Impact of Gender, Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy on Sources and Intensity of Stress among Adults

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Abstract: *An attempt is made in the present investigation to study the impact of gender, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy on sources and intensity of stress. Gender, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy are the independent variables and sources and intensity of stress is the dependent variable. It was hypothesized that, gender, emotional intelligence, and self-efficacy would significantly influence the sources and intensity of stress.200 males and 200 females with high and low emotional intelligence and high and low self efficacy constituted the sample of the study. Since there are three independent variables and each is varied into two ways a 2 x 2 x 2 factorial design is employed. The obtained data from the 400 sample are subjected to analysis of variance to test the hypotheses. It is found that adults with low emotional intelligence and low self efficacy experience high intercity of stress, and social, family, psychological, financial, health and professional problems are the potential sources of stress for them, where as there is no significant difference between male and female adults in their sources and intensity of stress.*

Keywords: Gender, Emotional Intelligence, Self-Efficacy and Stress

1. Introduction

Stress is simply a reaction to a stimulus that disturbs our physical or mental equilibrium. In other words, it is omnipresent part of life. A stressful event can trigger the "fight-or-flight" response, causing hormones such as adrenalin and cartisol to surge through the body.

The American Psychological Association defines stress as "any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological and behavioral changes". While a part of everyday's life, the varying degrees of stress are what impact the body and mind.

A little stress can be productive when it comes to accomplishing tasks, such as meeting home, school or work deadlines. Extreme and consistently high levels of stress can negatively affect health.

Anxiety, high blood pressure and sleeplessness are few stress-related issues. Major health concerns that are linked to stress include depression, heart disease and substance abuse.

"Emotional intelligence" is the capability of individuals to recognize their own, and other people's emotions, to discriminate between difference feelings and label them appropriately, to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour, and to manage and adjust emotions to adapt environments and achieve one's goals.

Psychologist Albert Bandura (1998) has defined self-efficacy one's belief and one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task one's sense of self-efficacy can play a major role in how one approaches goals, tasks and challenges.

Adult hood is the longest period in the total life span of the individuals.

In the life span of the every individual adults hood is the longest period, stretching from 20 years to 40 years.

Individuals have to adjust to new patterns of life and new social expectations. they face many problems during this period. They have to adjust to marriage, parenthood and job. And in fact they can be fertile sources of stress and in order to function effectively they resort to various coping strategies, men and woman may not experience the same degree of stress and their sources and intensity of stress may also differ, similarly their emotional intelligence as well as belief in their abilities this self-efficacy may also play a very important role both in the intensity as well as sources of stress.

In the light of the above an attempt is made in a very small way to study whether gender, emotional intelligence and self efficacy have any significant impact on sources and intensity of stress among adults.

2. Objectives

1) To study whether gender has any significant impact on sources and intensity of stress among adults.
2) To study whether emotional intelligence has any significant impact on sources and intensity of stress among adults.
3) To study whether one's beliefs in their abilities that is self efficacy has any significant impact on sources and intensity of stress among adults.
4) To examine whether there is any significant interaction among gender, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy with regard to sources and intensity of stress among adults.

In order to realize the above objectives following hypotheses are formulated.

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3. Hypotheses

1) There would be significant difference between male and female adults in their sources and intensity of stress.
2) There would be significant difference between adults with low emotional intelligence and high emotional intelligence in their sources and intensity of stress.
3) There would be significant difference between adults with low self- efficacy and high self-efficacy in their sources and intensity of stress.
4) There would be significant interaction among gender, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy with regard to sources and intensity of stress among adults.

4. Tools

Sources and intensity of stress among adults was assessed by "sources and intensity of stress Questionnaire." developed by Samuel Peter G.I and Prof. V. Srikanth Reddy.(2008).

Emotional intelligence scale by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pathe and Upendhar Dhar (2007), was used to assess emotional intelligence of the sample.

Self-efficacy was assessed by using self-efficacy scale, developed by Ralf Schwarzer & Mathias Jerusalem,(1993).

5. Subjects of Study

The population of study was 1048, adults, whose age was between 20 and 40 years, among 1048 people, there were 524 male and 524female adults in coastal region. They were administered emotional intelligence scale, and self-efficacy scale in order to categorize them as high and low emotional intelligence and high and low self-efficacy adults. after administering and scoring the scales 400 male and female were taken as sample.

The sample distribution according to gender, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy has been presented in the table-1. Among the 400 adults sample there were 200 males and 200 females, among ,200 males there were 50 low emotional

intelligence ,and 50 high emotional intelligence ,50 low self-efficacy and 50 high self-efficacy adults, in the same way 200 female adults were also categorized,i.e,50 low emotional intelligence, 50 high emotional intelligence,50 low self-efficacy, and 50 high self-efficacy adults were taken in to the sample.

The research design was 2 x2 x 2 factorial design.

Table 1: Sample Distribution according to Gender, Emotional Intelligence and Self – Efficacy

	Male		Female		
	L.E.I	H.E.I	L.E.I	H.E.I	Total
L.S.E	50	50	50	50	200
H.S.E	50	50	50	50	200
Total	100	100	100	100	400

Method

The assessment of the subjects was done in three sessions, The first session was to develop rapport with subjects. They were informed about the purpose of the study and were requested to cooperate with the investigator.

In second session they were administered the Emotional Intelligence scale and Self- Efficacy scale. Then according to scoring they were categorized in to Low Emotional Intelligence, High Emotional Intelligence , Low Self-Efficacy, And High Self-Efficacy male and female adults.

In third session after recognizing the sample 400 adults were given Sources and Intensity of Stress Questionnaire. Their responses were scored accordingly and it constituted the data of the study.

Statistical Analysis
The obtained data are subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the obtained results are discussed.

6. Results and Discussion

Table-2 presents the Means and SD's of score's on Sources and Intensity of Stress.

Table 2

		GENDER		Emotional Intelligence		Self - Efficacy	
		Male	Female	Low E.1	High E.1	Low S.E	High S.E
Social Problems	M	10.17	10.18	10.98	9.38	10.79	9.57
	SD	5.60	5.14	5.55	5.46	5.62	5.11
Family Problems	M	9.47	9.95	10.52	8.90	10.41	9.01
	SD	5.91	5.43	6.33	5.99	6.15	6.22
Psychological Problems	M	9.94	9.87	11.03	8.78	10.53	9.28
	SD	5.74	5.22	5.46	5.49	6.57	5.15
Financial Problems	M	10.33	9.06	10.72	8.67	10.49	8.91
	SD	6.24	5.90	6.36	6.02	6.61	5.53
Health Problems	M	6.76	7.17	7.98	5.95	7.85	6.08
	SD	5.60	5.61	6.04	6.90	6.32	4.82
Professional Problems	M	7.40	6.80	8.35	5.85	8.12	6.08
	SD	6.11	6.04	6.11	5.64	6.73	5.39
Total	M	54.09	53.03	59.58	47.54	58.19	48.93
	SD	30.18	29.76	31.67	29.01	33.02	27.17

Males have obtained high Mean scores on psychological, financial, professional problems and total stress indicating

that these are the sources of stress for males, where as social family and health problems are the sources of stress for female subjects.

With regard to emotional intelligence adults with low emotional intelligence experience high intensity of stress due to social, family, psychological, financial, health and professional problems consistently compare to adults with high emotional intelligence.

As with regard to self- efficacy adults with low self-efficacy experience high intensity of stress due to social, family, psychological, financial, health, and professional problems, Compare to adults with high self-efficacy.

There are Mean differences among the eight groups of subjects in their sources and intensity of stress , however in order to test whether there are any significant differences the data are further subjected to analysis of variance and obtained results are presented in Table -3.

Table 3: Summery of Anova of Scores on Sources and Intensity of Stress

Sources	Social Problems	Family Problems	Psychological Problems	Financial Problems	Health Problems	Professional Problems	Total Stress
Gender	0.000@	0.595@	0.016@	4.317*	0.504@	0.944@	0.118@
E.I	8.598**	6.879**	16.245**	10.826**	12.354**	16.182**	15.063**
S.E	4.999*	5.206*	5.014*	6.403*	9.392**	10.784**	8.908**
Gender- E-I	0.178@	0.90.@	1.528@	4.183*	0.173@	0.488@	1.234@
Gender- S.E	0.411@	0.499@	0.170@	1.570@	1.824@	2.870@	1.367@
E.I-S.E	0.227@	1.311@	0.026@	2.335@	0.173@	0.853@	0.824@
Gender-E.I -S.E	4.917*	2.456@	1.528@	1.694@	4.536*	3.560@	3.838*

@ Indicates not Significant
*Indicates Significant at 0.05 level
**Indicates Significant at 0.01 level

The first hypotheses predicted significant difference between male and female adults in their sources and intensity of stress among adults. The six 'F' values are not significant except for the factor Financial resource ,indicating that males experience high intensity of stress due to financial problems when compare to females .Where as for both males and females the other sources of stress such as Social, Family, Psychological ,Health and Professional problems are alike. So there is no significant difference between male and female adults in their sources ind intensity of stress. This finding is supported by the earlier researchers such as Vidhu and Chauhan (1999), Subhalakshmi (2002), and Pisantti et al (2003) who also found that gender has no significant impact on intensity of stress, where as Pradhan and Misra (1995) found significant difference between males and female in their sources intensity of stress.

Second hypotheses predicted significant difference between adults with low emotional intelligence and high emotional intelligence in their sources and intensity of stress. Interestingly all the seven " F " values for the variable emotional intelligence are significant ,suggesting that adults with low emotional intelligence and high emotional intelligence differ significantly in their sources and intensity of stress .Adults with low emotional intelligence experience high intensity of stress compared to adults with high emotional intelligence, and consistently social, family, psychological ,financial , health and professional problems are the sources of stress for adults with low emotional intelligence.

It is because adults with low emotional intelligence cannot adjust with the situation, they have no control over their emotions, fail to understand their emotions of themselves as well as others. As a results of which they experience high intensity of stress and all the six areas of problems are a sources for the intensity of the stress.

This finding is in agreement with other researches Anil kumar (2009) , Slaski and Cart Wright (2002), Carol L Gohm, Graut C (2005), Mathew G et al(2006), and Pooja and Rastogi (2009) who also found that people with low emotional intelligence experience high intensity of stress compare to people with high emotional intelligence.

The third hypotheses states that adults with low self-efficacy and those with high self-efficacy differ significantly in their sources and intensity of stress. Here also all the seven " F " values for the variable self-efficacy are significant , suggesting that there is significant difference between adults with low self-efficacy and high self-efficacy in their sources and intensity of stress. Adults with low self-efficacy experience high intensity of stress compare to adults with the high self-efficacy. It is because adults who do not believe in their abilities naturally they perceive every problem as a source of stress. where as adults who believe in their abilities that is with high self- efficacy can deal effectively with any type of problem as a consequence they do not perceive problems of various types be it social ,family, psychological , financial , health or be it a professional problems, hence they experience low intensity of stress

This finding is in agreement with the earlier researchers, Nicholas Marlowe (1998) and Steven M. Jex et al (2001). Who also found that adult with high self efficacy experience low intensity of stress compare to adults with low self efficacy.

Fourth hypotheses predicted significant interaction among gender, emotional intelligence and self-efficacy with regard to sources and intensity of stress among adults. There is a significant interaction among gender emotional intelligence and self - efficacy with regard to Social and Health problems only as a sources and intensity of stress. Based on the results obtained the following conclusions are drawn.

7. Conclusions

1) Male and female adults do not differ significantly in their sources and intensity of stress.
2) Adults with low emotional intelligence experience high intensity of stress and they perceive all the six types of problems as sources of their stress.
3) Adults with low self-efficacy experience high intensity of stress and they perceive all the six types of problems as sources of their stress.
4) There is significant interaction among gender, emotional intelligence and self -efficacy with regard to social and health problems.

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