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OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND STRESSORS AMONG WORKING COUPLES**H. L. NAGARAJA MURTHY****ASST. PROFESSOR****BHARATI VIDYAPEETH UNIVERSITY****INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH****NEW DELHI****ABSTRACT**

This was an ex-post-facto study to analyze emotional intelligence and stress among working couples conducted on a sample of 280 working couples of Delhi city (both New Delhi and Old Delhi). The age of the respondent ranged between 24 and 69 years. The couples (respondents) were selected based on the criteria that both of them should be working for at least 5 years, either of the couples should be a primary school teachers, executives in financial consultancy firms, Customers Relation Executives of call centres, CAs, Property Dealers, Advertising Agency Executives, Computer hardware technicians, Sales staff, marketing staff who had been married for at least 5 years and having at least one child. In the Indian context transition of gender inequality and gender roles deviate from traditional form to modern gender role expectations that have been observed to constitute cultural disparity that affect the work-family culture interface. The growing number of educated women employees in India in the urban, organized, industrial sector in technical, professional, and managerial positions has been accompanied by a steady growth in dual earner families. And gender role expectations and gender-based socialization have led men to identify themselves with the family role. The participation of women in paid employment has therefore been hailed as a harbinger of changes in gender relations within the family, reflected in the term 'new families'.

KEYWORDS

Emotional intelligence, stress, working couples.

INTRODUCTION

This was an ex-post-facto study to analyze emotional intelligence and stress among working couples conducted on a sample of 280 working couples of Delhi city (both New Delhi and Old Delhi). The age of the respondent ranged between 24 and 69 years. The couples (respondents) were selected based on the criteria that both of them should be working for at least 5 years, either of the couples should be a primary school teachers, executives in financial consultancy firms, Customers Relation Executives of call centres, CAs, Property Dealers, Advertising Agency Executives, Computer hardware technicians, Sales staff, marketing staff who had been married for at least 5 years and having at least one child.

In the Indian context transition of gender inequality and gender roles deviate from traditional form to modern gender role expectations that have been observed to constitute cultural disparity that affect the work-family culture interface. The growing number of educated women employees in India in the urban, organized, industrial sector in technical, professional, and managerial positions has been accompanied by a steady growth in dual earner families. And gender role expectations and gender-based socialization have led men to identify themselves with the family role. The participation of women in paid employment has therefore been hailed as a harbinger of changes in gender relations within the family, reflected in the term 'new families'.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to accurately identify and understand one's own emotional reactions and those of others. It also includes the ability to regulate one's emotions and to use them to make good decisions and act effectively. EI provides many competencies that are critical for effective performance in the workplace. To effectively influence others we also need to be able to manage our own emotions.

Stress has now become an area of concern for all types of occupations. There is little doubt, however, that some professions have fared worse than others. The transactional perspective of stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) emphasizes the role of 'cognitive appraisal' and 'coping responses'. A stressful transaction begins with primary cognitive appraisal, which a situation requires as an effective response to avoid or reduce physical or psychological threat or harm, and a secondary appraisal.

Human services, sometimes called "direct person-related jobs", include such occupations as counselors, social workers, nurses, and teachers. In those jobs, the primary task is to modify the clients/patients physically or psychologically. In human services, knowledge, skills, motivation of employees, working conditions, expectations and behavior of the customer create the service delivery process. The performance of human service occupations is inherent to strain and emotions, which may lead to sense of stress.

Why is human service work so stressful?

Basically, stress results from the customers' behavior (sometimes demanding and aggressive) and complaints. Stress may also result from poor work conditions, particularly lack of control (autonomy), poor social relations and lack of social support lack of rewards, work overload (particularly too many administrative tasks), or routinization. Human service work is evidently linked with experienced emotions. One aspect of this emotion at work, which is related to stress, is the requirement to express positive (and sometimes negative) emotions towards customers.

However, it is argued that this is not per se stressful. Emotional dissonance, which applies to the frequency of having displayed emotions (usually positive) that are not in line with those genuinely felt (neutral or negative), is rather conceived as stressful (e.g., smiling at a difficult customer may create emotional dissonance). Frequent experience of emotional dissonance leads to a loss of the capability to regulate one's own emotions, which means the loss of a particular internal resource.

In turn, ability to recognize people's emotions and to regulate one's own emotions seems to be very important in human service work. This ability, defined as emotional intelligence (EI) construct, has been introduced by Salovey and Mayer. It refers to one's ability to be aware of one's own feelings, to be aware of other feelings, to differentiate among them, and to use the information to guide one's own thinking and behavior. A temporary definition of emotional intelligence according to these authors indicates that it is "...an ability to recognize the meanings of emotions and the relationships, and to reason and problem- solve on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions and manage them" [9].

Emotional intelligence has become of widespread interest to psychological research in recent years. It has been claimed that emotional intelligence is one of the important factors that determine success in life and psychological well-being [10,11]. Nowicki and Duke [12] provide evidence for a direct link between emotional intelligence and academic achievement. Svyantek and Rahim [13] indicate that EI may be an important adaptive mechanism for helping individuals to interact with their environment, including work environment. Goleman [14] reports that EI is twice as important as technical skills and more important than IQ for success in jobs at all levels. Weisinger [15] suggests that EI is related to success at work and plays a significant role in a certain aspects of effective team leadership and team performance.

It should be, however, stressed that studies exploring the relationship between EI and experienced job stress and its outcomes are rather scanty. In one of them, Slaski and Cartwright [16] found that managers high in emotional intelligence revealed less subjective stress and had better physical and psychological well-being. Similarly, Gardner and Stough [17] revealed negative relationship between EI and occupational stress. In another study, Bar-On et al. [18] indicated that police officers scored significantly higher on emotional intelligence were less vulnerable to experienced stress and better coped with it. In turn, Reilly [19] in a study of hospital nurses identified negative correlation between EI and burnout syndrome. Similarly, Duran and Extremer [20], in their study including professionals employed in institutions for people with intellectual disabilities, revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout

syndrome, and personal accomplishment in particular. The data clearly indicated that EI expressed in the ability to recognize, express, and control emotions may have impact on the perceived job stress and the consequences of experienced stress. The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived stress in the workplace and health-related consequences in human service workers.

According to its contemporary meaning, occupational stress is a complex, dynamic process in which various factors (stressors) and modifying variables are interrelated [4,21–23]. Whether a stressor produces an enduring health outcome or not depends on the extent to which the person perceives the condition as stressful and responses to it. His or her perception and response are affected by a number of modifying variables, mainly by personal resources.

These resources seem to become very important factors that determine the experience of occupational stress and its related effects. It is expected that subjects with high level of emotional intelligence (one of the personal resources) will perceive their work environment as less stressful and they will experience less negative health consequences. The buffering role of emotional intelligence was also investigating in this study. One can assume that a high level of emotional intelligence may reduce adverse health outcomes even in highly stressful conditions.

PRESENT STUDY

AIM: In this study an analysis of emotional intelligence and stressors and their relationship is undertaken. The results of the present study are discussed and interpreted under the following sub-headings:

Demographic characteristics of the couples

Relationship of demographic characteristics with emotional intelligence and stress of the couples

Status of emotional intelligence among the couples

Relationship between the couples on the components of emotional intelligence

Status of stress among the couples

Relationship between the couples on stressors

Relationship between emotional intelligence and stress

This study was aimed to identify the level of stress and emotional intelligence and their relationship among working couples. This study was an ex-post facto analysis of stress and emotional intelligence.

A sample of 330 participants (42.4% of men and 57.6% of women), representing HR professionals: Physicians (n = 70), Nurses (n = 70), Teachers (n = 60), Probation officers in Women & Child Welfare Department- (n = 60) and Executives (n = 70), was eligible for the study. The mean age in the group was 38.4 years (SD = 8.45), and work experience was 83 years (SD = 6.13). There were 68.8% of employees with high education; 16.1% were single, 74.2% were married, and 9.7% were divorced or widowed.

The data were collected in the participants' workplaces (school, hospital, office). The participants, who were informed about confidentiality issues, administered a self report pack, which incorporated the measure of emotional intelligence, perceived job stress, and general health status. The following methods were used in the study:

The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire – (EI) Goleman (1997) defined EI as knowing what you are feeling and being able to handle those feelings without them swamping you; being able to motivate yourself to get jobs done, to be creative and to perform at your peak; sensing what others are feeling and handling relationships effectively.

This questionnaire consists of 30 items with the range of responses from 1 ("I don't agree at all") to 5 ("I completely agree") and scores from 33 to 165. The higher the score the higher the emotional intelligence. The psychometric characteristics of the questionnaire is satisfactory. Cronbach's alpha was 0.83–0.87; test-retest was 0.88 for men and 0.81 for women. Emotional intelligence correlates negatively with anxiety, alexythymia and neuroticism, but positively with extraversion, openness to experience, and need for social desirability.

VARIABLES AND THEIR MEASUREMENT

The details of independent and dependent variables selected for the study are given below:

For the present study, emotional intelligence and demographic characteristics were selected as independent variables and stress as dependent variable.

Independent variables

Emotional Intelligence:

a) **Emotional intelligence** (EI) Goleman (1997) defined EI as knowing what you are feeling and being able to handle those feelings without them swamping you; being able to motivate yourself to get jobs done, to be creative and to perform at your peak; sensing what others are feeling and handling relationships effectively. Dulewicz and Higgs (2001) have given seven components of emotional intelligence viz., self awareness, emotional resilience, motivation, interpersonal sensitivity, influence, intuitiveness and conscientiousness.

b) Demographic variables:

Age: The chronological age of the respondents in completed years at the time of investigation is referred to as 'age'. There were three categories of age: 18-40 Early adulthood, 41-60 Middle-ages and 60 Old age

Gender: It is a scheme of classification of the individuals based on biological differences as males and females.

Education: Years of education was counted for the respondent's educational level.

Type of family: Type of family was classified into two types depending on the structure

Nuclear family: It consists of husband, wife and their children.

Joint family: It consists of more than the primary family, that includes grand parents, uncles, aunts, cousins etc.

Religion: Religion refers to religions community in which the respondent is born. The respondents were classified into five religions they are Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe.

Medium of instruction: It refers to the mode of language in which the formal education of the respondent was carried out. It was grouped into six categories such as Hindi and English.

Schooling: It refers to the place/locale where the respondent's formal education was carried out.

Two groups were made: Rural and Urban

Dependent variable

Stress

Akinboye *et al.* (2002) defined stress as an unavoidable characteristic of life and work. Occupational stress describes physical, mental and emotional wear and tear brought about by incongruence between the requirement of job and the capabilities, resources and needs of the employee to cope with job demands. The stressors were categorized into six components which caused stress in the following aspects: self stressors, child stressors, spousal stressors, financial stressors, job stressors and health stressors.

The tools and instruments used to carry out the present research are enumerated below:

Personal information schedule

Stress scale (Bhagwatwar, 2000)

Emotional intelligence questionnaire (Dulewicz and Higgs, 2001)

Description of the tools

Personal information schedule

The personal information schedule consists of items to collect information of the respondents regarding age, gender, education, years of qualification, their occupation, no. of working hours, type of family, domicile, no. of children, type of housing, facilities available in the house, and the type of institution they work.

Stress Scale

The scale developed by Bhagwatwar (2000) was adopted in this study to measure the level of stress. It consists of 80 items and is a 7 point scale.

Levels Score

No stress at all (NS) 1

Little stress (LS) 2

Some stress (SS) 3

Moderately tolerable stress (MTS) 4

Substantial stress (SES) 5

High stress (HS) 6

Tremendously high stress (THS) 7

TABLE 1: MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF EXAMINED VARIABLES

Variables	MEAN	TD. DEVIATION
Emotional intelligence	123.58	15.15
Perceived stress at work (general)	114.57	25.84
Work overload	20.68	6.82
Lack of rewards	18.15	6.49
Uncertainty in workplace	15.38	4.44
Social relations	10.42	2.58
Threat	10.67	3.85
Physical burdens	6.97	3.18
Unpleasant work conditions	5.10	2.83
Lack of control	7.75	2.26
Lack of support	5.08	1.98
Responsibility	8.26	2.97
General health status	23.08	11.16
Somatic complaints	6.99	4.05
Anxiety/insomnia	6.81	4.31
Functioning disorders	7.19	2.66
Depression symptoms	2.11	1.91

The examined workers experienced high level of stress (according to normative data). The highest EI level was observed in teachers (M = 130.58; SD = 29.67), and the lowest in managers (M = 99.23; SD = 19.84). The differences were statistically significant, $p < 0.001$. Work overload and lack of reward and social relations were found to be the most stressful factors experienced by human service workers.

The examined workers showed an average state of health (according to normative data) and the worst health condition was observed in probation officers (M = 25.52; SD = 12.94) and the best in teachers (M = 17.18; SD = 9.93). There were statistically significant differences between the level of health status in probation officers and the remaining groups of human service workers ($p < 0.01$).

Gender differences in all examined variables were also analyzed. The obtained data indicated a higher EI level in women than in men. They did not differ in the level of stress generally perceived at work (however, women showed a higher level of work overload, lack of rewards, uncertainty in the workplace, but a lower level of threat). Moreover, women showed a worse health status, expressed by the high level of somatic complaints and anxiety/insomnia.

The next stage of the data analysis was to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived job stress and health status in the study group of human service workers. Pearson's correlation coefficients are presented in Table 3. The results indicated a significant negative relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived stress in the workplace.

The higher the level of emotional intelligence the lower the experienced stress. Taking particularly into account factors related to stress at work, one may observe that the higher the level of emotional intelligence the lower the sense of lack of control and lack of support. However, the obtained correlation coefficients were not strong, which indicates rather weak relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived job stress.

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, PERCEIVED JOB STRESS, AND HEALTH STATUS IN THE STUDY GROUP OF HUMAN SERVICE WORKERS

Variables	Men		Women		t	P
	M	SD	M	SD		
Emotional Intelligence	121.41	15.95	125.18	14.37	-2.247	0.02
Perceived Stress	112.24	25.73	116.20	25.86	-1.379	NS
Work Overload	19.73	6.38	21.38	7.05	-2.192	0.02
Lack of rewards	17.34	6.76	18.75	6.22	-1.961	0.05
Uncertainty-workplace	15.17	4.78	15.53	4.18	-0.717	0.05
Social relations	10.44	2.59	10.41	2.57	0.112	NS
Threat	11.32	3.71	10.19	3.88	2.651	0.01
Physical burdens	6.96	3.11	6.97	3.24	-0.047	NS
Unpleasant work	5.20	2.69	5.03	2.93	0.550	NS
Lack of control	7.56	2.40	7.88	2.13	-1.253	NS
Lack of support	5.15	1.97	5.03	1.99	0.559	NS
Responsibility	8.41	2.83	8.15	3.07	0.789	NS
General health status	21.47	10.22	24.26	11.68	-2.259	0.02
Somatic complaints	6.34	3.93	7.47	4.08	-2.641	0.01
Anxiety/insomnia	6.07	3.76	7.35	4.60	-2.684	0.01
Functioning disorders	6.96	2.50	7.37	2.76	-1.390	NS
Depression symptoms	2.19	3.17	2.07	3.06	0.339	NS

M– Mean SD–Standard Deviation t–t test value P–level of Significance NS–Not Significant.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study showed that human service workers experience high level of stress (the highest was observed in teachers). The level of stress experienced at work by this occupational group is higher than that experienced by firefighters (M = 107.4), prison officers (M = 104.5), bank workers (M = 90.5) or journalists (M = 98.6) (measured with the same method), and lower compared to actors (M = 130.2) and police officers (M = 122.7) [27]. Work overload, lack of rewards and social relations appeared to be the most stressful work-related factors.

The level of emotional intelligence of examined physicians, nurses, teachers, probation officers and managers was similar to the level observed in workers representing other human service professions, e.g., psychologists ($M = 126.4$) or clergies ($M = 126.5$) [11], but it was higher in workers of uniformed professions, e.g., firefighters ($M = 119.23$) or security guards ($M = 115.28$) (measured with the same method) [27]. In the study group, 110 (33.3%) workers showed low and 68 (20.6%) high level of emotional intelligence, whereas in the others, the average level of emotional intelligence was observed. The average state of health was found in all workers under study. The level of general health status was similar to that in other groups of employees, e.g., security guards ($M = 23.16$), bus drivers ($M = 22.86$), better than in prison officers ($M = 15.02$) and city guards ($M = 15.70$), and a little worse than in journalists ($M = 24.77$) [27] and police officers ($M = 25.31$) [26].

The employees reporting a higher EI level perceived a lower level of occupational stress and suffered less from negative health consequences. Emotional intelligence plays the buffering role (but rather weak) in preventing the workers from negative health outcomes, especially from depression symptoms. The present study identified the significance of EI in both perceiving job stress and preventing mental health disorders, and depression symptoms in particular.

Individuals with high level of emotional intelligence, pronounced by the ability to recognize and express emotions as well as to manage and control them, showed the ability to better cope with stress and suffer less from adverse health outcomes. It is consistent with the data reported by Pau et. al [28], indicating that individuals with high EI level were more likely to adopt reflection and appraisal, social, organizational and time-management skills. Low EI subjects were more likely to be engaged in health-damaging behaviors.

One can conclude that the ability to effectively deal with emotions and emotional information in the workplace assists employees in managing occupational stress and maintaining psychological well-being. This study also indicated that stress reduction and health protection could be achieved not only by decreasing work demands (stressors), but also by increasing the personal resources of employees, including emotion intelligence.

The increasing of EI skills (empathy, impulse control) necessary for successful job performance can help workers to deal more effectively with their feelings, and thus directly decrease the level of job stress and indirectly protect their health. The results of the study indicate the need to develop intervention programs aimed at increasing the EI level and better coping with stress.

Organizations that offer their employees a combination of EI and stress management training provide them with an opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to satisfy more effectively the requirements of their job. Moreover, the incorporation of the EI questionnaires into a battery of tests used in recruitment and selection procedures seems to be a promising tool in improving the predictive validity of the selection method. There are some limitations of the presented study.

The adopted cross-sectional research design does not allow for affirmative causal explanations. The study provides no information on the job stress process. Further research including more objective measures of experienced job stress and additional EI measures (e.g., observer's ratings) as well as investigating other consequences of stress in the workplace, especially burnout syndrome, is required.

Emotional intelligence questionnaire developed and standardized by Dulewicz and Higgs (2001). It consists of 84 statements with 7 subscales. Each subscale has 12 items. The score of each sub scale ranges from 12 to 84. Description of the sub scales is as follows :

Self Awareness: The awareness of one's own feeling and ability to recognize and manage these feelings in a way which one feels that one can control. This factor includes a degree of self belief in one's ability to manage one's emotions and to control their impact in a work environment.

Emotional resilience: The ability to perform consistently in a range of situations under pressure and to adopt behavior appropriately. The ability to balance the needs of situation and tasks with the needs and concerns of individuals involved. The ability to retain the focus on a course of action or need for results in the phase of personal challenge or criticism.

Motivation: It refers to the drive and energy to achieve clear results and make an impact and also to balance short and long term goals with an ability to perceive demanding goals in the phase of rejection or questioning.

Interpersonal sensitivity: It is the ability to be aware of and take account of the means and perception of others in arriving at decisions and proposing solutions to problems and challenges.

The ability to build from this awareness and achieve the commitment of others to decisions and action ideas. The willingness to keep open one's thought on possible solutions to problems and to actively listen to reflect on the reactions and inputs from others. Influence: It refers to the ability to persuade others to change a view point based on understanding of this position and recognition of the need to listen to this perspective and provide a rational for change.

Intuitiveness: It is the ability to arrive at clear decision and drive their implementation when present with incomplete or ambiguous information using both rational and emotional or intuitive perception of key issues and implications.

Conscientiousness: It is the ability to display clear commitment to a course of action in the phase of challenge and to 'match words with deeds' in encouraging others to support the chosen direction. The personal commitment to pursuing an ethical solution to a difficulty business issue or problem.

The major general inferences drawn from the study were as follows:

Background of the couples:

- 1) The age of the couples ranged between 24 years and 69 years, with mean age of males 45.01 years and mean age of females 40.10 years. Majority of the couples were in their Middle-age followed by early adulthood.
- 2) Majority of the couples were from Hindu religion.
- 3) Most of the couples had completed their schooling in urban areas.
- 4) Majority of the couples had Hindi as their medium of instruction.
- 5) Most of them were employed in non-aided institutions.
- 6) Most of them had completed 13-15 years of education.
- 7) Majority of the couples were in teaching profession.
- 8) Most of them were working for 7-8 hours per day.
- 9) Majority of the couples were vegetarians and were from nuclear families living in their own houses.

Relationship of demographic characteristics with emotional intelligence and stress

- 1) There was no significant relationship between medium of instruction, type of institute, years of education and stress.

Status of components of emotional intelligence among the working couples

- 1) Among the couples, about 11, 7 and 82 per cent had developed lower, average and higher emotional intelligence.

Relationship between emotional intelligence and stress of the couples

- 1) There was no significant relationship between self-awareness, motivation, influence, Conscientiousness, emotional intelligence and stress.
- 2) There was a significant and negative relationship between emotional resilience, Interpersonal sensitivity and stress.
- 3) There was a positive and significant relationship between intuitiveness and stress.

Status of components of stress among the working couples

- 1) The first-order stressor among the self stressors was due to peers which contributed to stress always among 8.1 per cent of the couples.
- 2) The first-order stressor among the stressors related to children was bad habits of the children which contributed to stress always among 6.8 per cent of the couples.
- 3) The first-order stressor among the spousal stressors which contributed to stress always among 14.8 per cent of the couples was "my spouse had started drinking alcohol".
- 4) The first-order stressor among the financial stressors which contributed to stress always among 10.3 per cent of the couples was having a deficit in the financial matters.
- 5) The first-order stressor among the job stressors which contributed to stress always among 8.7 per cent of the couples was encouragement of unhealthy competition at work.

6) The first-order stressor among the health stressors which contributed to stress always among 5.8 per cent of the couples was a family member suffering from an incurable disease.

Relationship between the couples on stressors.

1) There was a positive and significant relationship between self stressors, child stressors, spousal stressors, financial stressors, job stressors, health stressors and couples.

Relationship between emotional intelligence and stress.

1) There was no significant relationship between self-awareness, influence, conscientiousness, emotional intelligence and stress of the couples. But, even then, it signified a negative relationship.

2) There was no significant relationship between motivation and stress. But, even then, it signified a positive relationship.

3) There was a significant negative relationship between emotional resilience, interpersonal sensitivity and stress.

4) There was a positive and significant relationship between intuitiveness and stress.

IMPLICATIONS

The study reveals that about 80 per cent of the respondents have developed higher level of emotional intelligence. Even then, about 15 per cent of the respondents have been experiencing maximum stress always in the marital relationship. This is significant information to create awareness among family members to resolve stressors of marital relationship by using their emotional intelligence effectively.

Similarly about 10 per cent of the respondents are experiencing high stress due to financial matters, about 7 per cent of the respondents are experiencing high stress in relation to their children and around 9 per cent of the respondents are experiencing high stress in the job situation.

These results signify that among the working couples 8-15 per cent of the couples are experiencing high stress. This is to be a significant indicator of future anomaly. Therefore there is the need of effective management of the stressors by making use of emotional intelligence potentiality by effective counseling.

There is inverse relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and stress which clearly is an indicative of effective measures to manage stressors in day-to-day life. So, it is important to develop understanding among the couples to face and resolve the state of stress by making use of their emotional potentiality at appropriate time consciously.

The study has revealed a remarkable status between the couples that the relationship between the couples on the components of stress that the development of stress in their partner is a significant contributor for development of stress among themselves. Therefore it is prime perspective to resolving the couple stress by discussing the stressors which are responsible for the stress. Otherwise, both will experience detrimental effect of stressors.

Similarly it is confirmed that the potentiality of emotional intelligence of a life partner will have positive reinforcing effect on the development of emotional potentiality of another partner. So, it is necessary to express the emotional reaction genuinely and share the experience genuinely to resolve consequential effect and develop affirmative emotional perspectives.

The following questions were remained unanswered for quite some time but efforts were made through this study to derive at some justified and balanced answers to prove my study yielded desirable results. These questions were as under:

Can Adults Become More Emotionally Intelligent?

Many managers and executives who accept the notion that emotional intelligence is vital for success are less certain about whether it can be improved. On the other hand, there are consultants and trainers who claim that they can raise the emotional intelligence of a whole group of employees in a day or less.

What Is the Best Way to Improve Emotional Intelligence?

To be effective, change efforts need to begin with the realization that emotional learning differs from cognitive and technical learning in some important ways. Emotional capacities like self-confidence and empathy differ from cognitive abilities because they draw on different brain areas.

Purely cognitive abilities are based in the neocortex. But with social and emotional competencies, additional brain areas are involved, mainly the circuitry that runs from the emotional centres to the prefrontal lobes. Effective learning for emotional competence has to retune these circuits.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Because emotional learning differs from cognitive learning in a number of ways, training and development efforts need to incorporate a number of elements. Below are some of the most important ones.

1. **Practice:** There needs to be much more opportunity for practice than one normally sees in the typical work-based training programme. Not only do there need to be many opportunities during the training itself, but also the learners need to practice new ways of thinking and acting in other settings—on the job, at home, with friends, etc. And this regimen needs to occur over a period of months.
2. **Ongoing encouragement and reinforcement from others:** Even with ample practice during the training phase, the old neural pathways can re-establish themselves all too easily unless learners are repeatedly encouraged and reinforced to use the new skills on the job.
3. **Support from the boss:** A learner's bosses play an especially critical role in providing the support necessary for successful change. Reinforcement by one's supervisor can be especially powerful in helping new emotional competencies to take root. Also, supervisors influence transfer and maintenance of new competencies indirectly by serving as powerful models.
4. **Experiential learning:** In addition to sustained practice, feedback, reinforcement, and support, effective social and emotional learning needs to be based primarily on experiential activity rather than more intellectual, didactic approaches. Developing a social or emotional competency requires engagement of the emotional, non-cognitive parts of the brain.
5. **Emotionally intelligent trainers and coaches:** Because the competencies involved in social and emotional learning are so central to our personal identities, special care and sensitivity is required in the way that training is presented.
6. **Anticipation and preparation for setbacks:** Even when a training programme has all of these elements necessary for successful personal change—ample practice and support, emotionally intelligent trainers, etc.—learners will inevitably encounter setbacks.

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence can make a big difference for both individual and organizational effectiveness. However, if the current interest in promoting emotional intelligence at work is to be a serious, sustained effort, rather than just another management fad, it is important that practitioners try to utilize practices based on the best available research. Only when the training is based on sound, empirically based methods will its promise be realized.

This was an ex-post-facto study to analyze emotional intelligence and stress among working couples conducted on a sample of 280 working couples of Delhi city (both New Delhi and Old Delhi). The age of the respondent ranged between 24 and 69 years. The couples (respondents) were selected based on the criteria that both of them should be working for at least 5 years, either of the couples should be a primary school teachers, executives in financial consultancy firms, Customers Relation Executives of call centres, CAs, Property Dealers, Advertising Agency Executives, Computer hardware technicians, Sales staff, marketing staff who had been married for at least 5 years and having at least one child.

In the Indian context transition of gender inequality and gender roles deviate from traditional form to modern gender role expectations that have been observed to constitute cultural disparity that affect the work-family culture interface. The growing number of educated women employees in India in the urban, organized, industrial sector in technical, professional, and managerial positions has been accompanied by a steady growth in dual earner families.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & STRESS

Dear respondent, I purposed to do this survey to determine the extent of Emotional Intelligence levels of working couples. Whatever replies you provide will be used for counseling to develop satisfactory blissful family life. Hence I request you to provide replies accurately or nearby accuracy.

PART A (FAMILY BACKGROUND)

NAME:
 GENDER:
 AGE:
 RELIGION:
 SCHOOLING: URBAN/ RURAL:
 MEDIUM OF EDUTAIION: E/H
 EDUCATION OF YOUR SPOUSE:
 OCCUPATION:
 EDUCATION OF YOUR FATHER:
 OCCUPATION:
 NO.OF WORKING HOURS:
 NO. OF CHILDREN:
 VEG/NON-VEG:
 FAMILY: JOINT/ NUCLEAR
 HOUSE: RENTED/ OWN
 FACILITIES IN FAMILY: TV/VCP/VCR/TRANSISTOR/ COMPUTER/WI FI/CAR/A/C-PRINTER-FAX-MOBILE PHONE/COOKING GAS.\SOLAR LIGHTING
 GADGETS/GEYSER/WASH MACHINE/MOPED/TWO WHEELER/ MOV-IMMOVBLE PROPERTY

PART-B (STATEMENTS)

In this part you will find 30 statements which will gauge your level of emotional intelligence. Under each statement there are seven options- (a) always (b) very frequently (c) frequently (d) Often (e) Rarely (f) Very Rarely (g) Never. You will have to write against each statement the alphabetic used: either a-b-c-d-e-f or g. Don't think much on each statement but whatever comes to your mind mark it which will be treated as "CONFIDENTIAL" and your contribution in the form of your responses will be of paramount importance to us and as such please cooperate and give your response.

1. I will break the rules at work if it will help me to achieve my goals.
2. Decisions I make are based on facts
3. It is easy for me to change other people's opinions
4. I give people ample time to express their views.
5. I put all my energy into works that I believe are important
6. Even when I feel bad, I easily find ways to come out of it.
7. If I am in bad mood, I am able to hide it.
8. I challenge unethical behavior whenever I meet it at home.
9. When making a decision, I ignore my feelings as they only confuse the issue.
10. In group, I prefer to let other people make the decisions.
11. I have enough of my own problems without spending time listening to other people's affairs.
12. Any obstacles I encounter are likely to prevent me from completing a Task
13. I lose confidence when my work is criticized
14. I recognize my own moods and make specific attempts to change them
15. I avoid distasteful tasks
16. I need to know other people's opinion before I make a final decision in a Group
17. I find it difficult to change friends' minds
18. I encourage my colleagues to work together as a team
19. I am not distracted from my long-term goals
20. Whenever I experience a setback, it takes me a long time to bounce back
21. I feel out of control emotionally
22. I will not do something if I know it is wrong
23. I work on the principle that it is better to be safe than sorry
24. When other people's views are different from mine, I Do not consciously attempt to influence them.
25. I take my friend's opinion to win a team game
26. I strive to produce ever better results in my work
27. When under pressure, I become irritable
28. It is possible to control my own feelings
29. In group, I ensure that what I say and what I do are the same

REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK

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I am sure that your feedback and deliberations would make future issues better – a result of our joint effort.

Looking forward an appropriate consideration.

With sincere regards

Thanking you profoundly

Academically yours

Sd/-

Co-ordinator

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