

Relationship among Emotional Intelligence, leadership effectiveness and life satisfaction in college students

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Abstract- The study aimed to examine the relationship among Emotional Intelligence (EI), leadership effectiveness and life satisfaction in college students. Emotional Intelligence was measured using the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). Leadership effectiveness was assessed as a dependent variable using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-6S), while life satisfaction was measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The sample comprised 300 male and female undergraduate and postgraduate students. A null hypothesis was proposed, stating no significant relationship between EI, leadership effectiveness, and life satisfaction. The study utilized a correlation design, and the results were analysed using SPSS. The analysis shows a weak link between emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership effectiveness. There is a very weak link between EI and life satisfaction.

Keywords - emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness, life satisfaction, self and others emotional appraisal, use of emotions, regulation of emotions.

LINTRODUCTION

Emotion is a fundamental aspect of life and personality, and emotional intelligence (EI) plays a crucial role in both personal and professional survival. Emotions are the most effective way to express one's inner feelings and significantly influence behaviour. They drive action and provide immediate solutions to problems. Since emotions shape behaviour, they are central to human nature and essential for interpersonal relationships and communication. It is increasingly believed that EI should be taught in higher education to help students make better decisions and reduce stress, ultimately benefiting their academic and post-academic lives (Ravi Kant, 2019).

There are three prominent models of EI: Salovey-Mayer, Goleman, and Bar-On (Spielberger, 2004). While they share similarities, each model focuses on different aspects. The Salovey-Mayer model emphasizes cognitive abilities, while the Goleman and Bar-On models focus on emotional and behavioural components. EI models can be divided into two categories: mental ability and mixed. The mental ability model emphasizes emotions and their connection to thought, while mixed models integrate mental abilities, motivation, self-awareness, and social interaction (Kubilay et al., 2011).

Salovey and Mayer, who coined the term EI in 1990, introduced a model that emphasizes the ability to monitor one's own emotions and those of others, using this information to guide thinking and behavior. Their research showed that individuals with high emotional clarity recover faster from distressing situations. According to Kubilay et al. (2011), people who effectively perceive, understand, and assess others' emotions are better equipped to adapt to social changes and form supportive networks.

Goleman (1995) popularized a mixed model of EI, which includes five components: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. He argued that EI contributes to success in various domains, such as school, work, and relationships. Goleman believed that EI reduces negative behaviors like aggression, fosters cooperation, and enhances decision-making in areas such as substance use. Emotional intelligence aids in effective teamwork and helps individuals navigate organizational dynamics (Kubilay et al., 2011).

The Bar-On (1997) and Goleman (1995) models categorize EI components across different levels. Bar-On's model distinguishes cognitive abilities, like problem-solving and flexibility, from interpersonal skills, such as empathy and social responsibility. The Salovey and Mayer model focuses on the interaction between emotion and cognition, suggesting that mental ability models emphasize emotion and thought, while mixed models encompass multiple components (Kubilay et al., 2011).

Leadership is deeply emotional, with a leader's ability to influence followers' emotions impacting performance. Leaders who recognize and regulate emotions foster group morale and cohesion, significantly influencing team performance (Robert Kerr et al., 2005). Leadership development is a key part of a student's education, empowering them to become agents of positive social change. Engaging in leadership roles positively impacts a student's well-being (Saunders et al., 2017).

Life satisfaction, often associated with happiness, is a critical component of well-being. It is defined as an individual's positive evaluation of their life, based on personal criteria (Diener et al., 1985). High EI contributes to greater life satisfaction, as emotionally intelligent individuals are better able to handle life's challenges and maintain positive experiences (Kubilay et al., 2011).

This study emphasizes the practical significance of EI for both personal and professional fulfillment. It advocates for incorporating EI training into education to prepare students for leadership roles, improve stress management, and contribute to overall well-being. By promoting EI development, colleges can better equip students for success in their careers and personal lives.

II.OBJECTIVES

To study the relationship among Emotional Intelligence, leadership effectiveness and life satisfaction in college students.

1. To examine the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and leadership effectiveness in college students.
2. To assess the relationship between Emotional Intelligence on life satisfaction in college students.
3. To explore the relationship among Emotional Intelligence on leadership effectiveness and life satisfaction in college students.

III.METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study examines the relationships between emotional intelligence (EI), leadership effectiveness, and life satisfaction among 300 undergraduate and postgraduate students aged 18 to 24 from various colleges, selected through convenient sampling. The study utilized the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) to assess emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness is assessed by Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire form-6s, and the life satisfaction is evaluated using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Data analysis employed Pearson's correlation coefficient via SPSS software. The null hypothesis posited no significant relationships among the variables. Inclusion criteria encompassed teachers with five or fewer years of experience, while exclusion criteria ruled out those with more than five years of experience, non-English speakers, and non-teaching professionals. Data were collected offline from various schools and colleges to assess these relationships.

IV.RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic details

Demographic details	Groups	Sample size	Percentage
Age	18-20 years	191	63.67%
	21-24 years	109	36.33%
Gender	Male	97	32.12%
	Female	205	67.88%
Education	Undergraduate	193	64.32%
	Postgraduate	107	35.68%

The table 1 shows sample comprises participants aged 18 to 24 years. There are 191 participants (63.67%) in the 18-20 age group, while 109 participants (36.33%) belong to the 21-24 age group. The sample consists of 205 female participants (67.88%) and 97 male participants (32.12%). Among the participants, 193 (64.32%) are pursuing undergraduate education, and 107 (35.68%) are at the postgraduate level.

Table 2: Mean and Standard deviation along with variables and total population

Variables	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Emotional intelligence	300	58.45	9.002
Leadership effectiveness	300	45.55	9.573
Life satisfaction	300	23.55	5.208

The table 2 shows descriptive statistics for a sample of 300 participants indicate that Emotional Intelligence (EI) has an average of 58.45 and a standard deviation of 9.002, suggesting moderately high levels of EI with minimal variability. Leadership Effectiveness has an average of 45.55 and a standard deviation of 9.573, indicating slightly lower scores with moderate variability among participants. Life Satisfaction has an average of 23.55 and a standard deviation of 5.208, demonstrating consistent, moderate levels of satisfaction among participants. These findings imply a possible connection between EI, leadership effectiveness, and life satisfaction.

Table 3: Pearson correlation analysis between the emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness

		Emotional intelligence	Leadership effectiveness
Emotional intelligence	Pearson correlation	1	.236
	Sig (2- tailed)		.000
	N	300	300
Leadership effectiveness	Pearson correlation	.236	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	300	300

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 3 indicates a positive but weak correlation ($r = 0.236$) between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness, as shown by the Pearson correlation coefficient. The relationship is statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the threshold of 0.05. This suggests that individuals with higher emotional intelligence are more likely to exhibit better leadership effectiveness. The sample size of 300 respondents strengthens the reliability of these findings. However, the weak correlation implies that while emotional intelligence contributes to leadership effectiveness, other factors may also play a significant role. Further research could explore these factors and examine the potential causal relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership performance. (H0: there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness at the 0.01 level). Based on these results, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4: Pearson correlation analysis between the emotional intelligence and life satisfaction

		Emotional intelligence	Life satisfaction
Emotional intelligence	Pearson correlation	1	.074
	Sig (2- tailed)		.201
	N	300	300
Life satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.074	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.201	
	N	300	300

The table 4 shows a very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.074$) between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction. This indicates that higher emotional intelligence is only slightly associated with greater life satisfaction. However, the relationship is not statistically significant, as the p- value (0.201) exceeds the standard threshold of 0.05. This suggests that the observed association might be due to random chance. The analysis is based on a sample size of 300 respondents, ensuring reliable data, but the findings imply that emotional intelligence has minimal influence on life satisfaction in this context. Further research could explore other factors that may play a more significant role in determining life satisfaction. (H1: There is a no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction). Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction, is accepted, while the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5: Pearson correlation analysis between the self-emotional appraisal and leadership effectiveness

		Self-emotional appraisal	Leadership effectiveness
Self-emotional appraisal	Pearson correlation	1	.229
	Sig (2- tailed)		.000
	N	300	300
Leadership effectiveness	Pearson correlation	.229	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	300	300

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 5 indicates the correlation analysis conducted on 300 participants shows a weak yet significant positive relationship between Self-Emotional Appraisal and Leadership effectiveness ($r = 0.229$, $p = .000$). This implies that individuals who are adept at recognizing and understanding their own emotions tend to demonstrate slightly improved leadership skills. The significance level ($p < 0.01$) indicates that this relationship is statistically significant and unlikely to be due to random chance. Nevertheless, the weak correlation suggests that while self-emotional appraisal is a contributing factor to leadership, it is not the only one; other qualities such as decision-making abilities, communication skills, and social intelligence also play important roles.

Table 6: Pearson correlation analysis between the others emotional appraisal and leadership effectiveness

		Others emotional appraisal	Leadership effectiveness
Others Emotional appraisal	Pearson correlation	1	.171
	Sig (2- tailed)		.003
	N	300	300
Leadership effectiveness	Pearson correlation	.171	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	300	300

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 6 indicates Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Others' Emotional Appraisal (OEA) and Leadership effectiveness. The results indicate a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.171. This suggests that as individuals become better at understanding and assessing others' emotions, their leadership effectiveness tends to improve slightly. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), with a p-value of 0.003, indicating that the relationship is unlikely to be due to chance.

Table 7: Pearson correlation analysis between the use of emotion and leadership effectiveness

		Use of emotion	Leadership effectiveness
Use of emotion	Pearson correlation	1	.209
	Sig (2- tailed)		.000
	N	300	300
Leadership effectiveness	Pearson correlation	.209	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	300	300

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 7 shows the Pearson correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between Use of Emotions (UOE) and Leadership. The results show a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.209. This indicates that individuals who effectively use their emotions may demonstrate slightly better leadership abilities. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), with a p-value of 0.000.

Table 8: Pearson correlation analysis between the regulation of emotion and leadership effectiveness

		Regulation of emotion	Leadership effectiveness
Regulation of emotion	Pearson correlation	1	.139
	Sig (2- tailed)		.016
	N	300	300
Leadership effectiveness	Pearson correlation	.139	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.016	
	N	300	300

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table 8 shows Pearson correlation analysis conducted to explore the relationship between Regulation of Emotions (ROE) and Leadership effectiveness. The results indicate a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.137. This suggests that individuals who can regulate their emotions tend to exhibit slightly stronger leadership qualities. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), with a p-value of 0.016.

Table 9: Pearson correlation analysis between the self-emotional appraisal and life satisfaction

		Self-emotional appraisal	Life satisfaction
Self-emotional appraisal	Pearson correlation	1	.149
	Sig (2- tailed)		.010
	N	300	300
Life satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.149	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	300	300

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table 9 shows Pearson correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between Self- Emotional Appraisal (SEA) and Life Satisfaction. The results show a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.149. This indicates that individuals who are better at recognizing and understanding their own emotions tend to report slightly higher life satisfaction. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), with a p-value of 0.010.

Table 10: Pearson correlation analysis between the others emotional appraisal and life satisfaction

		Others emotional appraisal	Life satisfaction
Others emotional appraisal	Pearson correlation	1	-.040
	Sig (2- tailed)		.494
	N	300	300
Life satisfaction	Pearson correlation	-.040	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.494	
	N	300	300

The table 10 shows Pearson correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between Others' Emotional Appraisal (OEA) and Life Satisfaction. The results show a very weak negative correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.040. This suggests that the ability to understand and assess others' emotions has little to no meaningful impact on life satisfaction. The correlation is not statistically significant, as indicated by the p-value of 0.494 (greater than 0.05). This means that the observed relationship is likely due to chance and does not provide strong evidence of a real association between these variables.

Table 11: Pearson correlation analysis between the use of emotion and life satisfaction

		Use of emotion	Life satisfaction
Use of emotion	Pearson correlation	1	.117
	Sig (2- tailed)		.043
	N	300	300
Life satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.117	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.043	
	N	300	300

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table 11 shows Pearson correlation analysis conducted to examine the relationship between Use of Emotions (UOE) and Life Satisfaction. The results indicate a weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.117. This suggests that individuals who effectively utilize their emotions may experience slightly higher life satisfaction. The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, as indicated by the p-value of 0.043 (less than 0.05). This means there is a small but meaningful association between using emotions effectively and life satisfaction.

Table 12: Pearson correlation analysis between the regulation of emotion and life satisfaction

		Regulation of emotion	Life satisfaction
Regulation of emotion	Pearson correlation	1	.035
	Sig (2- tailed)		.542
	N	300	300
Life satisfaction	Pearson correlation	.035	1
	Sig (2-tailed)	.542	
	N	300	300

The table 12 indicates Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Regulation of Emotions (ROE) and Life Satisfaction. The results show a very weak positive correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.035. This suggests that the ability to regulate emotions has little to no association with life satisfaction in this sample. The correlation is not statistically significant, as indicated by the p-value of 0.542 (greater than 0.05). This means that any observed relationship is likely due to chance, and there is no strong evidence to suggest that regulating emotions directly influences life satisfaction.

V.DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to assess the relationship among emotional intelligence, leadership effectiveness and life satisfaction. The study sample as 300 students in which 193 are undergraduates and 107 are postgraduates. Most samples belong to the age group 18 to 20 years. Both male and female participants have taken this study with high proportion of female participants. Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a crucial role in leadership effectiveness, as students with higher EI tend to demonstrate better self-awareness, empathy, and decision- making skills, making them more effective leaders in academic and social settings. Younger students (18-20 years) may still be developing these skills, whereas older students (21-24 years) might have had more experiences that enhance their leadership abilities. Additionally, EI significantly impacts life satisfaction, as students who can regulate their emotions and build strong relationships tend to experience lower stress and higher overall well-being. Gender differences may influence this relationship, as females are often more empathetic and emotionally aware, leading to a people-oriented leadership style, while males may adopt a more task-focused, problem-solving approach. The difference in experience between undergraduate and postgraduate students may influence their leadership effectiveness, as postgraduates may have had more opportunities to develop leadership skills. Additionally, EI contributes to life satisfaction by improving emotional regulation, reducing stress, and enhancing social well- being. Students with high EI tend to be more confident, resilient, and satisfied with their academic and personal lives.

The positive correlation between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness suggests that individuals who possess higher emotional intelligence are more likely to be effective leaders. This effect occurs because emotional intelligence enables better communication, conflict resolution, adaptability, and motivation, which are essential leadership qualities.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction, though weaker, still suggests that individuals with higher emotional intelligence experience better emotional regulation and stress management, contributing to personal well-being. However, since the correlation is not strong, it indicates that life satisfaction is influenced by multiple factors beyond emotional intelligence, such as external circumstances, personal values, and social support. Individuals who develop emotional intelligence

through life experiences, education, and social interactions are more likely to excel in leadership and experience greater overall well-being. Factors such as upbringing, emotional regulation training, contribute to developing emotional intelligence over time. The moderate correlation between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness indicates that while emotional intelligence is essential, leadership skills can also be cultivated through learning and practice. Similarly, the weaker correlation with life satisfaction suggests that emotional intelligence alone does not guarantee happiness, but it can help individuals navigate challenges and maintain emotional balance.

The results indicate that self-emotional appraisal and the use of emotions have the strongest positive correlations with leadership effectiveness. This suggests that leaders who can accurately assess their own emotions and use them effectively tend to exhibit stronger leadership qualities. Self-emotional appraisal enables leaders to recognize their emotional states, which helps them stay composed, make rational decisions, and adapt to challenging situations. Leaders who understand their emotions can regulate their responses, preventing impulsive reactions and ensuring they communicate effectively with their team. The ability to use emotions positively further enhances leadership effectiveness by promoting motivation, resilience, and decision-making. Leaders who channel their emotions constructively can inspire and engage their teams, creating a supportive and productive work environment.

While others' emotional appraisal and regulation of emotions also contribute to leadership, their impact appears to be slightly weaker. Understanding others' emotions helps leaders build strong interpersonal relationships, but leadership effectiveness is more dependent on how well an individual manages and applies their own emotions. Similarly, while emotional regulation is important for maintaining control in stressful situations, it may not be as directly linked to leadership success as the ability to harness emotions for motivation and strategic thinking.

When it comes to life satisfaction, self-emotional appraisal and the use of emotions also show significant positive correlations. This indicates that individuals who are better at recognizing and utilizing their emotions experience greater personal fulfilment and well-being. Emotional self-awareness allows individuals to understand their feelings, cope with stress, and navigate challenges more effectively. By recognizing their emotions, individuals can make choices that align with their values and emotional needs, contributing to overall happiness. Similarly, the ability to use emotions constructively helps individuals maintain a positive outlook, set meaningful goals, and engage in activities that bring them satisfaction.

On the other hand, others' emotional appraisal and regulation of emotions do not exhibit significant correlations with life satisfaction. This suggests that while understanding and regulating emotions are important social skills, they may not directly impact personal happiness. Life satisfaction is influenced by multiple factors, including personal achievements, relationships, and external circumstances. The ability to assess others' emotions may improve social interactions, but it does not necessarily lead to greater life satisfaction. Likewise, while emotional regulation helps in managing stress and emotional outbursts, it does not guarantee long-term fulfilment. This indicates that while emotional intelligence contributes to well-being, it is not the sole factor determining life satisfaction. Other aspects, such as personal growth, social support, and life circumstances, also play a crucial role in shaping an individual's happiness and overall quality of life.

VI.CONCLUSION

1. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.
2. The result shows that there is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction.
3. It also shows that there is significant relationship between domains of emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness.
4. The result also shows that there is a significant relationship between self -emotional appraisal and life satisfaction and use of emotion and life satisfaction.
5. It also shows that there is no significant relationship between others emotional appraisal and life satisfaction and regulation of emotion.

VII.LIMITATION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- The findings may not apply to older people or working professionals, because of the age group restriction (18-24) reducing external validity.
- As college students grow older, their emotional intelligence (EI) and leadership skills develop through life and work experiences, which may strengthen the relationship between EI, leadership effectiveness, and life satisfaction over time.
- The relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI), leadership effectiveness, and life satisfaction may vary in different regions, as the study focus on Vellore and Chennai limits its applicability to areas with different educational, cultural, and economic environments.

Future research should explore how EI evolves over time and its long-term impact on leadership and well-being through longitudinal studies. Examining cultural influences can reveal how different norms shape the relationship between EI, leadership, and life satisfaction. Comparing Western and Eastern education systems may highlight how learning environments impact EI development and leadership styles. Additionally, studying socioeconomic differences can show how access to resources affects EI growth and

leadership opportunities. These insights can help design inclusive training programs and policies to enhance leadership effectiveness and emotional well-being across diverse populations.

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