

Does Personal Variables (Age, Gender, Marital Status, Experience and Organizational Experience) Moderate the Validity of Emotional Intelligence Relation with Organizational Role Stress?



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Abstract

In an era of shifting paradigms, one should be able to develop its human resources as a source of competitive advantage. In order to develop and enhance workforce capabilities and to successfully compete in the 21st century, organizations have to embark on future oriented human resources strategies. It could be argued that the individual competencies of the workforce in any organization would determine its overall success. This success, among other things, may be attributed to the socio - behavioral characteristics and adjustments these individuals have to make in their job-role and position-power to gain common ground in any organizational setting.

People who rise to the top of their field are not just good at their jobs. They are easy-going, flexible and optimistic. In other words, it takes more than traditional cognitive intelligence to be successful at work. It also takes 'emotional intelligence,' Emotional intelligence is a social intelligence that enables people to recognize their own, and other peoples' emotions; it's the ability to restrain negative feelings such as anger, self-doubt, stress, anxiety. Organizational role stress is the general problem of the professionals. Stress does not have the same impact on every one. There are individual differences in coping with stressful situations. The present study is an attempt to ascertain the moderating effects of age, sex, marital status, experience, organizational experience on the relationship of emotional intelligence and organizational role stress.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Stress, Organizational Role Stress, Age, Sex, Gender, Experience, Organizational Experience

Introduction

Research shows that emotions, properly managed, can drive trust, loyalty, and commitment. Many of the greatest productivity gains, innovations, and accomplishments of individuals, teams, and organizations have occurred within such a framework (Cooper, 1997).

Emotional intelligence is a social intelligence that enables people to recognize their own, and other peoples' emotions. Moreover, emotional intelligence enables people to differentiate those emotions, and to make appropriate choices for thinking and action (Cooper and Sawaf, 1997; Mayer and Salovey, 1993). It is an intelligence that may be learned, developed and improved (Perkins, 1994; Sternberg, 1996).

EQ and Stress at Workplace

The workplace has become a high stress environment cutting across industries. Employees experience high level of stress due to various factors such as high workload, tight deadlines, high targets, type of work, lack of job satisfaction, long working hours, pressure to perform, etc. Interpersonal conflicts at the workplace, such as boss-subordinate relationships and relationships with peers, emerged as a source of stress. Experts believed that the dysfunctional aspects of stress could directly impact an organization's performance and also affect the well-being of its employees. Stress at the workplace was linked to absenteeism, higher

attrition, and decreased productivity. Stress led to fatigue, irritability, poor communication, and quality problems/errors.

High stress levels also affected the morale and motivation of the employees. Prolonged exposure to stress without effective coping mechanisms could lead to a host of physical and mental problems. Moreover, stress could push the victim towards high risk behavior such as smoking, drinking, and substance abuse. Stress-related illness led to increase in absenteeism and attrition affecting the profitability of the organizations.

Experts say stress does not have the same impact on every one. There are individual differences in coping with stressful situations. Some people go to pieces at the slightest provocation; while others seem unflappable even in extremely stressful conditions. It is here Emotional Intelligence (EQ) come to our rescue and guide us to respond appropriately to different stressors.

EQ helps us to cope with stressful situations. Stress Management therefore largely depends upon striking on emotional balance between a potential stress condition and our reaction to it. Researchers proved this fact in their studies.

Emotional intelligence (EI) may predict stress responses and coping strategies in a variety of applied settings. Matthews et al., in his study (2006) compared EI and the personality factors of the Five Factor Model (FFM) as predictors of task-induced stress responses. Results confirmed that low EI was related to worry states and avoidance coping, even with the FFM statistically controlled. However, EI was not specifically related to task-induced changes in stress state. Results also confirmed that Neuroticism related to distress, worry, and emotion-focused coping, and Conscientiousness predicted use of task-focused coping.

Studies conducted by Montes-Berges et al., (2007) with nursing students have shown that emotional intelligence is a skill that minimizes the negative stress consequences.

Kumar (2009) in his study (Role of Emotional Intelligence in Managing Stress and Anxiety at workplace) concluded that emotional intelligence will correlate negatively with stress and anxiety, and Emotional intelligence will be predicted through levels of stress and anxiety. The findings of the study indicated that the low and high level of Emotional Intelligence establish relationship to some extent with stress and anxiety. Negative correlation of emotional intelligence with stress and anxiety highlights that emotional intelligence will prove helpful tool in dealing with stress and anxiety at workplace.

Keeping in view of the above, the present investigation is based on and is directed to ascertain the moderating effects of age, sex, marital status, experience, organizational experience on the relationship of emotional intelligence and organizational role stress.

Objective of the Study

In the direction of the available literature concerning the relationship of emotional intelligence, organizational role stress here an

attempt has been made to study the moderating effects of age, sex, marital status, experience, organizational experience on the relationship of emotional intelligence (overall and area wise) and organizational role stress (overall)

Hypotheses

H1

Age would significantly affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (dimension wise and overall) and organizational role stress (overall) by acting as a moderator variable.

H2

Sex would significantly affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (dimension wise and overall) and organizational role stress (overall) by acting as a moderator variable.

H3

Marital status would significantly affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (dimension wise and overall) and organizational role stress (overall) by acting as a moderator variable.

H4

Experience would significantly affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (dimension wise and overall) and organizational role stress (overall) by acting as a moderator variable.

H5

Organizational experience would significantly affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (dimension wise and overall) and organizational role stress (overall) by acting as a moderator variable.

Design and Methodology

Nature of the study

The present study is co-relational in nature. Present investigation is primarily focusing on following variables:

Predictor Variables

Personal Background variables (Age, Sex, Marital Status, Experience, Organizational Experience)

Criterion Variables

1. Organizational role stress
2. Emotional Intelligence

Sample

The study was conducted on 200 employees incidentally selected from private telecom operators of Lucknow. The age group of these employees ranged from 28 years to 45 years. The sample consists of both married and unmarried employees out of this 87 were female and 113 were male employees. These employees were randomly selected from six different departments namely:

1. Sales,
2. Operation,
3. Accounts,
4. Technical,
5. Customer Care,
6. HR.

The designation of these employees

ranged from

1. Executive.
2. Senior Executive,
3. Assistant Manager,
4. Manager,
5. Zonal Manager
6. Regional Manager.

The educational qualification also ranged from

1. Graduate (BA, BSC, BCOM)
2. Post graduate (MA, MSC, MCOM),
3. Graduate with Professional qualification (BE, BBA),
4. Post graduate with professional qualifications (MBA/CA).

Their total work experience ranged 3 years to 25 years. Their tenure in current job ranged from 1 year to 12 years.

Measures

Emotional Intelligence Scale (E.I.S)

Participants’ emotional intelligence was measured by a scale developed and standardized by Singh (2004). It is consisted of 60 statements which were grouped under five categories namely: Self awareness, Self Regulation, Motivation, Social Awareness, and Social Skills. Higher score indicates high level of emotional intelligence in that respective area. The author has reported the value of internal reliability ($\alpha=0.88$), and content and face validity is examined by asking from 10 specialists. In the present study, internal reliability was satisfactory ($\alpha=0.93$).

Scoring

The individual had to rate the statements is in 5,4,3,2, 1 for describe me very well, well, moderately well, little and not at all respectively. Higher score indicates high level of emotional intelligence in that respective area. The five areas of emotional intelligence have different numbers of items which are mentioned as under:

Organisational Role Stress Scale (ORS)

Emotional Intelligence Scale dimensions	Item Numbers	Total Number of items
Self Awareness	1 to 12	12
Self Regulation	13 to 24	12
Motivation	25 to 36	12
Social Awareness	37 to 48	12
Social Skills	49 to 60	12
Total		60

ORS scale developed and standardized by Pareek (1983) was used to measure the level of role stress among employees. To measure the role stress among the respondents, the refined version of the ORS scale was adopted, which measured role stress on 10 dimensions. These are as follows with item numbers of each dimension:

Scoring

ORS scale is a Likert type scale having five alternatives ranging from “never” to “always” . The ORS scale has 50 items, 5 for each dimension listed above. The scoring may range from 0 – 20 (for each dimension) and hence the total ORS score may range from 0 – 200. On the basis of the rating on the

items of various dimensions, the score of the each area of role stress can be found and total ORS scores can be obtained.

Reliability

Cronbach’s alpha (Cronbach, 1951) is used to test the statistical reliability of the scale. Reliability of a measure is the ability to yield consistent results (Nunnally, 1988). When compared to other reliability testing methods, the internal consistency method is simple and easy for computation. An alpha coefficient of 0.60 and above is considered to be a good reliability estimate (Nunnally, 1988). The organization role stress scale yields sample alpha coefficients of 0.93.

1.	Inter role distance (IRD)	1	11	21	31	41
2.	Role Stagnation (RS)	2	12	22	32	42
3.	Role Expectation conflict(REC)	3	13	23	33	43
4.	Role Erosion (RE)	4	14	24	34	44
5.	Role Overload (RO)	5	15	25	35	45
6.	Role Isolation (RI)	6	16	26	36	46
7.	Personal Inadequacy (PI)	7	17	27	37	47
8.	Self role distance (SRD)	8	18	28	38	48
9.	Role Ambiguity (RA)	9	19	29	39	49
10.	Resource Inadequacy (RI)	10	20	30	40	50

Results & Interpretation

Sub-Group Analysis

Sub-group analysis was used to set eyes on the relationship between a dichotomous variable and a continuous variable. The moderator variables in our case were personal background variables (age, gender, marital status, experience and organizational experience). These were dichotomize at the median and labeled as ‘Low Group’ (less than or equal to median) and as ‘High Group’ (greater than median). To ascertain the moderator effect of personal background variables, the simple product moment correlation between organizational role stress with emotional intelligence were calculated separately for each (low/high) group. To test the significance difference between two correlation coefficients, the coefficients for each group were transformed into Fisher’s Z function. The function Z has two advantages over ‘r’ (1) its sampling distribution is approximately normal and (2) its SE depends only upon the size of the sample ‘N’, and is independent of the size of ‘r’. The formulae for ‘t-value’ and SE are given below:

$$t = \frac{(r_{z1} - r_{z2})}{SE} \text{ and } SE = \left(\frac{1}{\sqrt{(N1-3)}} + \frac{1}{\sqrt{(N2-3)}} \right)$$

Where,

N1 and N2 are the sub-sample sizes for low and high groups respectively, r_{z1} and r_{z2} are the Fisher’s Z-values against each groups’ correlation coefficients and SE is the standard error of the

estimate. The Fisher's Z-value is equal to correlation coefficient, if coefficient is less than or equal to 0.25.

Following Tables (Table 1,2,3,4 and 5) presents the sub-group analysis to study the moderating effect of personal background variables

on the relationship of organizational role stress and emotional intelligence.

All the analysis has been done using SPSS 16.0.

Table 1
Sub-Group Analysis for Age as Moderator of the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Role Stress.

Variables	Un-moderated correlation		Moderated Correlations				t-value
	r	N	High		Low		
			rz1	n1	rz2	n2	
Self awareness with ORS	-.90	200	1.26	96	1.19	104	.49
Self regulation with ORS	-.93	200	1.22	96	1.59	104	2.57
Motivation with ORS	-.93	200	1.22	96	1.65	104	2.99
Social awareness with ORS	-.93	200	1.29	96	1.59	104	2.09
Social skills with ORS	-.92	200	1.13	96	1.53	104	2.78
EI with ORS	-.98	200	2.30	96	2.09	104	1.46

t=1.97 (p < 0.05), t=2.35 (p< 0.02), t=2.60 (p<0.01)

Referring Table 1 age was found to moderate the relationship of self regulation with ORS , motivation with ORS ,social awareness with ORS and social skills with ORS.

Also age was found to have no moderating effect on the relationship of self awareness with ORS and overall emotional intelligence with organizational role stress as the t-value was not found to be significant.

In the present study age was found to have a moderating effect on the relationship of organizational role stress with self regulation, motivation, social awareness(to be conscious of the difficulties and hardships of society) and social skills (a learnable social behavior used to achieve social goals) Social consciousness brings moral implications. Often, people with an awakened social consciousness become socially active. A socially conscious person tends to be empathetic towards others regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, class, or sexual identity.

Social skill is becoming increasingly important in today's workplace because organizational structures are becoming flatter with more service-oriented positions. Strong social skill can facilitate interpersonal interactions, which can in turn lead to effective job outcomes.

Age has a moderating effects in relation between social skills with ORS. The rationale for this type of an approach to treatment is that people meet a variety of social problems and can reduce the stress and punishment from the encounter as well as increase their reinforcement by having the correct skills. With the advancement of age with passes through different stages of socialization process and develop social skills for getting more reinforcement from our social network and also reducing or encountering stress arising from the same. With this we see that the hypothesis (H1) has been partially accepted.

Table 2
Sub-Group Analysis for– Sex (Gender), As a Moderator in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Role Stress

Variables	Un-moderated correlation		Moderated Correlations				t-value
	r	N	High		Low		
			rz1	n1	rz2	n2	
Self awareness with ORS	-.90	200	1.26	113	1.65	104	2.83
Self regulation with ORS	-.93	200	1.65	113	1.74	104	.65
Motivation with ORS	-.93	200	1.65	113	1.59	104	.44
Social awareness with ORS	-.93	200	1.65	113	1.59	104	.44
Social skills with ORS	-.92	200	1.59	113	1.59	104	.00
EI with ORS	-.98	200	2.30	113	2.30	104	.00

t=1.97 (p < 0.05), t=2.35 (p< 0.02), t=2.60 (p<0.01)

As seen in the above Table (2) the sex was found to have moderating effect only on the relationship of self awareness with ORS . Except this, sex was not found to have any moderating effect between self regulation, motivation , social awareness ,social skills and overall emotional intelligence with organizational role stress as the t-value was not found to be significant. With this we see that the hypothesis (H2) has been partially

accepted. Self-awareness leads to a better understanding of what are our particular stressors. Not only this Self-awareness can also lead to a recognition of what we may be doing to contribute to your own stress. If we can catch and identify self-sabotaging thought patterns and behaviors, we can change them more easily. The present analysis

confirm that gender play an important role in the relationship of ORS and self awareness (EQ).

Table 3
Sub-Group Analysis for – Marital Status, As a Moderator in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence And Organizational Role Stress

Variables	Un-Moderated Correlation		Moderated Correlations				t-value
	r	N	High		Low		
			rz1	n1	rz2	n2	
Self awareness with ORS	-.90	200	1.13	71	1.38	129	1.66
Self regulation with ORS	-.93	200	1.47	71	1.53	129	.40
Motivation with ORS	-.93	200	1.53	71	1.53	129	.00
Social awareness with ORS	-.93	200	1.53	71	1.59	129	.40
Social skills with ORS	-.92	200	1.42	71	1.49	129	.47
EI with ORS	-.98	200	2.09	71	2.30	129	1.40

t=1.97 (p < 0.05), t=2.35 (p< 0.02), t=2.60 (p<0.01)

As per the findings presented in the table 3 we can conclude that marital status doesn't have moderating effect on the relationship of emotional intelligence (overall and dimension wise) with Organizational role stress (overall) as the t-value was not found to be significant. That means your marital status has nothing to do with relationship of EQ with ORS. In A study (emotional intelligence of student teachers (pre-service) at primary level in puducherry region) Singaravelu S. observed Significant difference in emotional intelligence between the groups regarding marital status, as the calculated 't' value 2.88 was found to be significant at both levels of significance. This study concluded that , marital status has a significant effect on emotional intelligence of

student teachers. Unmarried persons experience more stress than married persons. This may be due to their comparative lack of security need, resulting in higher self-esteem, autonomy and self- actualization needs. Similar studies exploring the relationship between demographic variables and dimensions of role stress are carried out by many other researchers (Sharma and Mahajan, 2003; Aditya and Sen, 1993). In contrast to these the present study found that marital status would not significantly affect the relationship between emotional intelligence (dimension wise and overall) and organizational role stress (overall) by acting as a moderator variable as the t-value was not found to be significant. With this finding hypothesis (H3) has been rejected.

Table 4
Sub-Group Analysis for Experience, As A Moderator in the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Role Stress

Variables	Un-moderated correlation		Moderated Correlations				t-value
	R	N	High		Low		
			rz1	n1	rz2	n2	
Self awareness with ORS	-.90	200	1.38	89	1.22	111	1.11
Self regulation with ORS	-.93	200	1.29	89	1.53	111	1.66
Motivation with ORS	-.93	200	1.29	89	1.59	111	2.08
Social awareness with ORS	-.93	200	1.33	89	1.59	111	1.80
Social skills with ORS	-.92	200	1.05	89	1.53	111	3.32
EI with ORS	-.98	200	2.30	89	2.09	111	1.45

t=1.97 (p < 0.05), t=2.35 (p< 0.02), t=2.60 (p<0.01)

The above Table 4 suggests that experience have a moderating effect on the relationship of organizational role stress (overall) with motivation and also moderating effect on the relationship of organizational role stress (overall) with social skill. So Hypothesis (H4) has been partially accepted.

Table 5
Sub-Group Analysis for Organizational Experience as A Moderator In the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Role Stress

Variables Organizational Experience	Un-moderated correlation		Moderated Correlations				t-value
	r	N	High		Low		
			rz1	n1	rz2	n2	
Self awareness with ORS	-.90	200	1.26	73	1.53	127	1.81
Self regulation with ORS	-.93	200	1.33	73	1.83	127	3.34
Motivation with ORS	-.93	200	1.33	73	1.83	127	3.34
Social awareness with ORS	-.93	200	1.22	73	1.29	127	.47
Social skills with ORS	-.92	200	1.29	73	1.74	127	3.01
EI with ORS	-.98	200	2.30	73	2.65	127	2.34

t=1.97 (p < 0.05), t=2.35 (p< 0.02), t=2.60 (p<0.01)

Table 5 exhibited organizational experience as a moderator in the relationship between Emotional intelligence and organizational role stress. Referring the table we find that organizational experience acted as a moderator in the relationship between organizational role stress and self regulation ,motivation and social skill . Also it wasn't found to have any moderating effect on the relationship of self awareness with ORS and also of social awareness with ORS. Being in the same organization for longer period may help managers in regulating and motivating themselves as well as others. The same would facilitate process of social skill leading to reduction in role stress.

Conclusion

In regard to relationship of emotional intelligence and organizational role stress age, sex, experience and organizational experience had partially moderating effect whereas marital status had no moderating effect on the said relation.

Implication, Limitation and Suggestions

Emotional Intelligence embraces and draws from numerous other branches of behavioral, emotional and communications theories, such as NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming), Transactional Analysis, and empathy. By developing our Emotional Intelligence in these areas and the five EQ domains we can become more productive and successful at what we do, and help others to be more productive and successful too. The process and outcomes of Emotional Intelligence development also contain many elements known to reduce stress for individuals and organizations, by decreasing conflict, improving relationships and understanding, and increasing stability, continuity and harmony. Stress is a necessary factor in the success of people in the organization. However if the stress experience goes beyond a particular level, it may adversely affect the individual's performance level and psychological and physical health also.

The central characteristics of present research has been to find out that does age,sex,marital status, experience and organizational experience play a significant role in the relationship of emotional intelligence and organizational role stress of telecom managers.

The findings of this study can assist managers and policy makers to understand importance of personal back ground variables in relationship of emotional intelligence and organizational role stress. The knowledge of these relationships may be utilized by the organizations for developing a supportive work culture for achievement of super ordinate goal of organizational effectiveness. The future academic endeavors might make of present study as the stepping stone for future explanatory and confirmatory research towards a more complete understanding of the effectiveness considerations in particular and the related organizational dynamics in general.

It is suggested for future studies to incorporate other relevant variables viz. income , qualification , professional area , family and social responsibilities and family size of managers, etc . Besides this other

situational and personality variables may be studied and their impact may be ascertained.

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