

## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND ORGANISATIONAL STRESS

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**Abstract :** The psychological effects of stress have both short-term as well as long-term reactions, which indirectly has a monetary cost to business. Among many other personality dimensions, Emotional Intelligence which involves the ability to fairly and accurately perceive, appraise and understand emotions both in oneself and in others, has been identified as having a strong association with stress. Therefore, this study, primarily analyses if there exists a relationship between stress and emotional intelligence. The study includes 480 executives from the banking industry in Chennai, with 262 women and 218 men. The Emotional Intelligence tool developed by Richard Boyatzis et al (1999) and the Organizational Stress scale developed by Carol. A. Beatty's (1996), with a cronbach's alpha co-efficient of 0.85 and 0.97 both significant at 0.01, respectively have been used in this study. Statistical tools such as simple correlation, mean, S.D. and F-ratio have been used for the purpose of analyses.

**Keywords :** Emotional Intelligence, Organisational Stress,

### 1. Need for the Study

Many people consider stress as an excess of demands over resources. This makes them believe that stress is caused by external factors. But pressures also come from within, from our beliefs, attitudes and expectations about the world and us, from habits and behaviour and from our personality (Atkinson, 1999). Thus, stress can be caused both by external factors like the organization, the job and the like as well as personal factors that include individual values and the inherent characteristics of the executive.

Emotions are internal events that coordinate many psychological subsystems including physical responses, cognitions and conscious awareness. Emotions typically arise in response to a person's changing relationships (Mayer et al, 2000). Emotion and intellect are two halves of a whole. Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Quotient (EQ) are synergistic resources; without one the other is incomplete and ineffective. The domain of EQ is personal and interpersonal relationships; it is responsible for one's self-esteem, self-awareness, social sensitivity and social adaptability. Emotional awareness brings our inner world into focus. It enables one to strike a mutually healthy balance between one's own needs and the needs of others (Segal, 2000). Emotional Intelligence is a critical component of an individual's personality and must form part of any research on stress.

### 2. Review Of Literature

Vembar (2001) examined the moderating effect of Emotional Intelligence on Hardiness and Physical Health. Findings reveal that Emotional Intelligence accounted for 24.3% of the variance in Physical Health. Further it was observed that men had higher Emotional Intelligence than women.

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Kedarnath (2001) explored the nature of relationship of mental health with emotional maturity, emotional intelligence and self-acceptance. Correlation analysis revealed that mental health was positively related with emotional maturity, emotional intelligence and self-acceptance. Through path analysis it was concluded that mental health and emotional maturity augment self-acceptance through emotional intelligence.

Mishra and Dhar (2001) in a survey of 210 students from management institutes explored the relationship between thinking orientation and emotional intelligence. Results revealed that students with whole brain thinking possess significantly higher emotional intelligence than those with right brain or left-brain thinking. Age was found to be significantly correlated with emotional intelligence irrespective of thinking orientation.

Research regarding Emotional Intelligence is of recent origin and hence, as mentioned by Mayer and Salovey (1997), has been studied so little. Attempts have been made to investigate the relationship of Emotional Intelligence with other aspects of personality. Studies on Emotional Intelligence are of recent origin while there is very less information regarding Emotional Intelligence their predictive role on stress has not been studied.

### 3. Executive Emotional Intelligence

Therefore, this study has been set out with the objective To observe whether emotional intelligence of the executive affects the levels of Organisational Stress.

The following hypotheses were also tested in the course pf this study,

- ❖ The executives with high emotional intelligence are in a better position to handle their own feelings, as well as relationships with others. Hence, it was expected that Executives with lower emotional intelligence experience more Organisational Stress than those with higher emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence was negatively correlated to Organisational Stress. The correlation coefficient of -0.220 was significant at 0.01 level.

Table 1: Mean, S.D. and F-ratio of organisational Stress for executives based on emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence	n	Mean	S.D.	F - value	L.S.
High	70	56.94	14.48		
Moderate	334	59.28	13.67	10.952	<b>0.01</b>
Low	74	66.35	8.94		

Emotional intelligence of an individual was held to be an important factor on which the perception of Organisational Stress by the person was dependent, among others. The F-ratio was computed after bracketing the executives in sets consisting of high, moderate and low levels of emotional intelligence. There was significance at 0.01 level for the F-ratio of 10.952, and this proved that emotional intelligence does play a moderating role in the estimation of Organisational Stress by the executive.

Table : 2. The t-value of Organisational Stress for executives based on emotional intelligence

Levels of Emotional Intelligence	t-value	df	L.S.
High – Moderate	1.244	402	<b>N.S.</b>
High – Low	4.659	142	<b>0.01</b>

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Executives with high and moderate levels of emotional intelligence had similar levels of Organisational Stress, as the t-value of 1.244 for these two groups was not significant. However, for executives with low levels of emotional intelligence, the measure of stress arising from work related to the organisation was asymmetrical to corresponding values for executives with moderate levels of emotional intelligence (t-value = 5.513) as well as those with high levels of emotional intelligence (t-value = 4.659). Since the t-values in both cases were statistically significant, there was disparity in the Organisational Stress faced by an executive with a low emotional intelligence level when weighed against the executives with moderate and high levels of emotional intelligence. The results led to partial acceptance of the hypothesis at XII (a).

Thus it was found in this study that:

Executives with low emotional intelligence had higher Organisational Stress than executives with moderate and high emotional intelligence.

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