

# Assessing the Emotional Intelligence level and Analyzing its Impact on the Well-being of IT/ITES Professionals - with Special reference to South India

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The dissertation aims to assess the Emotional Intelligence levels of the IT/ITES employees of South India and bring out its impact on the well-being state of the employees. This will enable the creative use of the EI concept in the sector and thereby increase its contribution towards our nation's economy.

The Information Technology and Information Technology Enabled Services Industry (IT/ITES) plays a critical role in driving the growth and innovation of a country and helps nations to sustain their national competitiveness. In the last two decades, the Indian IT/ITES industry has contributed significantly to economic growth in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), foreign exchange earnings and employment generation. While the industry has significant headroom for growth it is battling with a few issues at present.

The work environment of an IT/ITES industry is characterized by long and odd working shifts, critical time deadlines, monotonous types of jobs and etc. The factors like stress, pressure to meet time deadlines, sitting on the computer for long hours, coupled with erratic sleep patterns and eating habits have an adverse effect on the health of IT and ITES employees. Hence it is evident that a sharp focus on the well-being of the IT/ITES employees is the need of the hour.

Many of the health issues faced by the IT/ITES sector like depression, stress, sleeping disorders,

restlessness, and etc have a significant relation with emotions and their management. Earlier emotions were considered as disorganized responses and were ignored by psychologists and behaviorists. In this millennium, psychologists argue that emotions of all sorts are potentially contributing to thoughts rather than disorganizing them. This change in perspective inspired the coining of the term Emotional Intelligence in 1990. Since then, this concept stormed the organizational context, leading to various empirical works, which have shown that EI can play a vital role in the personal and professional success of individuals. From the review of previous research it was evident that there is a dearth of EI research in India, specifically the IT/ITES sector was not focused upon. It was also found that previous research on EI focused more on the benefits to the organizations rather than benefits to the individuals. With this lacuna in mind, the present study focused on assessing the EI levels of the employees of the IT/ITES sector in India and bringing out the impact of EI on their well-being state.

There are various instruments to assess EI but they are influenced by culture and hence the study brought out the need of developing a genuine EI test to measure the EI levels of Individuals in the Indian context. With inferences from previous research on emotions, intelligence

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and emotional intelligence, the framework for EI in India was formulated, along with a new definition for the same. The instrument was developed in line with the framework. The contents of the questionnaire and the construct of EI were validated using expert opinion. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were established using necessary statistical tests. The resultant purified scale was further checked using Item Response Theory and was found to be fit. A reliable and valid EI test was finally developed and named as Deepa Krishnaveni Emotional Intelligence Test (DKEIT).

The sample for the study was collected from four types of IT/ITES locations in South India, as identified by a NASSCOM survey. The IT/ITES sector of South India was properly represented by a sample size of 466 individuals. Their emotional intelligence was assessed using DKEIT and their well-being was assessed by the General Well-Being scale. The results were consolidated to achieve the objectives of the study.

The study showed that the employees of the IT/ITES sector have a higher level of Emotional Intelligence. It also showed that EI has a significant impact on the well-being state of the

employees. This study used a few procedural and statistical remedies to counter the effect of common method variance, which is prevalent in social sciences research. The results of the study also showed that the well-being state of the employees was a matter of concern because only 25 per cent of them had positive well-being. The reasons for this were discussed in the study with important implications for the organizations in this sector, with respect to training and developing their human resources for competitive advantage.

This study has paved the foundation for the creative use of EI concept in the Indian organizational set up, by way of developing a tool to assess it. It has illustrated the development and validation of an instrument in social science research, which will serve as a blue print for future researchers. It also brought out the prevalence of common method variance in social sciences research and has demonstrated a few methods to counter the same. The instrument developed by this study can be used in the other sectors and professions also and hence has immense scope for further research. The limitations of the study were also discussed with a few guidelines for further research in this concept.