



ROLE OF AGE GROUP OF WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN BPO INDUSTRY ON VARIOUS DIMENSIONS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a relatively new and growing area of behavioral investigation. The researchers strive to understand its influence on women Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) employees since it is difficult to maintain their Emotional Intelligence. A review of the literature highlights the need for examination of the relationship of emotional intelligence and performance, so that women employees can be assisted in their emotional intelligence competencies thus expanding their behavior and improving their ability to perform. This study attempts to explore the influence of age group of women employees in BPO industry on various dimensions of their Emotional Intelligence. 462 women employees working in BPO companies in Chennai were selected for the study. Structured questionnaire were used for the measurement of influence of respondent's age on various EI dimensions like Self Regard, Interpersonal Relations, Impulse control, Problem solving, Flexibility, Reality Testing, Emotional Self Awareness, Stress Tolerance, Assertiveness and Empathy. One way ANOVA is applied to identify the age group has any significant influence on various EI dimensions. Results indicate that there is a significant influence of age on all the dimensions of EI except Assertiveness and Empathy.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Business Process Outsourcing, Women employees, Dimensions of EI.

1.0 Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is the ability to acquire and apply knowledge from your emotions and the emotions of others. You can use the information about what you're feeling to help you make effective decisions about what to say or do. It has received a substantial amount of attention in the Organizational Behavior, Human Resources, and Management literatures in recent years from those who champion its use and others who are wary of its validity. Currently, there are three main models of EI namely ability model, mixed model (usually subsumed under trait EI) and trait model. Different models of EI have led to the development of various instruments for the assessment of the construct. While some of these measures may overlap, most researchers agree that they tap different constructs.

2.0 Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

The following are the important dimensions that determine the emotional intelligence of a person:

1. Self Regard
2. Interpersonal Relations
3. Impulse control
4. Problem solving
5. Flexibility
6. Reality Testing
7. Emotional Self Awareness
8. Stress Tolerance
9. Assertiveness and
10. Empathy

3.0 BPO Industries in India- An Overview

The term Business Process Outsourcing refers the contracting of a specific business task, such as payroll, to a third-party service provider. In India, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) is the fastest growing segment of the ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) industry. India is now the world's favored market for BPO companies, among other competitors, such as, Australia, China, Philippines and Ireland. As of 2012, around 2.8 million people work in outsourcing sector. Annual revenues are around \$11 billion, around 1% of GDP. Indian BPO Companies offer varied services, such as customer support, technical support, telemarketing, insurance processing, data processing, forms processing, bookkeeping and internet, online, web-search.

4.0 Review of Literature

Reuven Bar-On (2002) agrees on the qualities of emotional self awareness, self-actualization, interpersonal relationship, reality testing, stress tolerance, optimism, happiness, etc. as those that decide the emotional intelligence of a person. Bar-On's (2002) model of emotional intelligence relates to the potential for performance and success, rather than performance or success itself, and is considered process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented. It strives to identify in a person the latent



capability of being emotionally intelligent. His model outlines the following five components namely intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood components (Bar-On, 2002). They are similar to Mayer and Salovey's model on emotional self awareness, self control, self expression, and empathy, but along with these aspects, Bar-On includes reality testing, - the ability to assess the relation between the emotionally experienced and the actual nature of an object, stress tolerance, and the strength to stay happy and optimistic in the face of adversity. Goleman's model deviates slightly as he includes organizational awareness, leadership, teamwork and collaboration along with self awareness, self control and empathy, as his focus is on workplace success.

Locke (2005) He believes that these emotional competencies are not innate talents but those that can be learnt and developed. In turn, the potential to develop these emotional competencies depended on a person's emotional intelligence which he believes is a latent, inborn talent. Emotional intelligence and emotional competencies are like apples and apple sauces While EI is natural, emotional competencies are the offshoot of EI. His four branch model (2001) included: Self-Awareness: Emotional Self-awareness, Accurate Self-Assessment and Self-Confidence. b) Self-Management: Self-Control, Trustworthiness, Conscientiousness, Adaptability, Achievement Drive and Initiative. c) Social Awareness: Empathy, Social Orientation and Organizational Awareness. d) Relationship Management: Developing Others, Influence, Communication, Conflict Management, Leadership, Change Catalyst, Building Bonds, Teamwork and Collaboration.

Bar-On's (2006) model outlines five components which are further classified into fifteen subcomponents. Intrapersonal: Self Regard, Emotional Self-Awareness, Assertiveness, Independence, and Self-Actualization. Interpersonal: Empathy, Social Responsibility and Interpersonal Relationship Adaptability: Reality Testing, Flexibility and Problem Solving Stress Management: Stress Tolerance and Impulse Control General Mood Components: Optimism and Happiness.

5.0 Statement of the Problem

Emotional intelligence cannot be seen solely as the understanding of feelings, but must be examined from a functional perspective as in the exhibition of performance and behaviors. If there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and performance, Women employees can be assisted in their emotional intelligence competencies thus expanding their behavior and improving their ability to perform. While considering the assessment of Emotional Intelligence age has been the prominent demographic factor, therefore the study attempts to explore the influence of age on various dimensions of EI.

6.0 Research Methodology

The descriptive research design was used for this study. The objective of the study is to find out whether the age group of the women employees working in BPO industry in Chennai makes an impact on their emotional intelligence. Women employees who were employed in the BPO companies in Chennai City during the study period consist of six months starting from July, 2014 to December, 2014 were considered as the sample population of the study. The sample size for the survey is determined by applying the following formula:

$$\text{Sample size } n = (ZS/E)^2$$

Where

Z = 1.96 (Standardized value corresponding to 95% confidence interval)

S = Sample standard deviation from pilot study = 0.58

E = Acceptable error = 0.05 (5%)

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Sample size } (n) &= (ZS/E)^2 \\ &= (1.96 * 0.58 / 0.05)^2 \\ &= 516.9 \sim 517 \end{aligned}$$

The researcher made sincere efforts to collect data from 517 respondents using the well structured questionnaires. But, only 481 respondents have returned the duly filled questionnaires. However, 19 questionnaires were rejected due to inadequate data. Hence, the sample size chosen for the study was determined as Four hundred and Sixty Two (**462**) women employees working in BPO companies in Chennai city. The researcher used snowball sampling for the selection of samples. Snowball sampling is a method of sampling in which sample elements are selected as they are identified by successive respondents (samples). The researcher has used One-way ANOVA to achieve aforementioned research objective and for testing the null hypothesis (H_0).

6.1 Impact of Age Group of Women Employees in BPO Industry on various dimensions of Emotional Intelligence:

One way analysis of variance is used to test the following hypothesis:

H_0 : There is no significant influence of age group on Self Regard, Interpersonal Relations, Impulse control, Problem solving, Flexibility, Reality Testing, Emotional Self Awareness, Stress Tolerance, Assertiveness and Empathy of the women employees in BPO industry in Chennai city.

Table 1: One way analysis of variance among age group on of Women Employees in BPO Industry with regards to various dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

Variable	Dimensions	Category	N	Mean	S D	F values
Age	Self Regard	Below 25 years	252	34.17	5.000	F=7.217** (p<.001)
		26-30 years	78	31.84	6.484	
		31-35 years	72	31.41	4.889	
		Above 35 years	60	33.65	5.742	
	Interpersonal Relations	Below 25 years	252	34.17	5.000	F=39.308** (p<.001)
		26-30 years	78	31.84	6.484	
		31-35 years	72	31.41	4.889	
		Above 35 years	60	33.65	5.742	
	Impulse control	Below 25 years	252	15.34	3.420	F=7.040** (p<.001)
		26-30 years	78	13.65	4.158	
		31-35 years	72	15.16	2.690	
		Above 35 years	60	16.15	2.944	
	Problem solving	Below 25 years	252	22.53	2.967	F=16.606** (p<.001)
		26-30 years	78	22.92	3.157	
		31-35 years	72	20.00	2.432	
		Above 35 years	60	21.80	2.898	
Flexibility	Below 25 years	252	23.91	4.111	F=2.791* (p=.040)	
	26-30 years	78	23.11	3.567		
	31-35 years	72	22.58	3.376		
	Above 35 years	60	23.20	3.150		
Age	Reality Testing	Below 25 years	252	18.33	2.560	F=3.701* (p=.012)
		26-30 years	78	18.11	2.150	
		31-35 years	72	18.66	1.255	
		Above 35 years	60	17.45	1.370	
	Emotional Self Awareness	Below 25 years	252	17.77	2.758	F=6.961** (p<.001)
		26-30 years	78	18.80	2.847	
		31-35 years	72	16.83	1.784	
		Above 35 years	60	17.70	2.818	
	Stress Tolerance	Below 25 years	252	27.25	3.525	F=2.689* (p=.049)
		26-30 years	78	27.57	3.072	
		31-35 years	72	26.25	1.976	
		Above 35 years	60	27.40	2.750	
	Assertiveness	Below 25 years	252	20.26	2.700	F=0.917 (p=.432)
		26-30 years	78	20.30	2.788	
		31-35 years	72	20.00	1.592	
		Above 35 years	60	19.70	2.993	
Empathy	Below 25 years	252	17.71	3.527	F=0.877 (p=.453)	
	26-30 years	78	18.19	3.058		
	31-35 years	72	17.75	2.180		
	Above 35 years	60	17.35	1.839		

Source: Primary data ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

From the Table 1 it can be observed that 'F' value of Self regard, Interpersonal Relations, Impulse control, Problem solving, Emotional Self Awareness are **7.217, 39.308, 7.040, 16.606, 6.961** and they are significant at 1% level. It is also observed that 'F' value of Flexibility, Reality Testing, and Stress Tolerance are **2.791, 3.701, 2.689** and they are significant at 5%

level. Therefore, the formulated hypothesis H_0 is rejected. It indicates that there is significant influence of women employee's age on Self regard, Interpersonal Relations, Impulse control, Problem solving, Emotional Self Awareness.

Table 1 also indicates that the 'F' value of Assertiveness and Empathy are **0.917** and **0.877** and they are significant at 5% level. Therefore, the formulated hypothesis H_0 is accepted. And it indicates that there is no significant influence of women employee's age on Assertiveness and Empathy.

7.0 Findings of the Study

The following are the findings of the study:

1. Significant influence of women employee's age on Self regard is observed. Women employees with age below 25 years are better in Self regard and women employees with age between 31-35 years are lacking in Self regard in BPOs.
2. Significant influence of women employee's age on Interpersonal relation is observed. Women employees with age less than 25 years are better in Interpersonal relation and women employees with age between 31-35 years are lacking in Interpersonal relation in BPOs.
3. Significant influence of women employee's age on Impulse control is observed. Women employees with age more than 35 years are better in Impulse control and women employees with age between 26-30 years are lacking in Impulse control in BPOs.
4. Significant influence of women employee's age on Problem solving is observed. Women employees with age 26-30 years are better in Problem solving and women employees with age between 31-35 years are lacking in Problem solving in BPOs.
5. Significant influence of women employee's age on Flexibility is observed. Women employees with age less than 25 years are more flexible and the women employees with age between 31-35 years are lacking in Flexibility in BPOs.
6. Significant influence of women employee's age on Reality testing is observed. Women employees with age 21-35 years are better in Reality testing and the women employees with age more than 35 years are lacking in Reality testing in BPOs.
7. Significant influence of women employee's age on Emotional self awareness is observed. Women employees with age 26-30 years are better in Emotional self awareness and women employees with age between 31-35 years are lacking in Emotional self awareness in BPOs.
8. Significant influence of women employee's age on Stress tolerance is observed. Women employees with age 26-30 years are better in Stress tolerance and women employees with age between 31-35 years are lacking in Stress tolerance in BPOs.
9. Significant influence of women employee's age on Assertiveness is not observed.
10. Significant influence of women employee's age on Empathy is not observed.

8.0 Conclusion

This study has been conducted mainly for the purpose of identifying the role of age of women employees working in BPO Industry at Chennai City on their emotional intelligence. It is suggested that the companies could devise suitable interventional strategies to improve the respondents who lack emotional intelligence than the other age groups as found in the study so as to enable the companies maintain the overall acceptable emotional intelligence in order to be more competitive than the other companies.

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