TRAIT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF DEPRESSION IN MALE AND FEMALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: *The study aimed to examine the predictive association of emotional intelligence with depression in university students including male and female.*
Design of the study: *Correctional study.*
Place and duration of the study: *Universities of Karachi-Pakistan, 2014-2016*
Sample and Method: *The present study sample consisted of 313 students including 161 males and 152 females. The age range of sample is from 19 to 30 years. The sample was collected from different educational institutes including Universities in Karachi, Pakistan. For this purpose Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Form and Center for Epidemiological Studies Scale for Depression were administered on all participants' Demographic information also gathered by detailed interview and self-constructed personal data sheet.*
Results and Conclusion: *Linear Regression Analysis was done and it reflects that the emotional intelligence significantly predicts depression in university students.*

Keywords: Trait Emotional Intelligence; depression; University students

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence refer as tendency to monitor self and other individual's emotions, to differentiate between various emotions and appropriate labeling of emotions, and utilization of emotional information to direct thinking and behavior (Coleman & Andrew, 2008). Emotional intelligence comprises three models 1) *Ability model* given by Salovey et al. (2004) emphases on the person's ability to function information regarding emotions and usage of these information to direct the social environment 2) *Trait model* "involves behavioral dispositions and self-perception regarding their abilities and is collected through self-responded scales "(Petrides & Furnham, 2001). 3) *Mixed model* is the combination of both ability and trait. It explains as a collection of skills and characteristics that leads towards leadership performance (Goleman, 1998).

Trait emotional intelligence defines as individual differentiation in appraisal, expression, processing, assessment and usage of emotional stimulus. It is a collection of emotions with reference to their abilities according to their perception and dispositions placed least level at hierarchies of personality (Petrides & Furnharm, 2001). Emotionally intelligent peoples can properly evaluate and regulate their emotions in a particular manner that enhances their well-being (Bar-On, 2005). These people can experience increase levels of pleasure (Furnham & Petride, 2003).

Extremera, et al. (2006) claimed that emotional intelligence predict depression, researches shows that emotional intelligence is positively linked with life satisfaction and negatively linked with depressive indicators (Martinez-Pons,1997). Likewise, Sulaman, (2013) found emotional intelligence negatively correlated with depression and positively correlated with psychological adjustment. Further, several researches conducted on the relationship of emotional intelligence and depression, reflected that emotionally intelligent individuals have higher level of life satisfaction (Ciar-rochi et al., 2002; Martinez-pons, 2003), an elevated level of harmony (Martinez-pons, 2003), and lower level of depression (Saklofske, et al., 2003).

In addition, two fresh meta-analytic researches depicted that irrespective of sex high level of emotional intelligence related with psychological health (Martins et al., 2010; Schutte et al., 2007). Emotional intelligence diminishes negative mood (Mikolajczak et al., 2009) and it has negative relationship with perceived stress and depressiveness (Downey et al., 2010; Zavala & Lopez,

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2012). Saklofske et al. (2003) found negative relationship between vulnerability to depression and emotional intelligence. Researches indicated that better level of emotional regulation and clarity (important aspects of emotional intelligence) linked with elevated level of emotional adjustment (Berking et al., 2008) and these individuals are mentally healthy with lower level depression (Salovey et al., 2002). Schutte et al. (2001) reported that emotionally intelligent individuals have well reorganization of emotions and they prevent themselves and others from negative emotions and these individuals are optimistic when they experience depressiveness, due to improvement in themselves in term of emotionality. Lloyd et al. (2012) found that individuals who obtained higher score in emotional intelligence scale experience lower level of depression than the individuals who obtained lower score in emotional intelligence scale. Fernandez-Berrocal etal. (2006) found emotional intelligence negatively related with depression and anxiety in adolescences. Likewise, Siu (2009) found negatively emotional intelligence correlated with depression, aggression and behavior problems in Chinese adolescents.

According to Ghorbani, et al. (2002) emotional intelligence predict depression and anxiety with negative relationship excluding self-awareness scale and self-reliance Scales, and both Iranian and Americans university students have positive relationship with emotional intelligence. Ciarrochi, et al. (2002) examined the link between emotional intelligence management skill and depression, and depressive symptomatology also caused deficit in emotional recognition. Further, Bar-On, (1997) reported that lack of affective control and difficulties in regulation of emotions are main aspects that are closely related with depression. Tsaousis and Nikolaou (2005 found that emotional intelligence positively related with psychological health handling depression and anxiety but negative relationship between emotional intelligence smoking and alcohol.

Moreover, during the development of emotional intelligence, model Schutte et al. (1998) found that significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence, optimism and negative relationship between depressiveness and pessimism. Dawda and Hart (2000) reported that emotional intelligence predicts depression and negative relation with Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) more specifically interpersonal aspect of emotional intelligence during examining the validity (convergent) of the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i).

It is concluded that emotional intelligence can predict depression in university students. According to DSM-V (APA-2013) depression defines as condition in which person may experience variety of symptoms like feelings of sadness, lack of pleasure and interest in nearly all activities , low self- esteem, disturbed sleep and appetite, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness and may have suicidal ideation depending upon the degree of severity. Depression is the second most common disorder after anxiety. These individuals frequently seek psychological health services. The symptoms of depression can occur in all ages specifically in adolescence and more in female. The level of depression range from no and mild depression to severe depression (Dahadhah, 2008). Emotional intelligence has implication in maintaining health, social development and development of well-adjusted healthy personality of the person. Current research aimed to investigate the predictive association between emotional intelligence and depression in university students including male and females. It was hypothesized that Trait Emotional intelligence would have predictive association with depression in male and female university students.

METHOD

Sample

The sample consisted of 313 respondent including 161 males and 152 females. The sample was recruited from different educational institutes (Universities) located in Karachi. The age range of a sample is between 19 years to 30 years (mean age = 21.49 years). The participants of a sample were belong to middle (33.2%), upper middle (41.2%) and upper (25.6%) socioeconomic background

Measures

Demographic information form

Demographic information form consisted of personal information including age, gender, birth order, academic qualification, family structure system, address etc. Before proceeding with scale item the demographic information were collected from male and female university students with age limit 19-30.

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Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue-SF)

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Adolescents Short Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003) designed to assess individual overall trait emotional intelligence. The scales include 30 items that based on statements derived from the 15 subscales of the Adult Trait EI scale (each subscale has two items). The scale constructed on a seven point Likert Scale. Participants were requested to rate each statement. The Higher level of trait emotional intelligence is showed by high score on scale. The TEIQue-SF is a reliable and valid instrument with Internal consistency of .85 and test re-test reliability ranged from .50-.82 (Petrides & Furnham, 2006).

Centre of Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Rodloff, 1977)

The CES-D is used to measure depression. The scale comprises of 20 items with four main domains including negative emotions, positive emotions, physical complaints and interpersonal relationships. Participants were asked to rate on 0 to 3 response option i.e.; rarely = (0), some of the time = (1), occasionally = (2) and most of the time = (3). Total scores are 0-60. The respondent rate the symptom that they are experiences during last month .A higher score reflects higher level of depression and lower score reflects no depression. The CES-D scale also provides 16 or more cut off scores that shows if an individual score 16 or more score it shows a risk for clinical depression. The Centre of Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale has adequate validity and reliability, and internal consistency. The coefficient of Cronbach's alpha reliability is ranged from .84 to .85 and the reliability research on White society sample showed reliability coefficient .90.

Procedure

First of all written consent from Participants were taken then they were requested to fill the forms that were used in current research. They were assured about confidentiality and it was communicated to them that they are allowed and have right to withdraw from the study at any time during participation in research. Further, participants were informed about the research and its process. Afterward demographic form, Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Adolescents Short Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003) and Centre of Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Rodloff, 1977) were given to them and requested to fill them. Then only completely filled questionnaires were

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selected and scored through standardized method of the scales. After scoring ; Statistical analysis was done by using Simple Linear regression to explore the predictive association of emotional intelligence and depression in university students.

RESULTS

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of sample (N=313)

Variables	Category	F	%
Age	M(21.49); SD(2.30)		
Gender		161	51.4
	Male	152	48.6
	Female		
Family status	Joint	098	31.6
	Nuclear	215	68.7
Socioeconomic Status	Middle	104	33.2
	Upper Middle	129	41.2
	Upper	080	25.6

Table 2
Summary of Linear Regression Analysis with Emotional Intelligence as predictor of Depression in male university students

Predictor	R^2	B	F	df	Sig
	.182	-.427	35.473	1,159	.000***

P<.05

Table 2 showed that EI contributes 18% depression in male university students

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Table 3

*Summary of Linear Regression Analysis with Emotional Intelligence as predictor
of Depression in female university students*

Predictor	R^2	B	F	df	Sig
Emotional Intelligence	.218	-.467	41.877	1,150	.000***

P<.05

Table 3 showed that EI contributes 21% depression in female university students

DISCUSSION

Result is suggesting emotional intelligence significantly predicts depression in male and female university students. Various researchers further confirm the predictive relation between emotional intelligence and symptoms of depression (Monroe & Harkness, 2011; Fernandez-Berrocal et al., 2006; Patrick et al., 2003).

Emotional intelligence is associated with appropriate perception, utilization of emotions and their expression. Emotionally intelligent individuals are optimistic. They frequently experiences positive emotions and they have ability of utilization of emotions in problem solving. In contrast, depressive individuals have difficulty in appropriate perception, expression, regulation and evolution of their emotions and they are pessimistic. They mostly experience negative emotions and they have feeling of hopelessness and helplessness. Rude and McCarthy (2003) found that individuals with mild depression have low level of concentration to emotions and lower level of clarity of emotions than non-depressed.

Further, depressive students are socially inept, fewer friends, not connected with others, have difficulty in maintaining relationships with others. They have difficulty in labeling their feelings appropriately, showing irritability and aggression. In an academic setup they have poor academic performance because of poor concentration level, loss of interest in studies, incomplete academic tasks, fatigue and impairment in social functioning. Emotional intelligence can overcome the depressive symptomatology through appropriate affective processing, maintaining social relationships, they can face challenges

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related to academics (achieving good grades, peer pressure, competition, team work, timely completion of tasks etc).

Fernández-Berrocal et al. (2006) reported that adolescents with ability to differentiate among feeling and to regulate emotional states have lower level of anxiety and depression. Present research results also in line with the researches that linked with emotional intelligence and social support, which has an significant contribution in reducing depression (Kwako et al., 2011) perceived stress and negative and pessimistic thinking in individuals (Downey et al., 2010; Mikolajczak, et al., 2009) and enhancing social adaptation (Mavroveli et al., 2007).

It further supported that emotional intelligence is found to be significant predictor of depression in students including male and female . Because of the fact that trait emotional intelligence part of vast social, psychological and affective components, it definitely influence the mood of individuals and their feeling of calmness and happiness. Hence, trait emotional intelligence can help individuals in decreasing feeling of depressiveness and anxiousness and enhancement of psychological adjustment along with outstanding global quality of life. Trait emotional intelligence contains strategies that person use to deal with daily life stressors. Higher level of emotional intelligence linked with effective coping (Petrides et al., 2007) and lower level of depression.

Knowledge about emotional deficits linked with depressiveness can assist therapist, counseling psychologist, families and friends to understand, explain and cope with the depressive symptoms. Emotional expression, regulation and evaluation is the most important element in mental health and daily life functioning. Appropriate regulation of emotions is linked with lower level of stress and helps in maintaining better quality of life which has obvious implication in term of reducing depressiveness (Austin, et al., 2005). Therefore, it should be considered in therapy for enhancing emotional clarity.

Conclusion

In the nutshell it is concluded that emotional intelligence contribute to depression and have inversely correlated in both gender, however the it contribute more in female. Moreover, enhancement of emotional intelligence in academic setup can reduce the level of depressiveness in university students

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Limitations and Recommendations

The present study was conducted on a small sample and only one variable, further study should conducted with other variables as mentioned in literature review. Awareness about the depressive disorders is associated with various types of emotions and student emotionality in academic setup can help in predicting and explaining student's emotions and emotional disturbance in educational setup, hence it is strongly recommended that awareness sessions and life skill training sessions should be conducted at University level to better understand and management of the emotional life.

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