers of West Bengal.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the pattern of relationship between the emotional intelligence and team effectiveness of the correctional officers of West Bengal.
2. To identify the impact of emotional intelligence on the team effectiveness of the correctional officers of West Bengal.

Hypotheses

H₁: Self perceived emotional intelligence of correctional officers of West Bengal is correlated positively with their team effectiveness.

H₂: The emotional intelligence will significantly predict team effectiveness of the correctional officers of West Bengal.

METHODOLOGY

Variables

Independent Variables

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify one's own emotion and to understand others emotions; it helps to utilize emotional information for thinking and to manage emotions to adjust with the new environmental demands (Coleman, 2008).

Dependent Variable

Team Effectiveness is the capacity of a team to achieve the organizational goals or objectives by efficient personnel (Aubé, & Rousseau, 2011).

Sample

Participants of the study included 100 correctional officers who are referred to as those courageous personnel who are obliged to maintain safety, security of the correctional home through proper custody and supervision of inmates. The officers were randomly selected from 58 correctional homes covering 17 districts of West Bengal on the basis of some matching characteristics like, designations, age, span of service, training attendance rate, etc. The data were collected by means of structured close-ended questionnaire in a series of face-to-face interaction regarding their self-perceived emotional intelligence and team effectiveness during their training programme at the Regional Institute of Correctional Administration, West Bengal. Profile of the sample with frequency distribution and percentage was shown in Table-1.

Table-1: Profile of the Sample with frequency distribution of sample

Sl. No.	Types of information	Frequency
1.	Additional Inspector General	2
	Deputy Inspector General	3
	Superintendent	11
	Chief Controller	28
	Chief Discipline Officers	3
	Chief Welfare Officers	2
	Chief Probationary Officer	1
	Controller	13
	Assistant Controller	16
	Discipline Officers	6
	Welfare Officers	10
	Probationary Officer	5

Sl. No.		Types of information	Frequency
2.	Age Range	25-29	16
		30-34	23
		35-39	20
		40-44	17
		45-49	13
		50-54	11
3.	Span of Service	2-4	25
		5-7	40
		8-10	35
3.	Gender	Male	90
		Female	10
4.	Training Attendance Range	1-3	65
		4-6	35

Measures

- General Information Schedule:** General information schedule was developed to obtain the demographic and job related information of the correctional officers, like, personal demography (age, sex, qualification) and job demography (designation, years of service in the present post, number of training programme attended, numbers of promotions received, number of inmates currently working under self and very brief description of work responsibility).
- Emotional Intelligence Scale:** This scale was developed by Schutte and other colleagues in the year 1998 on the basis of Salovey and Mayer's (1990) Emotional Intelligence model. For the present research purpose four selected components (perception of emotion, managing own emotions, managing other's emotions, utilization of emotion) were measured with 33 items (Schutte et al., 1998; Basu, 2015) to assess emotional intelligence of the correctional officers. All the 33 items of this self-reported inventory were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The scale had sound validity as item-total correlation ranged from 0.42-0.72 and the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the original scale ranged from 0.70–0.85 (Schutte et al., 1998).
- Team Effectiveness Scale:** This scale was originally developed by Pareek (2002) with its seven components (cohesion, confrontation, collaboration, task clarity, autonomy, supportive and accountability). The scale comprised of 28 items which were rated on a five-point scale (0 = this is not at all true about this group, and / or it almost never happens; 4 = this is highly characteristic of the group, and / or this always happens). For the present study, the scale was locally adapted for understanding the team effectiveness of correctional officers. The adapted scale's validity was firmly good as the item-total correlation of the scale was ranged from 0.41 - 0.81 and the Cronbach's alpha reliability of the scale was 0.93.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) was used to conduct the statistical analysis of data. The responses were treated for Pearson's product moment correlation and regression for verifying the hypotheses.

To identify the pattern of relationship between the emotional intelligence and its four dimensions (perception of emotion, managing own emotion, managing others emotion and utilization of emotion) and team effectiveness components, like cohesion, confrontation, collaboration, task clarity, autonomy, supportive and accountability of the correctional officers.

Table-2: Product Moment Correlation between the Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness

	MN	SD	Correlational Analysis												
			EI	PR	ON	OT	UT	TE	CO	CN	CL	TC	AU	SU	AC
EI	116.81	20.50	1												
PR	32.09	6.51	.95**	1											
ON	31.17	6.25	.94**	.89**	1										
OT	29.26	5.19	.94**	.86**	.86**	1									
UT	24.29	5.11	.80**	.64**	.61**	.70**	1								
TE	74.25	12.44	.64**	.61**	.59**	.63**	.48**	1							
CO	10.93	2.14	.48**	.45**	.41**	.47**	.41**	.79**	1						
CN	10.51	2.25	.46**	.45**	.40**	.46**	.36**	.78**	.60**	1					
CL	10.45	2.18	.55**	.54**	.54**	.54**	.37**	.76**	.55**	.43**	1				
TC	11.51	2.68	.51**	.49**	.53**	.49**	.30**	.79**	.60**	.44**	.59**	1			
AU	10.09	2.43	.56**	.54**	.49**	.56**	.43**	.83**	.53**	.69**	.54**	.55**	1		
SU	10.26	2.53	.36**	.37**	.29**	.35**	.28**	.71**	.41**	.51**	.40**	.51**	.55**	1	
AC	10.50	2.13	.56**	.52**	.53**	.54**	.44**	.80**	.61**	.56**	.61**	.55**	.64**	.43**	1

**Significance at the .01 level

[MN-Mean, SD-Standard Deviation, EI-Emotional Intelligence, PR-Perception of emotion, ON-Managing own emotion, OT-Managing others emotion, UT-Utilization of emotion, TE-Team Effectiveness, CO-Cohesion, CN-Confrontation, CL-Collaboration, TC-Task clarity, AU-Autonomy, SU-Supportive, AC-Accountability.]

It was seen from the Table-2 that the emotional intelligence along with its four components (perception of emotion, managing own emotion, managing others emotion and utilization of emotion) were significantly and positively correlated with the overall team effectiveness and its seven domains (cohesion, confrontation, collaboration, task clarity, autonomy, supportive and accountability). Specifically, the collaboration, autonomy and accountability dimensions of team effectiveness were highly correlated with emotional intelligence. Thus, the proposed research hypothesis (H_1), i.e. **self-perceived emotional intelligence of correctional officers of West Bengal is correlated positively with their team effectiveness**, was accepted.

Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

To identify the prediction power of emotional intelligence of team effectiveness, the linear regression analysis was computed and the statistical results were depicted in the following table (Table 3).

Table 3: Results of Regression Analysis explaining the facilitating impact of Emotional Intelligence on Team effectiveness

Emotional Intelligence	R	R ²	ΔR ²	F Ratio	Unstandardized coefficients: B values	Standardized coefficients: β values
	0.64	0.41	0.40	66.63**	0.33	0.64

**Significance at the .01 level

Predictor: Emotional Intelligence; Dependent variable: Team Effectiveness

From the above results of significant regression analysis ($F=66.63$, $p<0.01$) it was evident that emotional intelligence explained 41% of the total variance in team effectiveness of the correctional officers of West Bengal. Thus, the proposed research hypothesis (H_2), i.e. **the emotional intelligence will significantly predict team effectiveness of the correctional officers of West Bengal**, was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The present study found a positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence including its four components (perception of emotion, managing own emotions, managing other's emotions and utilization of emotion) and team effectiveness (cohesion, confrontation, collaboration, task clarity, autonomy, supportive and accountability) among the correctional officers of West Bengal. The emotionally intelligent correctional officers were more able to collaborate with other members for effective team functioning; they prefer autonomy for doing team work; they are more accountable to each other for their effort and contributions to the team. Many researchers found that there is a positive association between emotional intelligence and various aspects of team effectiveness (Jordan et al., 2002; Jordan, & Troth, 2004; Rapisarda, 2002). Team work is very much associated with emotional intelligence, because it enables an individual to regulate team work successfully (Yost, & Tucker, 2000) which in turn increases team effectiveness. The emotionally intelligent individual can increase team effectiveness by understanding the emotions of team members (Stough, Saklofske, & Parker, 2009) and can generate organizational outcome (Harmer, & Lutton, 2007). The positive association between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership increase the team effectiveness of the managers with subordinates (Polychroniou, 2009).

Lastly, it was viewed from the regression results, that the emotional intelligence had significant impact on the team effectiveness. In the correctional organization, emotional intelligence is crucial to deal with diverse offenders (Pittaro, 2017) and to maintain peace within the

Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

correctional environment. Emotionally intelligent correctional officers can lead the organization properly and enhance interpersonal relationship among the other co-officers through collaborative and cohesive team work. It was previously found that emotional intelligence can enhance the interpersonal relationship among the members of the team (Luca, & Tarricone, 2011) and emotionally intelligent leaders with their adequate self-knowledge and understanding of others, can increase team effectiveness and team performance (Cherniss, 2010).

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present research are notable, that it helps to establish an association between emotional intelligence and team effectiveness which is very significant in the prison system. The emotionally intelligent correctional officers of West Bengal were able to adapt to different people during different situations by controlling themselves as well as others. Thus, emotional intelligence was a key factor for successful team effectiveness of the correctional officers West Bengal.

Scope for Further Study

This study was limited to investigate the relationship and significant impact of emotional intelligence on team effectiveness of correctional officers of West Bengal. The emotional intelligence training can be introduced during the time of recruitment for establishing proper communication system within the correctional environment. Not only that, effective leadership style of the emotionally intelligent correctional officers can be considered for enhancing the team effectiveness. The study can be replicated to correctional homes of other states of India and to other law enforcement organizations such as police, military, border patrol officers, court officers, etc.

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Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

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Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

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Emotional Intelligence and Team Effectiveness: A Study among Correctional Officers of West Bengal

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