

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE - WHAT IS IT AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

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Abstract

The majority of authors who aim to advise readers on how to develop their hidden valences start by asking them to get in contact with their own emotions. Why is this so important? Our emotions represent the factors that significantly influence the way in which we react, make decisions, relate to our own system of values and, last but not least, communicate with others. Therefore, if we manage to control our emotions, we can keep things under control regardless of the context. Until recently emotions were considered something which you had to get rid of if you wanted to avoid any inconvenience. Today it is known that emotions can be educated and the advantages gained following this process are enormous. Emotional intelligence redefines the image of the human and of the world. Today we know that emotions are the most important human resources and that the way in which the human brain is built allows the individual to love first.

Keywords: *emotion, emotional intelligence, emotional maturity.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In Ancient Greece it was thought that logic was superior to feelings because people could agree to rational arguments but they usually did not agree with feelings. Although philosophy was inflationist, the idea that rationality was superior to emotion was not accepted by everybody. For example, the 18th century European sentimentalists believed in a credo “follow your hear,” stating that the truth could represent a property of somebody’s feelings and intuition and that feelings were more true than reason (REDDY, 2001). The recently introduced concept of emotional intelligence (EI) offers a new way of looking at the debate – that people can reason on the emotions and that they can use emotions to help reasoning.

The scientific references about emotional intelligence date back to the 1960s. The interest

for the study of emotional intelligence rose dramatically at the end of the 1990s, triggered by a popularization of the subject (GOLEMAN, 1995).

Up to 2007, the large diversity of those interested in emotional intelligence was correlated to the large diversity of the concepts about emotional intelligence that they employed. Some researchers defined EI as an ability to rationalise regarding the emotion; others compared the concept with a list of traits, such as the motivation of achievement, flexibility, happiness and self-respect.

IQ intelligence is a type of mental capacity which refers to manipulation and reasoning regarding different types of information (CARROLL, 1993). We look at intelligence as a general term regarding a hierarchy of mental abilities. IQ is not in itself a very good predictor of the performance at the workplace. Hunter and Hunter (1984) estimated that, in the best case scenario, IQ represents approximately 25% of the variance. Sternberg (1996) emphasized the fact that study varies and that 10% could represent a more realistic estimation.

Research has shown that our success at the workplace or in our life depends 80% on emotional intelligence and only 20% on intellect (MAYER et al., 2000). While the intellect helps us solve problems, make calculations or processing information, emotional intelligence (EQ) allows us to be more creative and to use emotions in order to solve problems.

Cognitive capacity seems to play a limited role in accounting the reason for which some people have more success than others, therefore showing that the emotional and social factors are also important. In conducting the research for his

first book, Goleman familiarized himself with some research which indicates the importance of social and emotional abilities for personal success. Some of them stem from personality and social psychology, while others stem from the field of neuropsychology (GOLEMAN, 1995).

Nowadays, there is a large number of research that suggest that a person's ability to perceive, identify and manage emotions represents the basis for the quality of social relations and emotional competencies, which are important elements for the success in almost every workplace. Moreover, as the rhythm of change increases and the labour market becomes more and more demanding in relationship to a person's cognitive, emotional and physical resources, this special set of skill becomes more and more important. (CHERNISS, 2001).

Emotional intelligence refers both to the ability to achieve correct reasoning about emotions and to the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge in order to improve thinking.

Emotional intelligence refers to the skills that alongside intelligence and emotion increase thinking. O more complete understanding of emotional intelligence requires an appreciation of the way in which its measures refer to the outcomes of life.

In a meta-analysis, Elfenbein et. al (2007) noticed that the accuracy of emotional recognition led to a moderate, but significant increase in workplace efficiency for different specialists, such as doctors, workers in the field of human service, teachers, school principals and business managers.

Emotional intelligence represents a predictor of significant results for different samples from a series of field taken from the real world. It predicts social relationships, workplace performance as well as mental and physical well-being. EI often presents the progressive validity in predicting social results in comparison to other measures of intelligences and socio-emotional traits.

The relationship between EI and life results suggest that EI can inform in a valuable way the understandings and interventions of the human behaviour practitioners.

In the last 18 years, research has been conducted regarding EI, which led to remarkable

results. At the same time, EI is still a new field of research and there are many other things that need to be done.

Our analysis represents an attempt to establish the level of emotional intelligence of the students from the Faculty of Communication Sciences within the Apollonia University of Iasi. The studied sample was comprised of 21 subjects. We applied the Friedmann scale, an emotional intelligence test, with the purpose of measuring the students' emotional maturity.

There are 25 Yes or No questions and each answer has an associated number of points.

The assessment of the score:

Over 25 - Perfectly emotional grown up

23-24 - Good maturity

21-22 - A corresponding level of maturity

19-20 - A medium level of maturity

17-18 - Borderline, tendency towards imbalance

15-16 - Easy emotional immaturity

13-14 - Immature and teenage reactions

11-12 - Infantile and childish reactions

0-10 - Infantilism

The assessment of the score:

Superior level - high emotional intelligence

- Over 25 - Perfectly emotional grown up
- 23-24 - Good maturity
- Identification and awareness of your own emotions and of those around you;
- Objective emotional self-assessment;
- the practical mastery of various emotional activities;
- manifesting flexibility and good self-trust;
- the continuous amplification of a state of well-being through emotional self-motivation, using emotions with the purpose of emotional performance;
- having the proper means to solve various emotional problems
- assuming responsibility for your own emotional experiences, knowing the causes;
- a higher degree of mobilising emotional intelligence, will and emotional mood
- an efficient affective communication, good interpersonal relationship

The assessment of the score:

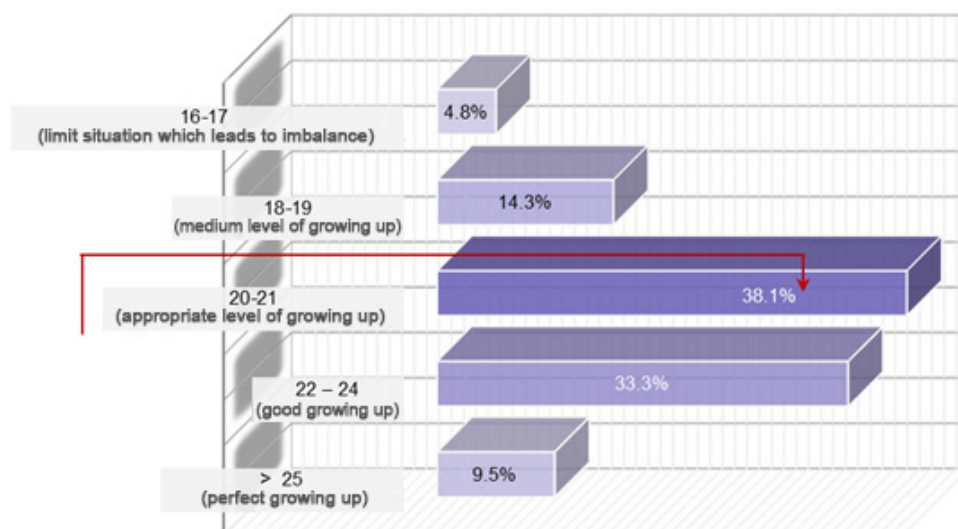
Medium level - medium emotional intelligence

- 21-22 - A corresponding level of maturity
- 19-20 - A medium level of maturity

- satisfactory knowledge of the concepts of emotional intelligence;
 - affective knowledge at a reproductive level, sometimes unconscious;
 - a partial identification of other peoples' emotions and moderate sensibility;
 - reduced capacities for solving non-standard problematic situations;
 - a realist emotional self-assessment in personalized situations;
 - the insufficient manifestation of self-confidence, not-taking risks;
 - a stable motivation in solving emotional problems;
 - the use of affective communication in particular situations, a positive collaboration, relationship especially in your own interest.
- The assessment of the score:
- Medium level – medium emotional intelligence
- 17-18 – Borderline, tendency towards imbalance
 - 15-16 – Easy emotional immaturity
 - 13-14 – Immature and teenage reactions
- 11-12 – Infantile and childish reactions
 - 0-10 – Infantilism
 - the presence of some consciences that relate to the concept of fragmentary, superficial and emotional intelligence, acquired at a reproductive level;
 - an unclear definition of the structural components of emotional intelligence, not being aware of their value for the personal and professional development;
 - the lack of emotional experience in practical activities;
 - the inability to clearly express peoples' own emotional states – an emotional behaviour triggered from the inside;
 - manifestation of emotional inflexibility, failure to efficiently use the peoples' own emotions;
 - maladjustment and faulty social communication, hesitation in making decision;
 - inexpressive and confuse emotional manifestation;
 - the difficult establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

2. RESULTS

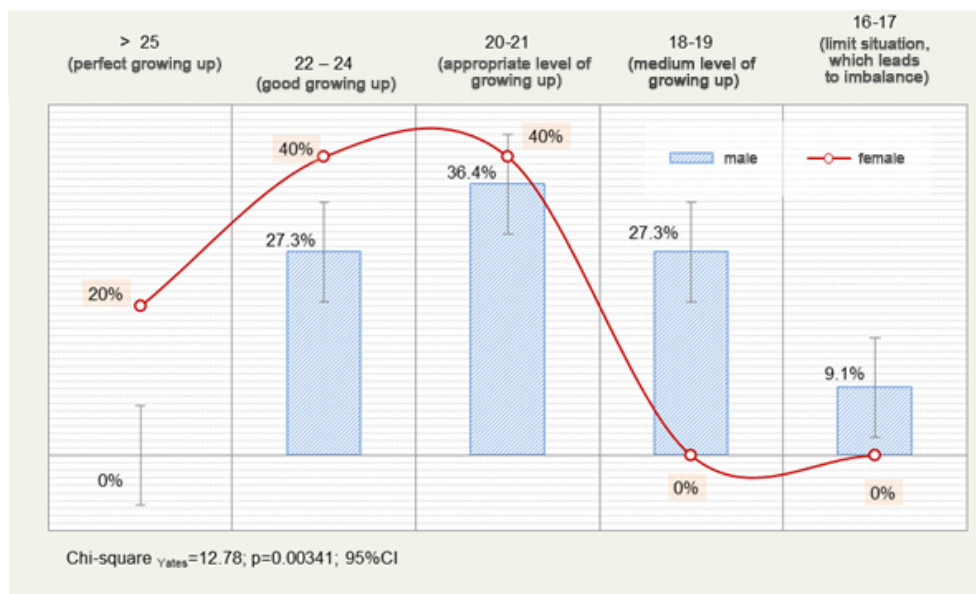
2.1. THE SAMPLE ANALYSIS



The results of the studied sample highlights a significant percentage (38.1%) which represents an appropriate level of maturity (Score: 20-21) or a good growing up (33.3%).

A lower percentage can be found at the subjects that present a medium level of growing up (14.3%), perfect growing up (9.5%) or a limit situation which leads to imbalance (4.8%).

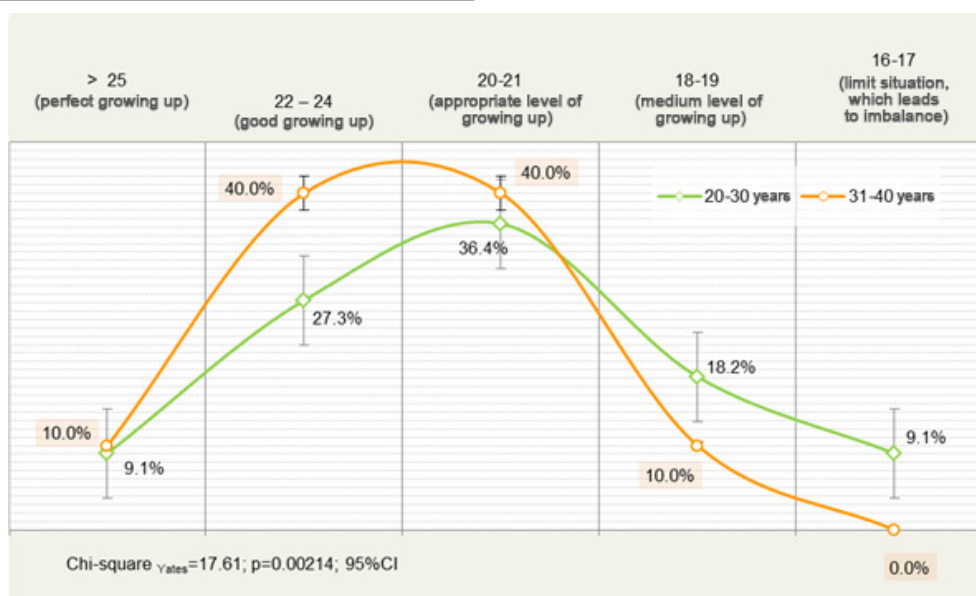
2.2. ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO THE SEX OF THE RESPONDENTS



There are significant differences ($\chi^2=12.78$, $p=0.00341$, 95%CI) between the results of the assessment of emotional growing up (emotional intelligence) (Friedmann scale) highlighted using a more significant frequency of female respondents which leads to perfect emotional growing up (20% vs. 0%) or good growing up (40% vs. 27.3%).

In the case of male respondents we notice a significantly higher frequency in the case of a medium level of growing up (27.3% vs. 0%), respectively a borderline situation, a tendency towards imbalance (9.1% vs. 0%).

2.3. ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS



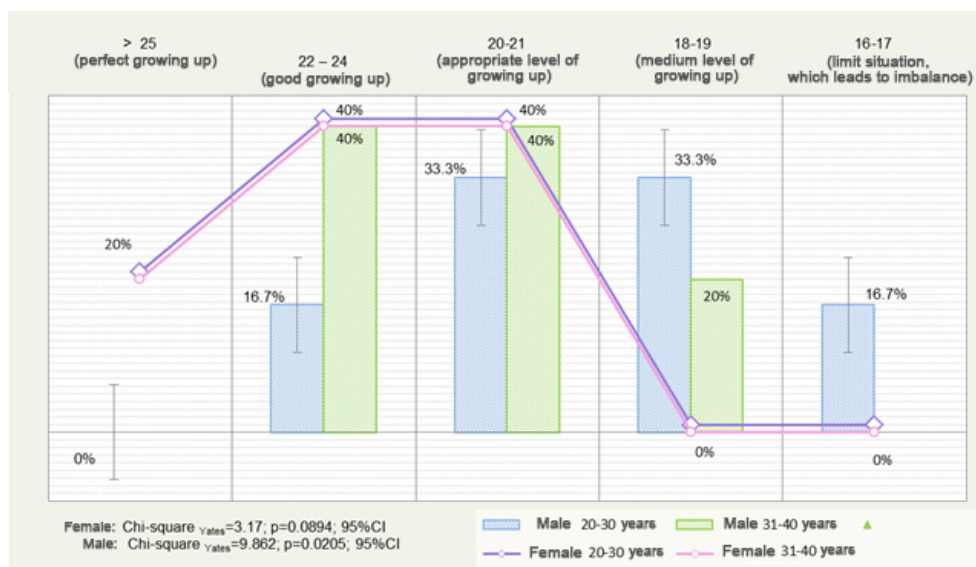
A comparative analysis of the results of the two age groups highlighted an very good emotional growing up in the case of the respondents aged 31-40 ($\chi^2=17.61$, $p=0.00214$,

95%CI) in comparison to those aged 20-30 which was associate with a medium level of growing up (18.2%) and even a tendency towards imbalance (9.1%).

2.4. ANALYSIS ACCORDING TO THE AGE AND GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

The analysis according to age groups and sex highlight the fact that in the case of women there are no differences between age groups ($\chi^2=3.17$, $p=0.089$, 95%CI).

In the case of male respondents we notice a significantly higher frequency of a relatively good (40%) or average level of growing up (40%) for the 31-40 age group ($\chi^2=9.86$, $p=0.0205$, 95%CI), while for the 20-30 age group we notice a higher frequency of the medium level (33.3%), respectively of the borderline situation (16.7%).



Unlike IQ which is something we are born with and that is very difficult to change during a person's lifetime, emotional intelligence can be developed.

3. CONCLUSIONS

In "The psychology of ages", Anca Munteanu stated: "... at birth, every human being who has a normal IQ (of at least 90) hoards at least a minimum creative potential for a particular field...." The same book notices that 65% of the men are thinking and 65% of women are affect (the left hemisphere deals with reason and write hemisphere deals with emotions).

If we think of the fact that two out of three men are born with their left side more capable than the right side and that through education men, in general, are taught to be strong, not to express their feelings and to have the logic as their law, we encounter a world in which men do no longer understand their emotions, they cannot understand other peoples' emotions and this makes women say: "we do not understand men."

If we think of the fact that two out of three women are born with their right side more developed, and that through education they are taught to express their feelings, be as communicative as possible and to "listen to their hearts," we come across a world in which men consider that women are impossible to understand.

A man needs both hemispheres in order to function completely. A person who has the thinking function more developed has to train his affective side because emotions represent life.

A person who has the emotional function as his main function needs to train the left side, the reason and logic in order not to become the prey of all kinds of emotions and in order to have a guided life, not to step on path that lead to nowhere.

It is therefore necessary to train both hemispheres in order to lead a balanced life and to achieve personal goals.

D. Wechsler, the author of the standardized set of tests for intelligence, noticed that the adaptation of the individual to the environment in which he lives is achieved using both cognitive

and non-cognitive elements. These non-cognitive aspects of intelligence include affective, personal and social factors, being essential for the individual's success in life (WECHSLER, 1955).

The psychological profile of the people with a higher level of emotional intelligence

The difference between emotional intelligence (IE), whose level of structuring is analysed using the emotional coefficient (QE), and the academic intelligence, which relates to logical thinking and is mainly acquired in schools, assessed by the intellectual coefficient (IQ), can also be done using accessible terms for everyone: "the voice of the heart" and "the voice of reason." The two forms of intelligence refer to two types of knowledge, one based on affectivity and the other on reason.

Jack Block (Berkeley University of California) established some typological profiles for women and men, who belong to one of the following situations:

- a) high intellectual coefficient and lower emotional coefficient;
- b) high emotional coefficient and above average intellectual coefficient (BLOCK & KREMENI, 1996);

The psychological profile of a man with a high intellectual coefficient and a lower emotional coefficient

He is ambitious and productive, calm, impervious about the aspect that concern him because he considers that he is right and that he cannot be vulnerable. He is predictable; you can see how he is going to behave in various situations and how he is going to react in the most diverse socially and professional contexts.

He tends to be critical and condescending, captious, difficult and inhibited, embarrassed and ashamed in a sexual and sensual experience, inexpressive and detached, being stupid and unfriendly on an emotional level.

The psychological profile for a man with ability or high coefficient of emotional intelligence (QE)

It possesses a social balance in inter-human relationships. He has a remarkable capacity to engage in solving other people's problems, he can devote himself to noble causes, is socially responsible, and takes into account the moral side of the circumstances in which he is involved.

He is sympathetic and caring in interpersonal relationships. He has a rich affectional life, with shades of difference concerning his own person. He feels comfortable with himself and with others in the social universe he lives in.

The psychological profile of a woman with a high intellectual (QI)

He trusts the intellect, the power of knowledge of reason. She has fluency in expressing her thoughts. She appreciates the intellectual values to a great extent, showing a conspicuous interest in the intellectual and aesthetic domains. She has the tendency towards introversion, focusing on her own person. It is prone to anxiety, to splitting the hairs, to the exacerbation of her own mistakes that consumes her in time and to the feeling of guilt. She hesitates to express or show her grief or anger in a natural, open way.

The psychological profile of a woman with a high emotional coefficient (QE)

She tends to be affirmative (positive) expressing her feelings directly, naturally, feeling good in her skin, the thoughts about her own self being positive. For her, life has meaning and it is worth living to the full. She is a sociable person who expresses her feelings properly and adapts well to stress. She is socially balanced, she easily meets new people, feels comfortable with herself being funny, playful, spontaneous, sexually natural. She rarely feels anxious.

In spite of the belief that women are the ones who can deal with emotions - they having the emotional side more developed; it seems that men are beginning to be interested in cultivating IE, in managing their own emotions.

Unlike the IQ, which is a given, the one with which we are born and which hardly changes during our life, the emotional intelligence can develop.

What should we look for in order to strengthen IE?

1. THE OWN EMOTIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE IMAGE OF THE SELF

A person's self-image is the mental image she has about herself, an image that is generally quite resilient to change. The bad self-image is the result of the person's accumulation of the criticism that was addressed to him/her in his/

her childhood and which leads to the damage of his/her own image and the way he/she perceives himself/herself.

2. ASSERTIVENESS

Assertiveness is an aptitude that can be developed. Assertiveness supports your rights, protects your personal space, and expresses your point of view, the needs and feelings in a socially acceptable, honest and direct way.

3. SELF-ESTEEM

Self-esteem is a term used for the person's overall assessment of his/her own worth. The self-esteem includes beliefs (of the type I am or not competent) and emotions (such as triumph, despair, pride, shame).

4. TOLERANCE AT STRESS

The psychological stress refers to a person's inability to respond adequately to emotional or physical, real or imaginary threats. The signs of stress are cognitive, emotional, physical or behavioural, including: flawed thinking, a negative overall outlook, excessive worry, mood instability, irritability, agitation, inability to relax, loneliness, isolation, depression, somatic pain, constipation, dizziness, nausea, chest pain, palpitations, excessive eating or loss of appetite, neglect of responsibilities, increased consumption of alcohol, nicotine or drugs.

Managing your own emotions is an aptitude that can be developed with stress control and management tools and of those who have the ability to develop your communication.

COMPETENCE to reduce stress

Realizes when you are stressed

Identifies how you react to stress

Discovers the stress-relieving methods that work for you

The stress management techniques include:

- autogenous training
- cognitive psychotherapy
- group psychotherapy
- conflict resolution
- physical exercise
- meditation
- finding of a hobby
- artistic expression
- breathing techniques
- relaxation techniques

- time management
- listening to music

5. PROBLEM SOLVING

Problem solving is a mental process that includes finding the problem and modeling the problem. Problem solving is defined as a high-order cognitive process that requires the modulation and control of several abilities.

6. FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility also implies the ability to think positively and manage effectively stress and time.

7. IMPULSE CONTROL

Anger management refers to a system of psychotherapeutic techniques and exercises by which a person with excessive or uncontrollable anger can control or reduce the trigger factors and the effects of an emotional state of anger.

8. OPTIMISM

The optimism and the pessimism come from the way people find explanations for various events. There are three typical dimensions of event explanations, namely:

- stable versus unstable
- internal vs. external
- global versus specific

9. NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Successful non-verbal communication depends on the ability to manage your stress, to recognize your own emotions and to understand the feelings you send and receive.

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