

INVESTIGATING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN GHANA

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Abstract

This study seeks to examine the nature of emotional intelligence among employees in public and private institutions in Ghana. A convenience sample of 140 respondents was used to collect data via a Likert Scale format questionnaire. Results indicated that the respondents had varying levels of emotional intelligence, with four dimensions identified as awareness of own emotions, management of emotions, awareness of others' emotions, and management of others' emotions. The study recommends that institutions incorporate the findings into their organizational strategies to ensure efficiency. This research contributes to the existing literature by exploring the nature of emotional intelligence in specific study areas, which has not been previously investigated. The study suggests that future research should investigate the role of demographic features in emotional intelligence. While the study may have external validity limitations due to its non-probability sample method, the results can provide information to management to optimize productivity and improve employee emotional levels.

1. Introduction

Research in the area of emotional intelligence (EI) continues to attract attention in the literature ever since the formal treatment of the subject in terms of theory by Mayer and Salovey (1990) after previous empirical works. This sustained interest stem from the fact that emotional intelligence impact significantly on all known cultures and academic communities. These research works have taken the form of academic debate in the field of management and psychology, among researchers and practitioners, intending to understand the concepts of emotional intelligence and how to put into use the principles of emotional intelligence (Emmerling & Goleman, 2003).

According to researchers (Boyatzis, 1982; Goleman, 1998; Goleman, 2001; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Schmidt & Hunter, 1981; Spencer & Spencer, 1993; Sternberg, 1997), empirical research in emotional intelligence

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is currently still relevant since EI is very important in predicting worker performance, job satisfaction, motivation and many issues, even higher than that of the traditional measures of intelligence, such as the intelligence quotient. In the literature (Gardner, 2013; Mayer & Salovey, 1990; Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999; Steiner, 1984) emotion is explained as an individual potential to be able to manage personal emotions and feelings, and other persons also emotions and feelings. It is further considered as an individual capacity to be able to recognise and bring out emotions to be able to aid judgement. Emotional intelligence is considered to vary from individual to individual and that an individual deals with emotional issues differently. Hence, peoples use different adaptive strategies to deal with emotional issues (George, 2000; Mayer & Salovey, 1990).

The literature (Mayer & Salovey, 1990; Wasielewski, 1985) indicates that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more productive on various tasks as compared with individuals that have lower emotional intelligence, and they are also good leaders. Higher levels of emotional intelligence in addition help individuals to be able to deal with other person feelings and emotions appropriately when socialising.

The current research is necessitated by the fact that empirical research findings (Cote & Miners, 2006; Law, Wong, & Song, 2004; Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004) conclude that workers higher on emotional intelligence are more productive at the job place than workers with lower emotions and feelings, who are considered as less productive, and poor leaders with weak planning skills.

The nature of emotional intelligence has not been examined in the current study areas in the knowledge of the authors, and hence the paper fills in this knowledge gap to add to the existing literature. In the current infrastructure of the institutions, with technology and modern processes of doing things, the present paper investigates whether emotional intelligence among the respondents is high or low. Addressing the gap will afford management of institutions information on the nature of emotional intelligence levels among the employees to appropriately provide the needed human resources programmes that will help them optimize productivity, in the bide to achieve their core goals as management of the institutions. Respondents will also be aware of their emotional intelligence nature and that will help them to take achieve decisions in improving their emotional levels if they happen to have low emotional levels. Knowledge of the respondent's emotional level will help respondents to be able to predict their work behaviour and the other demands of their job. It will also help to determine whether respondents in the survey are emotionally stable or not.

The research is based on a global objective of investigating the nature of emotional intelligence among the employees and the ranks of the emotional intelligence among the respondents. The particular intentions of the present study are to assess the sorts of emotional intelligence among the respondents and to rank the identified emotional levels of the respondents.

The research is underpinned by the following question: What are the sorts of emotional intelligence among the respondents in the survey? What are the ranks of the emotional intelligence identified? The propositions for the paper are; there are higher levels of emotional intelligence among respondents in the study and that, some emotional constructs are highly ranked than others by the respondents.

The research delimitations are that some respondents might have been economical with information when responding to the items in the questionnaire. There could be under-reporting or over-reporting of responses by respondents. Causality issues were also not examined in the study. The sample is based on a non-probability sample method and as such, the findings may lack external validity. The study did not consider the effect of emotional intelligence on other dimensions of an individual employee, and work environments such as job performance, motivation, satisfaction, and adaptive strategies of emotional intelligence.

The rest of the manuscript looks at the literature survey (section 2); methodology (section 3); results and discussions (section 4); and conclusions (section 5).

2. Literature Survey

There have been Prior research efforts to examine and measure the nature of emotional intelligence empirically in various institutions both private and public. The findings are found in the works of various researchers (Asrarul-Haq, Anwar, & Hassan, 2017; Befort & Hattrup, 2003; Bono, Foldes, Vinson, & Muros, 2007; Bono & Vey, 2007; Brotheridge, 2006; Carmeli, 2003; Day & Carroll, 2004; Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2005; Fox & Spector, 2000; Grandey, Fisk, & Steiner, 2005; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2006; Mayer & Cobb, 2000; Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2001; Murphy, 1989; Offermann, Bailey, Vasilopoulos, Seal, & Sass, 2004; Pugh, 2001; Sy, Tram, & O'hara, 2006).

Fox and Spector (2000) in a survey identified various emotional intelligence measures and their effect on worker performance and reported that respondents have different levels of emotional intelligence, such as high and low levels. Mayer and Cobb (2000) in their study examined the various construct of emotional intelligence among respondents and reported that emotional intelligence is associated positively with respondents work effort.

Mayer et al. (2001) reported that respondents have different levels of emotions and that those with higher emotional levels have a good work relationship with co-workers than those with low emotional intelligence levels. In the empirical study of Befort and Hattrup (2003), they pointed out various emotional measures among the respondents and indicated that respondents with higher emotional intelligence can manage effectively their psychological state of mind and also are more productive at the job place than respondents lower on the emotional intelligence scale.

Day and Carroll (2004) investigated different constructs of emotional intelligence, and reported various dimensions of emotional intelligence among the respondents and concluded that they are associated with worker performance. They indicated that there is a need to improve the emotional performance of employees to enhance worker work effort. Offermann et al. (2004) studied the emotional profiles of respondents and reported that respondents exhibit various aspects of emotional intelligence and concluded that worker performance in teamwork is associated with emotional intelligence.

In the study by Kellett et al. (2006) on the role of emotional intelligence in leadership, they recognized various emotional intelligence measures and concluded that the identified emotional intelligence measures predict the surfacing of leaders in a group. Sy et al. (2006) in a study of leadership and emotional intelligence recognised different aspects of emotional intelligence among the respondents and stated that emotional intelligence is associated with the performance of leaders. Their findings are also in support of that of Bono et al. (2007) study on emotional intelligence and leadership. Bono et al. (2007) also concluded that leaders high in emotional intelligence are more stable in their temperament when dealing with co-workers. They also identified various aspect of emotional intelligence with various levels.

Dunaway (2013) explored the dimensions of emotional intelligence and reported various dimensions of emotional intelligence such as awareness of own emotions; management of own emotions; awareness of others' emotions; and management of others 'emotions. They concluded that awareness and management of one's own emotion significantly affect team effectiveness.

Ugoani, Amu, and Kalu (2015) investigated emotional intelligence and how it affects leadership. Their study findings indicated self-awareness, self-confidence, emotional management, empathy, and transparency are emotional intelligence domains among the respondents and they affect leadership performance.

Masa'deh (2016) in Jordan investigated the nature of emotional intelligence and the effect it has on organisational effectiveness. The study reported various dimensions of emotional intelligence such as management of other's emotion; awareness of other's emotions; management of one's own emotion; and awareness of one's own emotion.

In Pakistan, Asrar-ul-Haq et al. (2017) examined the effect of emotional intelligence on worker performance and identified various constructs of emotional intelligence such as conflict management, developing other colleagues, achievement, self-confidence, emotional self-awareness, and self-confidence.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design/Strategy/Type

The quantitative research design employed in the present research, to quantify the responses on the nature of emotional intelligence in the study area. The research is also a descriptive study in which the domains of emotional intelligence as exist in the study area are described. In addition, the study is not longitudinal but cross-sectional research and as such data is taken from the respondents once and analysed.

3.2. Research Population/Sample size/Sampling Method

The target population for the study is the staff of the public and private institutions in Sunyani municipality. A sample size of 140 respondents was used. Table 1 in section 4 shows the respondents biographical information. The sample size for the study was selected using the convenience sampling method. In this method of sample, a respondent is included for the reason that the respondent is easily accessible to the researchers.

3.3. Data collection Instruments

The research questionnaire in the format of the five-point (5-point) Likert scale (Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), and codes were designed by the researcher, using information from the prior research effort surveyed in section 2 of the current paper. The working hours of the respondents were used to administer the questionnaire. The items on the questionnaire were closed-ended. Hence, respondents only ticked the responses as applied to them.

3.4. Data Analysis and Presentation of Empirical Results

Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation of responses. The reliability test was also performed to assess the reliability of the responses provided by the respondents. The results are presented in Tables in section 4 of the paper.

3.5. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework for the current research. The model considers emotional intelligence as consisting of various domains which are indicated in figure 1. Various models in the literature are used to measure the domains of emotional intelligence (Ugoani et al., 2015). These models are found in the works of various authors (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 2001; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki, 2007). The models are Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso (2002) (MSCEIT); Interpersonal EQ, Adaptability EQ, Stress management EQ, Impulse Control EQ, and General mood EQ; Emotional Competency Inventory (ECI); The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue). The current model has based on the works of these authors (Goleman, 1995). Goleman (1995) identified five subdomains (Know your emotions; Manage your emotions; Motivate yourself; Recognise and understand other people’s emotions; manage relationships (other people’s emotions)) of emotional intelligence from the main four domains and stated that emotional intelligence consists of (1) Self-Awareness; (2) Self-Management; (3) Social Awareness; and (Relationship Management).

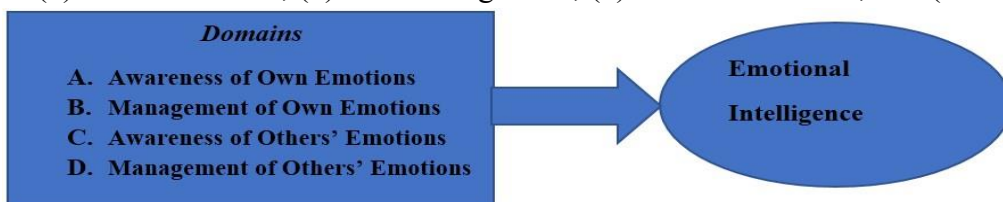


Figure-1. A conceptual framework for the explanation of emotional intelligence domain.

4. Empirical Results and Discussions

4.1. Background Information on Respondents

Table 1 indicates the demographic features of the respondents in the study. The results show that the majority (57.9%) of the respondents were males; a majority (39.3%) belong to the age group of 30-39 years; a majority (62.1%) hold undergraduate certificate; a majority (50.7%) are married; most (43.6%) are senior members; most (32.9%) have worked between 3-5years; a majority (69.3%) were Christians; and lastly, a majority (57.9%) of the respondents were from Brong Ahafo.

Table-1. Demographic profile of respondents.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	81	57.9
Female	59	42.1
Total	140	100.0
Age		
20-29	37	26.4
30-39	55	39.3
40-49	38	27.1
50-59	10	7.1
Total	140	100.0
Educational status		
First Degree/HND/Diploma	87	62.1
Masters	41	29.3
PhD	12	8.6
Total	140	100.0
Marital status		
Single	62	44.3
Married	71	50.7
Divorced	7	5.0
Total	140	100.0
Current work status		
Junior staff	48	34.3
Senior staff	61	43.6
Senior member	30	21.4
Missing response	1	0.7
Total	140	100.0
Length of service in the current position		
2years and less	40	28.6
3-5years	46	32.9
6-8years	26	18.6

9years and above	28	20.0
Total	140	100.0
Religion (Belief)		
Christian	97	69.3
Muslim	30	21.4
Traditional	6	4.3
Other religion	7	5.0
Total	140	100.0
Region (Culture)		
Upper West	12	8.6
Upper East	9	6.4
Northern	10	7.1
Brong Ahafo	81	57.9
Ashanti	6	4.3
Western	7	5.0
Eastern	4	2.9
Central	7	5.0
Greater	1	0.7
Volta	3	2.1
Total	140	100.0

4.2. Results of Reliability Test

The results of reliability test for the dimensions of emotional intelligence are shown in Table 2 (All the domains of emotional intelligence analysed together), and Table 3 (when the domains are separated into four) The results show high internal consistency since the value of the Cronbach alpha coefficients is all above 0.7. This means the questionnaire used to collect data is adequate and reliable as Cronbach (1951) explained.

Table-2. Results of Reliability analysis for Emotional Intelligence dimensions.

Categories of Statements	Cronbach's alpha	No. of Items	Conclusion
Emotional intelligence domains	0.860	15	High reliability

Table-3. Results of Reliability analysis for Emotional Intelligence dimensions.

Categories of Statements	Cronbach's alpha	No. of Items	Conclusion
Emotional Intelligence Domains			
Awareness of own emotions	0.901	4	Very high reliability
Management of own emotions	0.771	4	High reliability
Awareness of others' emotions	0.818	3	High reliability
Management of others 'emotions	0.854	4	High reliability

4.3. Test for Dimensionality of the Key Domains of Emotional Intelligence Used in the Study

After testing for the reliability of the set of items used, the set of items were statistically examined to determine if they measure just one common thing (Emotional Intelligence), using the dimensionality test. The results are shown in Table 4 to Table 7. The test results in all the Tables indicate uni-dimensionality of the scales, since in all

the test results as shown in the Tables, only the first component is larger and also explains the variance in the components using the initial Eigenvalues. In Table 4, the first component explains about 77%; in Table 5, about 60%; in Table 6, about 73%; in Table 7, about 70%, in the variance.

Table-4. Test results for dimensionality.

Initial Eigenvalues				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Components	Totals	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.096	77.402	77.402	3.096	77.402	77.402
2	0.496	12.399	89.800			
3	0.232	5.789	95.589			
4	0.176	4.411	100.000			

Table-5. Test results for dimensionality.

Initial Eigenvalues				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Components	Totals	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.403	60.070	60.070	2.403	60.070	60.070
2	0.736	18.408	78.477			
3	0.538	13.445	91.922			
4	0.323	8.078	100.000			

Table-6. Test results for dimensionality.

Initial Eigenvalues				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Components	Totals	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.201	73.365	73.365	2.201	73.365	73.365
2	0.510	17.011	90.376			
3	0.289	9.624	100.000			

Table-7. Test Results for dimensionality.

Initial Eigenvalues				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Components	Totals	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.793	69.816	69.816	2.793	69.816	69.816
2	0.576	14.391	84.207			
3	0.381	9.513	93.720			
4	0.251	6.280	100.000			

4.4. Normality Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnova and Shapiro-Wilk tests were performed to explore the nature of normality of the data set. Table 8 report the test results. The results in Table 8 indicate the data set are not normally distributed, since the P-values of the tests are less than 0.05. This indicates the data significantly deviate from a normal distribution.

4.5. Analysis of Emotional Intelligence Domains

Table 9 shows the values of the standard deviations and the score of means for each emotional intelligence key domains. In all, four (4) domains were identified in the research. They are awareness of own emotions; management of own emotions; awareness of others' emotions; and management of others' emotions. Each domain has subdimensions as a measure of the key domain.

Table-8. Normality Test Results.

Scales	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	P-Values	Statistic	df	P-Values
I can explain the emotions I feel to my colleagues.	0.290	140	0.000	0.799	140	0.000
I can discuss the emotions I feel with other colleagues.	0.292	140	0.000	0.834	140	0.000
If I feel down, I can tell my colleagues what will make me feel better.	0.251	140	0.000	0.846	140	0.000
I can talk to other colleagues about the emotions I experience	0.286	140	0.000	0.845	140	0.000
I respect the opinion of my colleagues, even if I think they are wrong.	0.267	140	0.000	0.859	140	0.000
When I am frustrated with my colleagues, I can overcome my frustration.	0.242	140	0.000	0.832	140	0.000
When deciding on a dispute, I try to see all sides of a disagreement before I conclude.	0.289	140	0.000	0.820	140	0.000
I give a fair hearing to my colleagues' ideas	0.289	140	0.000	0.825	140	0.000
I can read my colleagues "true" feelings, even if they try to hide them.	0.228	140	0.000	0.882	140	0.000
When I talk to my colleagues, I can gauge their true feelings from their body language.	0.245	140	0.000	0.867	140	0.000
I can tell when my colleagues don't mean what they say.	0.270	140	0.000	0.865	140	0.000
My enthusiasm can be contagious for my colleagues.	0.266	140	0.000	0.862	140	0.000
I am able to cheer my colleagues up when they are feeling down.	0.309	140	0.000	0.815	140	0.000
I can get my colleagues to share my keenness for a project.	0.307	140	0.000	0.828	140	0.000
I can provide the "spark" to get my colleagues enthusiastic.	0.257	140	0.000	0.850	140	0.000

The subdimensions have been ranked. The two most ranked dimensions of each key domain as indicated in Table 8 are as follows: For the awareness of own emotions domain, they are 'I can explain the emotions I feel to my

colleagues’, and ‘If I feel down, I can tell my colleagues what will make me feel better, respectively. In the case, of management of own emotions, they are ‘when I am frustrated with my colleagues, I can overcome my frustration’, and ‘when deciding on a dispute, I try to see all sides of a disagreement before I conclude’, respectively. The first two most ranked dimensions for awareness of others emotions are ‘when I talk to my colleagues, I can gauge their “true” feelings from their body language, and ‘I can read my colleagues “true” feelings, even if they try to hide them’, respectively. Lastly, for the management of others’ emotions, the first two most ranked dimensions are ‘I can provide the “spark” to get my colleagues enthusiastic’, and ‘I can cheer my colleagues up when they are feeling down, respectively.

Table-9. Results on the dimensions of emotional intelligence.

Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Ranks
Awareness of own emotions				
i. I can explain the emotions I feel to my colleagues.	140	3.9286	1.1165	1
ii. I can discuss the emotions I feel with other colleagues.	140	3.8357	1.0361	3
iii. If I feel down, I can tell my colleagues what will make me feel better.	140	3.8857	1.0394	2
iv. I can talk to other colleagues about the emotions I experience.	140	3.8286	0.9441	4
Management of own emotions				
i. I respect the opinion of my colleagues, even if I think they are wrong.	140	3.8571	0.9412	4
ii. When I am frustrated with my colleagues, I can overcome my frustration.	140	4.0500	0.8841	1
iii. When deciding on a dispute, I try to see all sides of a disagreement before I conclude.	140	4.0071	0.8439	2
iv. I give a fair hearing to my colleagues’ ideas.	140	3.9929	0.8936	3
Awareness of others’ emotions				
i. I can read my colleagues “true” feelings, even if they try to hide them.	140	3.7214	1.0254	2
ii. When I talk to my colleagues, I can gauge their true feelings from their body language.	140	3.7214	1.0733	1
iii. I can tell when my colleagues don’t mean what they say.	140	3.6714	1.0139	3
Management of others’ emotions				
i. My enthusiasm can be contagious for my colleagues.	140	3.7000	0.9574	4
ii. I am able to cheer my colleagues up when they are feeling down.	140	3.8786	0.9404	2
iii. I can get my colleagues to share my keenness/Zeal for a project.	140	3.7929	0.8855	3
iv. I can provide the “spark” to get my colleagues enthusiastic.	140	3.9000	0.9237	1

4.6. Discussions

The research used both public and private institutional-based cross-sectional research to investigate the nature of the key emotional intelligence domains in Sunyani Township. The research findings show four key emotional intelligence domains in the study. They are awareness of own emotions; management of own emotions; awareness of other’s emotions; and the management of other’s emotions.

The research findings are in line with that of prior research efforts that explored the nature of emotional intelligence such as Dunaway (2013) who explored the dimensions of emotional intelligence and reported various dimensions such as awareness of own emotions; management of own emotions; awareness of others' emotions; and management of others' emotions; Ugoani et al. (2015) who investigated the emotional intelligence dimensions and indicated self-awareness, self-confidence, emotional management, empathy, and transparency as the main domains among the respondents; Masa'deh (2016) who examined the nature of emotional intelligence and reported of various dimensions such as management of other's emotion; awareness of other's emotions; management of one's own emotion; and awareness of one's own emotion. In a similar study, Asrar-ul-Haq et al. (2017) identified conflict management, developing other colleagues, achievement, self-confidence, emotional self-awareness, and selfconfidence as the key dimensions of emotional intelligence. The findings imply that respondents in the study do not have a problem with the issues of emotional intelligence and as such other aspects of the organisations might not suffer negatively since they score higher on the scale used to measure the nature of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is and continues to be important in any organisation, and worker must be encouraged to learn skills that will aid them to improve on these emotional intelligence dimensions.

5. Conclusions

The purpose of the study has been achieved by examining the nature of emotional intelligence in a survey using respondents from both public and private institutions. The reliability of the scales and the dimensions of the scales (whether unidimensional and multidimensional) were investigated using reliability test (Cronbach Alpha), and factor analysis (Principal Component Analysis) respectively. The results show the responses were reliable and the scales were also unidimensional. Various dimensions of emotional intelligence and their subdimensions were identified as awareness of own emotions; management of emotions; awareness of others' emotions; and management of others' emotions. The various subdimensions of emotional intelligence are differently ranked among respondents.

Management of institutions should consider in their organisational strategies, the findings of the present research to ensure the efficient running of the institutions. Various policies should be put in place to help employees to learn to improve on their emotions and feelings so that the organisations will benefit from employees' high emotions and feelings. The findings support the theories on the dimensions of emotional intelligence among employees. The theories indicate workers possess various emotional intelligence at very levels of high and low, and that these levels can be enhanced through learning.

Further empirical studies, considering comparative analysis involving private and public universities are worth embarking on. The role of demographic features in emotional intelligence is also a good line of research in future studies. Studies on the effect of emotional intelligence on motivation, job satisfaction, and job performance are in addition worth doing in the current study area. Causal studies using the structural modelling method on the effect of emotional intelligence on motivation, job satisfaction, and job performance should be considered in subsequent studies.

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