

Assessment of Emotional Intelligence in Facilitators of Government and Private Sector Medical College

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ABSTRACT

Aim: To evaluate the EQ level in facilitators of government and private medical colleges of Karachi.

Study design: Cross sectional

Place and duration: Ziauddin Medical College, January-June 2022

Methodology: Facilitators of government and private sector medical institutes particularly lecturers were targeted population. The calculated sample; (n=35/institute) was recruited by simple random technique. The questionnaire regarding demographic data was self-developed however, emotional quotient was assessed by EQ scale. Chi-square test was applied as test of significance.

Results: The maturity scale score of females showed that statistically (p-value=0.011) they are emotionally more mature than males. When sensitivity and maturity score were compared between the two institutes (Government or private) their scores were similar and there was no significant difference between sensitivity and maturity scores of government and private sector employees. According to EQ compatibility scoring system scale, 100% male and 100% female scored in the range of extremely high competency category.

Conclusion: The emotional quotient analysis showed that females are more sensitive and mature emotionally than males though the emotional intelligence of male and female participants was equal. Emotional sensitivity, maturity and intelligence scores of Government and private sector employees was comparable to each other.

Keywords: Emotional quotient, Medical education system, Facilitators, Government and private sector

INTRODUCTION

From the inception of a human being, multiple factors contribute to its growth starting from nutrition, education, experiences, intelligence quotient and also emotional quotient. Emotional intelligence (EI) or emotional quotient (EQ) is the capability of one to discriminate his/her feelings from others and appreciate the emotions of others^{1,2}. Emotional Quotient is the key way to handle stress, time management, emotional setbacks, decision making, leadership ability and administrative properties. Emotional intelligence (EI) is also a crucial tool in enhancing one's psychological resiliency to stressors and stimuli³.

EQ is a personality trait shaped by one's social skills, self-consciousness and awareness, sense of empathy and motivation. In consistency with attachment theory, an emotionally secure individual is more inclined in employing emotional management approaches that lower the distress and develop positive emotions, while an apprehensive person is more prone to use management stratagems that strengthen negative emotions and increase his distress^{4,5}.

As much as EI and empathy play a role in patient-physician relationship and degree of patient care, an individual's personality is another key factor. AbiKe et al in his article links both EI and empathy to personality among medical students and their potential as competitive physicians⁵.

Students having Test Anxiety (TA) fail to show their true skills and portray their knowledge as the anxiety renders their cognitive functions. 62% of students who did not pursue their education due to mental health concerns suffer from TA. EQ plays a very important role in improving test anxiety, as proven by Ahmad Panah in his research that among Iranian students, regardless of their gender, "lower TA and higher EI levels" were linked. The outline of results indicated that "improvement in interpersonal and intrapersonal skills is suggestive to reduce TA"⁶.

Hence, it shall be fair to say that employing such social management skills in the medical curriculum can not only improve

the students' academic performance but also be constructive towards their professional success as physicians¹. Even in the government sector, while linking Intelligent, Emotional and Spiritual Quotient with employee performance, it is appreciated that "EQ helps the employees in reasoning, planning, problem solving, abstract thinking, understanding the idea, and learning and thus improve their performance"⁷.

In a rapidly evolving world in terms of resilience and advancement, EQ is essential for daily activities especially in areas of hefty work such as in the health care system, such as nursing, medical students and teachers, doctors, business entrepreneurs, government officers, etc⁸. Stress management abilities involve an individual's capability to remain calm, use effective coping mechanisms and promote power supportive systems⁹.

Adaptability skills are a set of multiple things like problem solving abilities, flexibility and aptitude to framing issues and their solutions. The general mood should be optimistic, of resilience and hopefulness¹⁰. In all fields of science and arts teachers must assist students in approaching material from a more consumer-oriented perspective, preparing them to be lifelong learners and mentors. As a result, instructors should make every effort to "move the learners gradually but firmly in the direction of autonomy and individuality". To the best of our knowledge, no documented literature is present which can evaluate the EQ of a medical educationist.

In this regard the objective of our study is to evaluate the EQ level in Health professional educationists of different fields in the medical colleges of Karachi.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design: Cross sectional study

Place and duration: Ziauddin Medical College, January-June 2022

Sample Size calculation: The sample size was calculated by open epi calculator by keeping 50% proportion of population of each institute. Total calculated sample size was n=35.

Inclusion Exclusion criteria: The target population was facilitators of government and private sector medical institutes

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particularly lecturers. We kept that as 35 facilitators per sector i.e. n=35 from government and n=35 from private sector institutes. The sample was recruited by simple random technique.

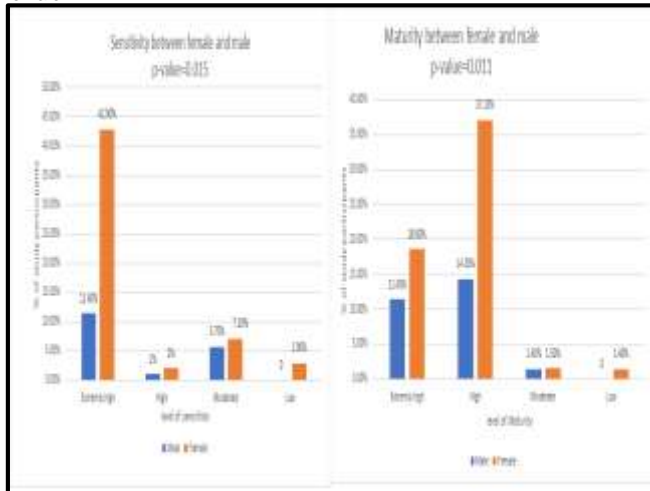
Data collection procedure: The questionnaire regarding demographic data was self-developed. However, emotional quotient was assessed by EQ scale developed by Dr. Dalip Singh & Dr NK Chadha. This emotional quotient scale assesses three psychological dimensions; emotional sensitivity, emotional maturity and emotional competency. This examination has been standardised. This EQ test has a test retest reliability of 0.94, a split-half reliability of 0.89, and a validity of 0.89. More than 25,000 people worldwide have attempted it online. There are 22 different situations given in the questionnaire and it measures the emotional responses to different situations. Answers are given on the basis of how a person feels^{11,12}. After taking written consent research, objectives were shared with the study participants and a questionnaire was administered.

Statistical analysis: Data was entered on SPSS version 20. Chi-square test was applied as a test of significance and p-value less than 0.05 was considered as significant at 95% confidence interval.

RESULTS

The data was collected from lecturers of private and government sector medical colleges. There were 19(27.1%) male and 51(72.9%) female participants. Most of the participants belonged to the 26-30 year and 31-35year age group i.e. 29(41.4%) and 41(58.6%) respectively. Out of 70(100%) participants 50(71.4%) were married and 20(28.5%) were having children. The chi-square analysis was applied to assess the association of EQ with gender and job sector i.e. government or private. When sensitive scores were compared between both the genders the responses of females came out statistically significant (p-value=0.015) when compared to male. According to the EQ scale scoring system, the maturity scale score of females showed that statistically (p-value=0.011) they are more mature emotionally when compared to males (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Comparison of sensitivity and Maturity score between male and female



When sensitivity and maturity scores were compared between institutes (Government or private) the scores were similar and there was no significant difference between sensitivity and maturity scores of government and private sector employees as shown in figure 2. The compatibility analysis between both the genders and institute groups did not show any significant difference. According to the EQ scale compatibility scoring system 100% male and 100% female scored in the range of extremely high competency

category. The same was observed for employees of government and private institutes as 100% participants of both the groups scored in extremely high competency categories (i.e. 126-200). The calculated scores for emotional quotient analysis seemed to be equal in both the genders and institutes. Participants belonging to either gender (Male or Female) or institute (Government or private) have similar emotional quotients.

Figure 2: Comparison of sensitivity and Maturity score between government and private sector

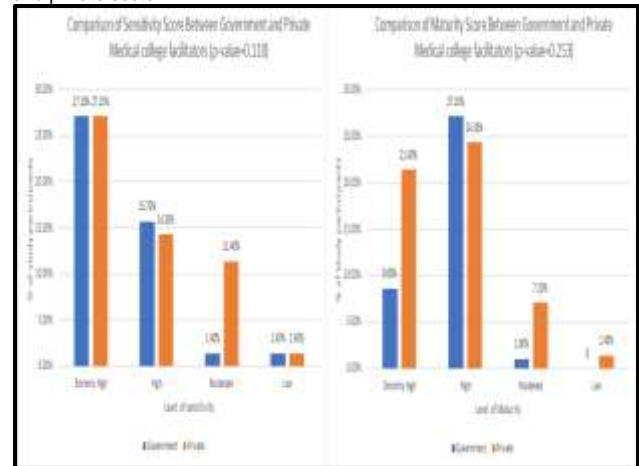


Table 1. Emotional quotient scores between gender and institutes

EQ scale scores	Extremely high	High
Male	19 (27.7%)	0
Female	50 (72.5%)	1(1.4%)
P value	0.539	
Government	31 (44.3%)	1(1.4%)
Private	38 (54.3%)	0
P value	0.272	

DISCUSSION

Despite being a social construct EI has proven itself to be an important constituent to the practice of the art of medicine and is key to the patient-physician relationship on and clinical outcomes. EI is therefore a crucial element in maximising effective patient care and ensures healthier medical quality and delivery while enhancing on key features like creativity and commitment^{13,14}. Lewis et al further amplifies this notion by suggesting that EQ might be an important competency in team building and working group¹⁵. Moreover, Sulmaz Ghahramani mentions in his article about the positive correlation between happiness and EQ and found EI to be a strong predictor of happiness¹⁶. Results of the correlation analysis for the doctors discuss that emotional intelligence/quotient in its three dimensions; emotional sensitivity, maturity, and competency. Many articles like that of Swarnima Tiwari et., al. prove the presence of a negative relation between EQ and occupational stress, perceived stress, and burnout, which indicates that a lower level of emotional intelligence is associated with higher levels of occupational stress and vice versa^{17,18}.

Gender: As indicated in table 1 our research has shown female gender (p-0.539) to have higher EQ score than men. This is further broken down in terms of sensitivity and maturity threshold. Our data proves women to be much more emotionally mature and sensitive than male. This is coherent with a research done in Jammu India where calculation of EI of working males and females with more females (18.75%) having extremely high emotional intelligence than males (3.75%)¹⁷. Earlier done research further endorse this stipulation. The importance of this fact can be understood as higher EQ in females heavily influences the quality of life, satisfaction with goals, ambitions and work ethic positively. While EQ could predict a higher response to emotional stressors,

there are numerous other factors too. Lazarus in his theory conceptualises that one's reaction to environmental stressors is influenced a lot by all behavioural, emotional, cognitive and social resources available to the individual and so a number of other salient factors that may be involved between gender and coping strategies¹⁹⁻²¹.

Government vs Private Sector: The current data refuted our initial hypothesis that physicians working at public hospitals would be under more stress due to weaker infrastructure and a larger patient load. Instead, overall stress levels among physicians in public and private hospitals were comparable. The construct of EQ has certainly been validated in previous studies despite little empirical work. Its impact on health in terms of the search for abilities and characteristics that can improve the patient-centred qualities of healthcare and approaches to improve training is still debatable. When sensitivity and maturity scores were compared between institutes (Government/private) scores were similar and there was no significant difference between sensitivity and maturity scores of government and private sector employees (Fig. 3). Our data therefore negates that the poor health care system in the government is due to low EQ among the professionals. This is enforced in a study by Yvonne F Birks¹ and Ian S Watt² that shows EQ does not influence patient outcome²²⁻²⁴.

However, this is a proven fact that the mental health of health care workers, public or private, is severely affected. Factors such as the dire state of infrastructure for patient care, lack of awareness among the masses, along with poor compliance for safety measures can be accredited to the high prevalence of anxiety, depression, and stress in Pakistani health care professionals^{25,26}. Other studies conducted in Malaysia and Pakistan also showed that the stress faced by the private and public health sector was similar, according to that the private sector faces more pressure in terms of higher demands and expectations from full paying patients. But the government sector has lesser job satisfaction and substandard levels of organisational justice^{27,28}.

Now that we have established that work place stress severely affects the mental health HCW, it should be noted that situations like the COVID pandemic have only made it worse and has become an urgent public health concern. In an article recently published in Egypt it was found that the severe toll of pandemic affected not only the attention span but even cognitive abilities of the HCW; increasing the risk of medical errors and accidents^{29,30}.

CONCLUSION

The emotional quotient analysis showed that females are more sensitive and mature emotionally than males though the emotional intelligence of male and female participants was equal. Emotional sensitivity, maturity and intelligence scores of Government and private sector employees were comparable to each other.

Conflict of interest: None

Ethical Approval: Study was approved by ERC Ziauddin University.

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