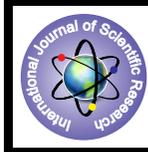


## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING OF EMPLOYEES IN AN ORGANIZATION



### Psychology

**KEYWORDS :** Psychology, subjective well-being, affect, life satisfaction, emotional intelligence, employees.

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### ABSTRACT

*As many nations of the world enter an era of post materialism in which basic survival needs are met, interest in Subjective Well-Being is likely to grow, affecting the ways in which policy makers govern. Continued research into Subjective Well-Being may ultimately answer the question of what composes the "good life." Campbell, Converse, and Rodgers (1976) found that the demographic factors of age, sex, income, race, education, and marital status accounted for less than 20% of the variance in Subjective Well-Being. Argyle (1999) determined that external circumstances account for approximately 15% of the variance in Subjective Well-Being. It is concluded that personal reactions to life's circumstances are more important than the events themselves and that personality affects our reactions. The present study examined the relationship between subjective wellbeing and emotional intelligence. Positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) by Watson, Clark & Tellegen (1988), The satisfaction with life scale by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985) and The assessing emotions scale by Schutte, Malouff & Bhullar (1998) was used. Non probability convenient sampling method was used to collect data. Pearson's product moment correlation, student's independent t-test and ANOVA were carried out to test the formulated hypotheses.*

The term "subjective well-being" (SWB) refers to people's evaluations of their lives. It includes cognitive judgments, such as life satisfaction, affective evaluations (moods and emotions), such as positive and negative emotional feelings and personal quality of life (satisfaction with specific personal domains of Subjective Well-Being, for example, with the self, partner and family) (Diener, Eunkook, & Shigehiro, 1997). People are said to have high Subjective Well-Being if they are satisfied with their life conditions and experience frequent positive emotions and fewer negative emotions (Diener et al., 1997). Subjective Well-Being is the psychological term for "happiness" and is preferred because of the many connotations of the latter term (Diener, 1984).

Subjective Well-Being is increasingly important in a democratic world where there is a need for people to live fulfilling lives as evaluated by themselves, and not simply as judged by policy makers, autocrats, or experts (Diener & Diener, 2000). In an international survey of college students (Diener, 2000), it was found that positive well-being in the form of life satisfaction was rated as more important than money. It is therefore important to note that a new direction in which psychologists can expand their activities is in helping people live more rewarding lives. Although the image of having a good life is bound to vary somewhat across cultures, to some extent it will probably always include close relationships, responsibilities to one's own family and enjoyment of one's life.

### COMPONENTS OF SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING

Subjective Well-Being is composed of several major components, including life satisfaction, contentment with specific life domains, the presence of frequent positive affect (pleasant moods and emotions), and a relative absence of negative affect (unpleasant moods and emotions) (Diener et al., 1997). The major components of Subjective Well-Being can be further reduced to more specific elements. Positive affect is commonly divided into joy, elation, contentment, pride, affection, happiness and ecstasy (Diener et al., 1997). Negative affect is separated into guilt, shame, sadness, anxiety, anger, stress, depression and envy (Diener et al., 1997). Positive Subjective Well-Being is categorized by satisfaction with oneself, satisfaction with current life, satisfaction with past life, satisfaction with the future, satisfaction with meaningful relationship with significant others and a desire to change life. The various domains of life satisfaction are composed of work, family, leisure, health, finances, self, and one's group (Diener et al., 1997).

### EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence "is a type of social intelligence that in-

volves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Mayer & Salovey, 1993). According to Salovey & Mayer (1990), Emotional Intelligence subsumes Gardner's inter and intrapersonal intelligences, and involves abilities that may be categorized into five domains: **Self-awareness:** Observing yourself and recognizing a feeling as it happens. **Managing emotions:** Handling feelings so that they are appropriate; realizing what is behind a feeling; finding ways to handle fears and anxieties, anger, and sadness. **Motivating oneself:** Channeling emotions in the service of a goal; emotional self control; delaying gratification and stifling impulses. **Empathy:** Sensitivity to others' feelings and concerns and taking their perspective; appreciating the differences in how people feel about things. **Handling relationships:** Managing emotions in others; social competence and social skills.

### EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Advanced emotional intelligence can be beneficial in many areas of life. However, the application of its usefulness has been most frequently documented in the professional workplace. Cherniss (2000) outlines four main reasons why the workplace would be a logical setting for evaluating and improving emotional intelligence competencies: 1. Emotional intelligence competencies are critical for success in most jobs. 2. Many adults enter the workforce without the competencies necessary to succeed or excel at their job. 3. Employers already have the established means and motivation for providing emotional intelligence training. 4. Most adults spend the majority of their waking hours at work.

Emotional intelligence facilitates in making the right decision & problem solving (Singh 2001). Since the persons having high emotional intelligence have skills to identify and regulate the emotions of self and others to activate emotions at the right time and place to the right degree to apply these processes adoptively in social interaction (Baron & Parker 2000) therefore they have significantly more positive affect and less negative affect. Emotional intelligence helps the individual to cope up with any given situation and makes the person well adjusted, psychologically balanced, which leads to competent and fully satisfied life. Yates (1997) found that high EQ individuals are on the higher level of success and satisfaction and it is significantly & highly correlated with job performance.

### METHODOLOGY:

#### Objectives

1. To study the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Subjective Well Being of employees in a private organi-

zation.

2. To study the gender differences in Subjective Well Being of employees in a private organization.
3. To study the influence of level of education on Subjective Well Being of employees in a private organization.

**Hypothesis**

Previous researches have reported that emotional intelligence has a significant correlation with subjective well being. Subjects with high emotional intelligence scored significantly high on positive affect and scored significantly low on negative affect. (Gallagher, Dianne & Brodrick, 2008); There is a significant positive correlation between Emotional intelligence and all the three dimensions of life satisfaction. (Kulshrestha & Sen, 2006). Based on these researches the following hypothesis was framed.

Hypothesis 1: Emotional intelligence would be positively related to Subjective Well-Being of employees in a private organization.

**Sub-Hypotheses:**

1.1 Emotional Intelligence would be positively related to Positive Affect of employees in a private organization.

1.2 Emotional Intelligence would be negatively related to Negative Affect of employees in a private organization.

1.3 Emotional Intelligence would be positively related to life satisfaction of employees in a private organization.

The differences in Subjective well-being between men and women were very small Michalos (1991). Based on this study the following hypothesis was framed.

Hypothesis 2: Male and female employees in a private organization would not differ in their Subjective well-being.

**Sub-Hypotheses**

2.1 Male and female employees in a private organization would not differ in their Positive Affect.

2.2 Male and female employees in a private organization would not differ in their Negative Affect.

2.3 Male and female employees in a private organization would not differ in their life satisfaction.

Small but significant correlations between education and Subjective Well-Being have often been found (Cantril, 1965; Diener et al., 1993). Based on this the following hypothesis was framed.

Hypothesis 3: Education level of employees in a private organization would be positively related to Subjective well-being.

**Sub-Hypotheses**

3.1 Education level of employees in a private organization would be related to Positive Affect.

3.2 Education level of employees in a private organization would be related to Negative Affect

3.3 Education level of employees in a private organization would be related to life satisfaction.

**Sample selection**

A non probability convenient sampling method was used in the present study. A sample of 89 employees were selected for the study. The sample consisted of project managers, Deputy managers, Team leaders, Cluster leaders, Trainers and HRs in a private organization in Chennai. Among them 45 were male employees and 44 were female employees. Questionnaires were administered on the basis of their availability.

tered on the basis of their availability.

**Tools used:**

- Positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) - Watson, Clark & Tellegen (1988)
- The satisfaction with life scale. - Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin (1985)
- The assessing emotions scale - Schutte, Malouff & Bhullar (1998)

**Method of data collection:**

The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to employees working in a private organization. Based on the availability of employees the filled in questionnaires were collected back. On the whole 125 questionnaires were distributed, out of that 89 were returned with all the information needed.

**Statistical analysis used in the study**

The data collected was subjected to analysis using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 16.0 for windows. Descriptive statistics like mean and SD were obtained for all variables. After testing the data for normality and homogeneity of variables, the relationship among variables was established by using Pearson's product moment correlation method. Thereafter student's independent t-test and ANOVA were carried out to find the mean difference between various groups and to test the formulated hypotheses.

**Results and discussion**

**TABLE 1**

**Relationship between emotional intelligence and Subjective Well-Being of employees in a private organization**

Variable	N	r
Positive Affect	89	.290**
Emotional Intelligence		
Negative Affect	89	-.053
Emotional Intelligence		(NS)
Life Satisfaction	89	.148
Emotional Intelligence		(NS)

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level NS - Not significant

Table 1 indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between Positive Affect and Emotional Intelligence. The table also indicates a negative correlation between Negative Affect and Emotional Intelligence though not statistically significant. The table indicates that there is no significant relationship between satisfaction with life and Emotional Intelligence. Hence the sub hypothesis which stated Positive Affect would be positively related to Emotional Intelligence is accepted. But the hypotheses stating there is a negative relationship between Negative affect and Emotional Intelligence is not accepted as there is no significance. The hypotheses stating there is a positive relationship between satisfaction with life and Emotional Intelligence is also not accepted.

**TABLE 2**

**Influence of gender on the Subjective Well-Being of employees in a private organization**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t value
Positive Affect	Male	45	38.08	7.24	1.979
	Female	44	35.41	5.34	(NS)
Negative Affect	Male	45	18.94	6.78	0.082
	Female	44	19.06	7.11	(NS)
Life Satisfaction	Male	45	23.6	5.56	0.214
	Female	44	23.84	4.96	(NS)

NS - Not Significant

Table 2 indicates that there is no significant relation between Positive Affect, Negative Affect and gender. The table also indicates that there is no significant relation between Life Satisfaction and gender. Hence the sub hypotheses gender would not be positively related to Positive affect, Negative Affect and Satisfaction with life are accepted.

**TABLE 3**  
**Influence of level of education on the Subjective Well-Being of employees in a private organization**

Variable	Education	N	Mean	SD	df	F
Positive Affect	Graduation	36	35.3889	35.3889	2	1.397 (NS)
	Post Graduation	39	37.8308	37.8308	86	
	Professionals	14	37.2857	37.2857	88	
Negative Affect	Graduation	36	19.3889	6.49957	2	0.345 (NS)
	Post Graduation	39	18.3269	6.84888	86	
	Professionals	14	19.8571	8.33765	88	
Life Satisfaction	Graduation	36	23.9444	6.16416	2	0.082 (NS)
	Post Graduation	39	23.4615	4.35797	86	
	Professionals	14	23.8571	5.5727	88	

NS – Not Significant

Table 3 indicates that there is no significant relationship between the education level and subjective Well-Being of employees in a private organization. There is no significant relation between Positive Affect and education level and Negative Affect and education level of employees in a private organization. Also there is no significant relationship between satisfaction with life and education level of employees. Hence the hypotheses there would be a significant relation between Positive Affect and education level of employees, Negative Affect and education level of employees and satisfaction with life and education level of employees in a private organization are not accepted.

**OVERALL DISCUSSION**

The present study is an attempt to find the influence of emotional intelligence on the Subjective Well-Being of employees in a private organization. The findings of the present study shows that emotional intelligence significantly correlates with positive affect. The results also indicate that negative affect and emotional intelligence are negatively correlated but it is not statistically significant. These findings are in harmony with the findings of Baron & Parker (2000) where they reported that persons having high emotional intelligence have skills to identify and regulate the emotions of self & others to activate emotions at the right time & place to the right degree to apply these processes adaptively in social interaction and therefore they have significantly more positive affect and less negative affect. Occupational setting may be considered as a ‘mini-culture’, where each employee has to deal with people from different backgrounds and handle different demands from different levels . All these demand, understanding and managing of the emotions of ones own self and those around. Employees with high emotional intelligence can cope up with any given situation & that makes the person well adjusted and psychologically balanced and the employee will experience more positive affect.

It was surprising to see that there is no significant relationship between life satisfaction and emotional intelligence. This result is in contradiction with the results found by Palmer, Donaldson, and Stough (2002) where they reported that higher emotional intelligence was a predictor of life satisfaction. If we look into this in a different perspective the possible reason could be high emotional intelligence alone may not provide life satisfaction unless the life conditions are good. The individual may have the ability to perceive and manage emotions, but if he/she has not got the opportunity to do what one wants to do or has not been able to live the life one has desired, he/she might not be satisfied with it. Life satisfaction depends on the personal values of the individual which may range from family to materialistic possessions. Though the individual is emotionally strong and is able to manage the emotional part well, if he is not satisfied with his status with regard to the things he values in life, he may not be highly satisfied with life. Moreover, life satisfaction, being a self rated measure, depends on how the individual rates his satisfaction with life.

Analysis of the effect of gender on the Subjective Well-Being of employees revealed that there is no significant difference between men and women employees. The result is in harmony with the findings of Michalos (1991), that the differences in Subjective Well-Being between men and women were very small. Haring, Stock and Okun (1984) showed that men were slightly happier than women, but the magnitude of this difference was very small. In the present study also the results indicate that there is a negligible difference between the positive affect of male and female employees. It is indicated that men showed slightly higher positive affect than women. The finding of the present study is more significant because the number of male and female employees are equally distributed. In today’s world both men and women are enjoying equal opportunities, facing equal challenges and achieving equal heights in their professions and thereby not experiencing any difference in their Subjective Well-Being. The slight difference could be because women more readily admit to negative feelings where as men deny such feelings.

A further analysis of the effect of education on the Subjective Well-Being of employees revealed that there is no significant relation between the education level of employees and the various components of Subjective Well-Being, the positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction. The result is in contradiction to the findings of Campbell et al.(1976); Centril, (1965); Diener et al.(1993) that a small but significant correlations between education and Subjective Well-Being have often been found. But different studies by Campbell (1981), Witter et al (1984) showed that much of the relation between education and Subjective Well-Being is due to the correlation of education with occupational status and income. The findings of these studies support the results obtained in the present study as the researcher tried to control the effects of income and occupational status by selecting a sample which is almost homogeneous in the aspects of occupational status and income. Education may even potentially interfere with Subjective Well Being if it leads to expectations which cannot be met, thus increasing the goal-achievement gap.

Different variables lead to Subjective Well-Being across individuals with different values and goals. Different strategies may work better in different circumstances for various people. The present study emphasizes the influence of Emotional Intelligence on the subjective well being of employees in private organizations. The results of the study have implication in organizational setting. Happy workers enjoy multiple advantages over their less happy peers. Individuals high in Subjective Well-Being are more likely to secure job. A relatively new practice in the workplace is recruiting and developing people based on their strengths (what they love to do, are naturally good at and energises them).

**FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. The positive affect and emotional intelligence of employees in a private organization were found to be significantly related.
2. The negative affect and emotional intelligence of employees in a private organization were found to be negatively or inversely related but statistically not significant.
3. Life satisfaction of employees in a private organization was not found to be influenced by emotional intelligence.
4. It was found that gender and subjective well-being of employees in a private organization are not related to each other.
5. It was found that education level does not influence the subjective well being of employees in a private organization.

**CONCLUSION**

From the findings of the present study it can be concluded that emotional intelligence of employees a significant positive relation was found with positive affect. A negative relation was found with negative affect and emotional intelligence though not statistically significant. Furthermore life satisfaction was

found to have no significant relationship with emotional intelligence. From this it can be inferred that positive affect has been influenced by self efficacy and emotional intelligence of the employees and life satisfaction was influenced by self efficacy of the employees in a private organization. There could be various other factors which could better account for subjective well-being but were not taken into consideration in this study.

**LIMITATIONS**

- The data in this study was collected only through self report measures, could be a threat to internal validity.
- Multiple methods for evaluations should be used to reduce the impact of subjectivity. It was not possible due to time constraints and availability of samples.
- The sample size used in the study was small so the results could not be generalized for a large population.
- The study was done on a single organization and so the organizational factors could have also influenced the results and hence it is not generalizable.

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