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Emotional Intelligence of Correctional Officers of West Bengal

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Abstract:

This study aims to investigate the perceptions of emotional intelligence of correctional officers of West Bengal correctional service working at various functional units and different hierarchical levels. Data were collected from 224 correctional officers by means of questionnaires in a series of face-to-face structured interviews regarding emotional intelligence. Factor analysis provides support for the model, which suggests that supervisors' overall emotional intelligence and its domain. Reliability coefficients of the scales as assessed with Cronbach α , were also exhibit high internal consistency. There exist a significant variation of emotional intelligence with variation of age, experience and designations. This study contributes to our understanding of the linkage among emotional intelligence of correctional officers of West Bengal correctional service and the impact on teamwork with their subordinates for healthy dealing with inmates (prisoners).

Key words: Emotional intelligence, correctional officers, age, experience and designations

1. Introduction

Interest among social scientists on emotions as a domain of intelligence has grown in recent years, which are different from Intelligence Quotient (IQ) (Stern, 1961) and multiple intelligence [18]. Of course in the corporate sector, IQ helps one to pass the hurdle of entry in an organization, the emotion as a domain of intelligence helps to develop a coping skill to deal with interpersonal relationships, and development of cooperative work culture for achievement of goal.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) coined the term “Emotional Intelligence” and described it as “a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action. Emotional Intelligence according to them includes

- i) Identifying emotions,
- ii) Understanding emotions
- iii) Using emotions
- iv) Managing emotions [43].

In the later part, they define emotional intelligence (EI) as “the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth”. Similarly, Emotional Intelligence as 'the capacity for recognizing owns feelings and those of others, for motivating oneself and for managing emotions well in oneself and others. Emotional Intelligence has been considered as the competencies of the individual with respect to the following cluster of variables. i) Self awareness: capacity for understanding one's emotions - strength and weakness; ii) Self management: capacity for effectively managing one's motives and behavior; iii) Social awareness: capacity for understanding what and why others are saying and feeling iv) Social Skills: capacity for acting in such a way that one is able to obtain the desired [23]. Emotional Intelligence reflects one's ability to deal with daily environment challenges and helps predict one's success in life, including professional and personal pursuits [4]. These definition and other are complimentary [7].

Although the concept of EI is not without its critics [14] [31]. EI is a construct that has attracted considerable attention [22] [23] in predicting workplace outcomes, including job performance [52] and satisfaction [55]. Also, EI is a construct that may impact core affective processes to influence the quality of supervisor–subordinate interactions [13] [37].

In their proposed model, Mayer and Salovey (1997) have estimated that emotional intelligence plays an important role in regulating and controlling emotions as well as intellectual [34] and cognitive processes [33] [48]. The absence of this skill implies an uncertainty

in decision making [39][47] [51] [54]. Scholars and writers in management are beginning to emphasize the importance of EI on leadership effectiveness [37][23][6][41][42] for better team management.

In particular, this study investigates the supervisor's level of emotional intelligence (EI). The investigation was concentrated on the correctional administrator of the correctional homes in West Bengal.

1.1. Introduction of Correctional Homes and Correctional Officers

With the change in the perception towards prisoners, prisons are no longer considered as a place for punishment but as correctional home. Therefore in present day scenario, there is a need to create a healthy environment inside the correctional home so that inmates can return to the society as healthy citizen. Many of the problems in the Jails are an offshoot of neglect by the correctional officers. Reason behind such that there is no organized or systematic effort to bring about changes in a sustained and institutionalized manner because of a variety of reasons, prime among them is not to give due importance of the personnel management in the Jail administration.

1.1.1. Role Expectation from a Prison (Correctional) Officer

The role played by the prison Officers is not only a complex one but also a totally professional task. The West Bengal correctional services Bill 1992, also places a lot of responsibility on the Staff in ensuring that a prison is basically for the reformation of a prisoner so that on his release from the Jail he is able to adjust easily into the community life. The Act has prescribed various functions for the Correctional Homes. Some of the important functions that have been included in the Act are:

To give correctional treatment to the prisoners so as to efface from their minds the evil influence of anti social ways of life and rehabilitate them in society as good and useful citizens.

To adopt ways to ensure that a prisoner does not fall prey to the depriving mental attitude, which may make him believe that he is lost to society;

To adopt measures calculated to rouse in the mind of a prisoner a healthy social sense and a sense of abhorrence against the anti social ways of life.

To adopt measures to ensure effective after care service of the released prisoners.

Depending on the types of inmates, types of Govt. order and the situation of the home they need to take part in counseling, advising, controlling, monitoring and developing the activities inside the home. Hence a coping skill to deal with interpersonal relationships, which involves the ability to monitor one's own and others feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action for the development of cooperative work culture for achievement of goal is required.

Hence to revamping of the "correctional services", at first it is necessary to identify the present level of social intelligent or in broader sense emotional intelligence of the correctional officers, so that they can exert their full competency for their service happily.

1.2. Objectives of Study

The following objectives of study were considered:

- To investigate the level of emotional intelligence of the correctional officers of West Bengal with variation of age, experience and designation.
- To investigate the significant difference of emotional intelligence of the correctional officers of West Bengal with variation of age, experience and designation.

2. Survey of Literature

The declaration of Indian Jails Committee about the reformation and rehabilitation of offenders is the ultimate objective of prison administration. This has brought out the essential aim of reformation and social rehabilitation (Model Prison Manual, 2003). India is seem to none in terms of an enlightened thinking with regard to the purpose and objectives of imprisonment of the gap between proclaimed principles and actual practices appeared to have been widening recent years. However in probing this complicated opaque world of prisons, academicians has left no stone unturned and sociology of prison is increasingly gaining dominance as an independent discipline within the gamut of social science. But there is little intervene with the study on organizational behaviour or organizational psychology to identify the psychological competencies as well as influencing organizational and personnel variables on competency.

In this article, first a review of the literature on EI will be presented and then the hypothesis and methodology part will be explained regarding sample, procedure and measurement. Finally after providing research findings and discussion session, scope for future research will be addressed.

2.1. Emotional Intelligence

A study on Emotional Intelligence, leadership style and coping mechanisms of executives by Purkable, Terry Lyn (2003) opined that the organizational leaders frequently use emotions to influence the affective states of others. Leban (2003) identified that the success of complex projects depends on the relationship between rational leader behaviour and emotional intelligence of the project manager. Cannalo and Brierza (2002) showed that the highest performing managers had significantly more 'emotional competence' that other manager. Leaders high on Emotional Quotient generated hope and conviction because they could instil confidence in people who were frightened to situations [12]. Sternberg (2002) suggests that there are other dimensions of intelligence-social intelligence, EQ, or

practical intelligence or what scholars refer to as "street smarts"-which indicates that an individual is not limited simply because he or she has a below average academic intelligence or IQ [50]. Studies on the US Air Force when they began using emotional intelligence tests to select recruiters showed, it immediately saved \$3 million a year through greater effectiveness and lower turnover and associated costs [50]. Boyatzis (2001) studying on several hundred managers from 12 different organizations showed one of the foundations of Emotional competence ie accurate self-assessment was associated with superior performance [7]. Ciarrochi et al (2002) argued that the ability to cope with aversive affect and stressful situations is related to one's ability to manage emotions [11]. The Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organization (2000) points out that in a manufacturing plant, after the supervisor received a training in emotional competencies production increased by 17% [12]. Leaders who are high in EI may be more likely to cultivate trust and cooperation from their subordinates [19]. A study Walter V, Clarke (1997) of 130 executives found that how well people handled their own emotions determined how much people around them preferred to deal with them. De-Drev et al (1995) confirmed that people with higher emotional intelligence face a crisis situation more efficiently with good problem solving, decision making skills [22].

Although Gardner (1983, 1999) did not use the term EQ, his concepts of intrapersonal intelligence deal with the ability to understand one's own emotions and interpersonal intelligence is one's ability to understand the emotions of others [22] [23]. Goleman (2001) suggested that this intelligence is associated with social competencies, such as empathy and social skills [24]. In his research indicated that the manager's who don't feel a responsibility to others can't handle stress, are unaware of their own emotions, lack the ability to understand others, or erupt into anger easily are viewed as likely to derail due to problems dealings with other people [23]. 80 Ph D's in science undergone a battery of personality tests, IQ tests, and interviews in the 1950s at Berkeley. After forty years when their success based on resumes, evaluations by experts in their own fields were made, it turned out that social and emotional abilities were four times more important than IQ in determining professional success and prestige (Daniel Crdemar's book on Emotional Intelligence, 1998) [18].

Several researchers have attempted to develop measures of EQ [4] [44] [35] [8] [32] [42] [22] is the progenitor of the EQ construct. In his role as a consultant in organizations, Gardner (1983) [17]; ([22] [25]) found that EQ is twice more important than technical skills and IQ for jobs at all levels. He also reported that EQ plays an increasingly important role at the highest levels of a company. It appears that EQ relates to a number of non-cognitive skills, abilities, or competencies that influence a manager's capacity to deal with environmental demands and pressures.

Another issue is that in organizational studies, supervisors are often asked to assess their own managerial skills, but studies reported that unsuccessful supervisors overestimate their skills compared to successful supervisors [30] [46]. Also three studies reported that under-estimators of their managerial skills are likely to be more effective than over-estimators [2] [53] [9]. As a result, if the supervisors are asked to self-assess their EQ, some of them will probably provide misleading information.

3. Methodology

3.1. Hypothesis

Several scholars use the term EI to include emotional awareness, accurate self-assessment, self-confidence, trustworthiness, adaptability, conscientiousness, innovation, and so on [23][4]. Also, studies reported that self-awareness is an essential ability for enhancing managerial effectiveness [9] [46], also a prerequisite for self-regulation, empathy, and social skills [24]. In order to understand the emotional processes and deal with them effectively, one needs to have Perception of emotion, Managing own emotion, Managing emotion of others and Utilization of emotion of others [9] [15].

Matching with the subjects of the study we selected the domains of EI Perception of emotion, Managing own emotion, Managing emotion of others and Utilization of emotion of others for the present study because we believed that: - manifestations of these domains of EI in an organizational context with variation of age, experience and designation will have a significant influence on officers' perceptions of their own managerial skills. We selected these domains of EI for the present study because we believed that: - manifestations of all the domain of EI in an organizational context will have a significant influence on officers' perceptions of their work effectiveness. Taking lead from these contributions, following hypothesis is considered:

H1. There exist significant differences of the level of emotional intelligence with variation of age, experience and designation of the correctional officers of West Bengal Correctional Service.

3.2. Samples and Procedure

The present research investigated how Perception of emotion, Managing own emotion, Managing emotion of others and Utilization of emotion of others of EI are associated with correctional officers' transformational leadership.

Sample Profile: Sample profiles with frequency distribution are shown in Table I.

3.3. Data Collection

Data were collected by means of structured close-ended questionnaires in a series of face-to- face interaction regarding their self-perceived emotional intelligence group wise with a gap of 15 days or more. Furthermore, in depth interview were conducted in order to collect some qualitative information from their comments and observations.

Age in Years	Designations														Total In number and in Percentage M / F
	Superintendent		Chief Controller		Welfare officer		Controller		Discipline Officer		Assistant controller		Probationary Officer		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	32 14.3%	0	28 12.5 %	0	4 1.8%	12 5.4%	56 25%	4 1.8%	16 7.1%	0	52 23.2 %	4 1.8%	16 7.1%	0	204/20 94.6/5.4
26-30	0	0	6 2.8%	0	2 .08%	3 1.3%	9 4.0%	1 .04%	5 2.2%	0	24 10.1 %	0	2 .08%	0	48/ 4 23.2/1.8
31-35	0	0	2 .08%	0	1 .04%	8 3.6%	15 7.0%	1 .04%	1 .04%	0	15 7.0%	3 1.3%	2 .08%	0	36 /12 16.1/5.1
36-40	4 1.8%	0	0	0	1 .04%	1 .04%	22 9.8	2 .08%	0	0	5 2.2%	1 .04%	0	0	32 /4 14.3/1.8
41-45	10 4.5%	0	10 4.5%	0	0	0	10 4.5%	0	4 1.8%	0	0	0	6 2.8%	0	40/ 0 17.9/0
46-50	6 2.8%	0	4 1.8%	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	16/ 0 7.1/0
51-55	8 3.6%	0	4 1.8%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8 3.6%	0	4 1.8%	0	24/ 0 10.1/0
56-60	4 1.8%	0	2 .08%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2 .08%	0	8/ 0 3.6/0

Table 1: Sample Profile with Frequency Distribution of Sample (Sample Size, N=224, M=204, F=20)

3.4. Measurement

3.4.1. Emotional Intelligence (EI)

The selected components of supervisory EI (Perception of emotion, Managing own emotion, Managing emotion of others and Utilization of emotion) were measured with items adopted from widely used Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (SEIS) (1998) [29]. An important issue raised by Petrides and Furnham (2000) is whether this scale can be used in research as a face valid, unidimensional measure of EI in organizations. Investigating the psychometric properties of the SEIS would therefore help to answer this question [39].

The SEIS comprises 33 self-referencing statements and requires subjects to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each statement on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) [10]. Participants, reply on a Likert scale and a total score is derived by summing up the item responses [39]. The brevity of the scale and its accumulating reliability and validity evidence makes this scale a reasonable choice for those that are seeking a brief self-report measure of global EI.

Initially an instrument was designed and filled out by group of supervisor (n =90). After completion the instructor initiated an item-by-item discussion. Critiques of the instrument were also received from two management faculty and other two faculties of industrial psychology. The items that were reported to be difficult, ambiguous, or inconsistent were either dropped or revised. A new item was added to compensate for the elimination of an item. Special attempts were made to make the items free from social desirability contamination. After each factor analysis, the items that loaded less than 0.50 and/or loaded on an uninterruptible factor were dropped or rephrased.

4. Results

To test the hypothesis, data analysis proceeded using SPSS

Exploratory factor analysis on the 33 EI items supported the four independent dimensions of EI. Factor loadings for all the domains range are 0.55 to 0.88. The internal consistency reliability coefficients of the four sub scales of the EI, as assessed with Cronbach α , were also exhibit high internal consistency (range 0.482 to 0.789) (Table II).

Domains	Factor Loading	Cronbach α
Perception Of Emotion (PE)	0.837	0.694
Managing Own Emotion (MO)	0.774	0.482
Managing Emotion Of Others (MOT)	0.876	0.639
Utilization Of Emotion (UT)	0.554	0.601
Emotional Intelligence (Overall) (EI)		0.789

Table 2: Factors Loading and Internal Consistency for Domains of Emotional Intelligence

Age wise variation of level of unit mean values for self perceived domains of emotional intelligence and overall emotional intelligence of correctional officers indicate above average (≥ 3.9) for all the domains except utilization of emotion (UT) and which is high in nature. (Table III) It may be due to the fact that this particular job enforces an officer to utilize or manipulate the emotional aspects to overcome the daily problems and hazard coming out of the job context.

Age in Year	Mean Of the Domain of Emotional Intelligence				(EI)
	PE	MO	MOT	UT	
26 - 30	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.5	4.1
31 - 35	3.8	3.8	3.2	4.1	3.7
36 - 40	3.7	3.5	3.8	4.0	3.8
41 - 45	3.8	4.2	3.9	4.5	4.1
46 - 50	4.0	3.7	4.3	4.0	4.0
51 - 55	3.8	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.9
56 - 60	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.3	4.2

Table 3: Age Wise Variation of Mean Values for Domains of Emotional Intelligence

Experience wise variation of level of unit mean values for self perceived domains of emotional intelligence and overall emotional intelligence of correctional officers indicate that between the year of experience 11 years to 25 years these are high in nature (Table IV) It has generally seen that during this period of working life officers have to interact and take decision of their own and as a consequence receives maximum opportunities to deal with emotional intelligence in their working life.

Exp	Mean Of the Domain of Emotional Intelligence				EI
	PE	MO	MOT	UT	
1-5	3.8	3.9	4.2	3.9	3.9
6-10	3.5	3.7	3.9	4.1	3.8
11-15	3.9	4.5	4.5	4.2	4.3
16-20	4.2	4.2	4.1	3.9	4.1
21-25	4.2	3.7	4.4	4.5	4.2
26-30	3.5	4.3	3.9	3.8	3.9

Table 4: Experience Wise Variation of Mean Values for Domains of Emotional Intelligence

Designation wise variation of level of unit mean values for self perceived domains of emotional intelligence and overall emotional intelligence of correctional officers indicate that superintendent, controller and disciplinary officers perceive their level of emotional intelligence more than other categories of officers. Qualitative discussion with them also reveals the same as par the demand of their job. (Table V)

Designation	Mean Of the Domain of Emotional Intelligence				(EI)
	PE	MO	MOT	UT	
Superintendent	4.0	4.1	4.3	3.8	4.05
Chief Controller	3.6	3.7	4.1	3.8	3.8
Welfare officer	3.5	3.7	3.8	4.3	3.9
Controller	3.6	3.9	4.1	4.3	4.0
Discipline Officer	3.8	4.0	4.6	3.9	4.1
Assistant controller	3.8	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.9
Probationary Officer	3.8	3.6	4.0	4.2	3.9

Table 5: Designation Wise Variation of Mean Values for Domains of Emotional Intelligence

One way analysis of variance (F ratio) indicates that there exist significant variation of emotional intelligence and its domain due to variation of age, experience and designations of the correctional officers. (Table VI). It corroborates the reasons as indicated above (table III, IV and V).

Domains	F Ratio		
	Age	Experience	Designation
Perception Of Emotion (PE)	4.4*	5.7*	2.07
Managing Own Emotion (MO)	5.3*	6.5*	5.05*
Managing Emotion Of Others (MOT)	7.9*	4.3*	4.4*
Utilization Of Emotion (UT)	8.2*	0.94	4.6*
Emotional Intelligence (Overall) (EI)	6.5*	4.8*	4.0*

*Table 6: Significant Variation (F Ratio) Of Domains of Emotional Intelligence With Variation of Age, Experience and Designation
* Significant At 0.01 Level*

4.1. Discussion

This study is an attempt to investigate the significant variation of Perception of emotion, Managing own emotion, Managing emotion of others and Utilization of emotion components of EI due to variation of the age, experience and designation of the correctional officers of West Bengal Correctional service. The study contributed to our understanding of the linkage that the perception of emotional intelligence significantly varies with variation of these factors (Table VI).

In order to understand the emotional processes and deal with them effectively, this kind of job, demand high utilization of emotions to control over the any risky and unsafe situation (table III).

Study also indicated that middle period of working life correctional officers nurture their or get opportunities to deal with emotional intelligence more than the junior one. Qualitative discussion reveals that seniors are so habituated with the situation they try to avoid any kind of confrontation in verge of their retirement from service life (Table IV).

It is coming from the data that the job of superintendent, controller and disciplinary officer's demand more fostering with the emotional intelligence and which also validated from qualitative discussion with the officers (Table V).

The implications of the study are that supervisors need to acquire and use their competencies on emotional intelligence in order to enhance their own leadership and improve team effectiveness regarding supervisor-subordinate interaction as well as relationships with inmates.

Appropriate interventions may be needed to enhance supervisors' emotional competencies that would involve positive reinforcements, education and specific job-related training. Moreover, organizations may have to adapt the policy of recruiting managers who are likely to be high on EI giving emphasis on team building.

5. Scope for Further Study

- This study is limited by the domain of EI components.
- Apart from self perceived questionnaire there is a need to investigate through superior, subordinates and co worker
- Also it will be useful to investigate the differences in the perceptions regarding the leadership performance of managers with low and high EQ.

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