

## USING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A CATALYST FOR SERVICE QUALITY: A DESCRIPTIVE SURVEY OF ACADEMICS IN PUNJAB

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*"Emotional Intelligence refers to the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and our relationships."-Goleman, 1998*

*Emotional intelligence and service quality--this study is designed to examine whether emotional intelligence acts as a catalyst for improving the service quality of an education sector or not. By using standardized tools developed by Goleman and Zeithmal, data is collected through a self administered questionnaire from the management schools of two leading universities in Punjab; one is a private university that pays more attention to the improvement of service quality and the other one is well reputed University that did not spend much on quality issues as is the practice in private university. SPSS version 18 is used for data analysis. The empirical analysis reveals that emotional intelligence strongly catalyzes the service quality in case of both the universities in Punjab.*

**Keywords:** *Emotional Intelligence, Service Quality*

*JEL Classification- Z0, L80*

Success of an education sector depends upon high service quality to a large extent. Service quality is the extent to which a service meets customers' needs or expectations (Lewis and Mitchell, 1990; Dotchin and Oakland, 1994a; Asubonteng et al., 1996; Wisniewski and Donnelly, 1996). Service quality can be defined as the difference between customer expectations of service and perceived service. If expectations are greater than performance, then perceived quality is less than satisfactory and hence customer dissatisfaction occur (Parasuraman et al., 1985; Lewis and Mitchell, 1990). Many factors contribute to high service quality. Some believe that support of

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management is important for it. Service sector is labour-intensive so human effort has a lot to do for providing services. Many factors affect the human capability to provide quality services. Human beings are blessed with a number of inherent capabilities by nature and emotional intelligence is one of them. Emotional intelligence is the innate potential to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, describe, identify, learn from, manage, understand and explain emotions (Jack Mayer and Peter Salovey, 1990).

Service quality relies on many variables and emotional intelligence is the most important determinant of service quality. It is an integrated part of multi-disciplinary modern business management. As the service providers are required to be adaptive towards the demands and behaviors of the students, it is basically emotional intelligence that helps teachers in responding effectively towards the student needs. As service providers in the education sector require the potentials such as interpersonal, intrapersonal and technical skills, these skills can be easily translated in one term and that is emotional intelligence. The learning and practice of these skills help improving the performance of service providers and thus increasing student satisfaction. By using Emotional intelligence, universities can have increased knowledge about the students and greater ability for recognizing and regulating the quality of service according to the desires of students.

In an education sector, high quality services are always emphasized. This is the only area in education, which guarantees its success. Universities in Punjab have also started paying attention to the improvement in service quality because of the upcoming intense competition from foreign universities. Workshops and seminars are arranged for the training of employees into quality issues. Whatever measures are taken to improve the service quality, involve emotional intelligence of educational officers anyway.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Research of the EI and job performance show mixed results: a positive relation has been found in some of the studies, in others, there was no relation or an inconsistent one. This led researchers Cote and Miners (2006) to offer a compensatory model between EI and IQ, that posits that the association between EI and job performance becomes more positive as cognitive intelligence decreases, an idea first proposed in the context of academic performance (Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham, 2004).

The results of the former study supported the compensatory model: employees with low IQ get higher task performance and organizational citizenship behavior directed at the organization, the higher their EI (Emotional Intelligence). A salesperson's customer orientation level is significantly related to emotional intelligence. Managers should consider using emotional intelligence as a selection and human-resource development tool, as improvements in emotional intelligence are correlated with greater levels of customer orientation (Elizabeth et al., 2004).

A negative correlation between emotional intelligence and stress at work, indicating that high scorers in overall EI suffered from less stress related to the occupational environment. There is a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and organizational commitment, which according to the ASSET model is considered as a consequence of stress, suggesting a new role for EI as a determinant of employee loyalty to organizations (Nikolaou et al., 2002).

The managerial skills in general and emotional intelligence in particular, play a significant role in the success of senior managers in the workplace. This argument, despite its popularity, remains elusive. This can be attributed to the fact that although a few studies have provided evidence to support this argument, it has not received an appropriate empirical investigation. Senior managers with a high emotional intelligence employed in public sector organizations develop positive work attitudes, behavior and outcomes. Emotional intelligence augments positive work attitudes, altruistic behavior and work outcomes, and moderates the effect of work-family conflict on career commitment but not the effect on job satisfaction (Carmeli Abraham, 2003).

The extent to which students perceive the level of service performance meets their expectations reflects the quality of service (Zammuto et al., 1996). Ramzi (2002), however, attempted to measure the student perceptions of registration and academic advising across different faculties and other administrative services to assure positive quality service that complements the academic. There are no significant differences between male and female leaders in their demonstration of emotional and social intelligence competencies. The most successful men and women were also more similar than different in their competency demonstration (Hopkins et al., 2008).

The team leader EI is significantly related to the presence of emotionally competent group norms (ECGN) on the teams they lead, and that ECGN is related to teaming performance. Organizations should develop emotionally competent

executive leaders because everyone on the executive management team influences the development of ECGNs on the teams he or she leads (Koman et al., 2008).

Hence, it can be stated that emotional intelligence skills are necessary for the success in today's dynamic business environment as it is being practiced successfully in the service industry such as hospitality, banking and patient care. It may be concluded that emotional intelligence can be associated with the service quality in the education sector and desired objectives can be achieved.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the research are:

- To study emotional intelligence level in private and public education sector.
- To study service quality level in private and public education sector.
- To check whether emotional intelligence catalysing service quality or not.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive research design has been used including survey method. In order to analyze the education sector, two universities have been selected. The one is a private university i.e. Lovely Professional university and the other one is a public university i.e. Punjab Technical University.

The sampling element includes individual students of above mentioned universities. The two variables are studied i.e. emotional intelligence and service quality. Primary data is collected through close ended questionnaires, whereas secondary data is collected through the data already available in the organizations. Hypothesis testing is performed while applying linear regression and correlation. The hypothesis consists of two variables; emotional intelligence, an independent variable and service quality, a dependent variable.

(H1): Emotional intelligence is a predictor of higher service quality in the Indian education sector.

(H0): Emotional intelligence is not a predictor of higher service quality in the Indian education sector.

A convenient sample of 110 teachers and students is drawn for the study as per the

following details:

<b>Private University</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Public University</b>	<b>Teachers</b>	<b>Students</b>
Lovely Professional University	25	30	Punjab Technical University	25	30

Following standardized tools are adopted for data collection; for emotional intelligence, a tool named Emotional Intelligence scale developed by Goleman, (1998) based on fifteen items. For the dependent variable i.e. service quality, SERVQUAL scale developed by Zeithaml (1985) is adopted. A five point Likert Scale starting from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1 - 5) is used for the study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE**

#### **Faculty Analysis:**

- Data analysis shows that 88 percent of the employees of LPU belongs to the age group of 20-30 while only 60 percent of employees of PTU belong to the age group of 30-40. The data reveals that LPU has a majority of young teachers.
- The educational level of both the employees appeared to be the same as in LPU 88 percent of employees are having a master's degree, whereas in PTU the percentage of master degree holder employees is 84.

#### **Student Analysis:**

- The age of students of both the universities is almost same i.e. 20-30 years. For LPU, the employees belonging to this age group was 88 percent, whereas in PTU, 40 percent of employees belong to that age group. So it appears that the sample for the study belongs to younger population of the society.
- Both universities have the almost good level of education among its students. In case of LPU, 66.7 percent of students are Graduate, whereas in PTU the same percentage is 36.7. So it appears that majority of the students is educated.

## TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

The acceptance/rejection of a hypothesis is tested through the use of following tests:

- Regression Analysis
- Correlation Analysis

## REGRESSION ANALYSIS

For testing the hypothesis empirically, emotional intelligence is taken as an independent variable and student satisfaction is taken as a dependent variable. The hypothesis is tested through linear regression.

(H0): Emotional intelligence is not a predictor of higher service quality in Indian Education sector.

(H1): Emotional intelligence is a predictor of higher service quality in Indian Education sector.

University	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	F Statistics	P Value
LPU <sup>b1</sup>	.739 <sup>a</sup>	.546	.427	4.571	.007 <sup>a</sup>
PTU <sup>b2</sup>	.649 <sup>a</sup>	.422	.269	2.770	.048 <sup>a</sup>
a. Predictors: (Constant), Motivation, Social, Self, Change, Emotional					
b1. Dependent Variable: Responsibility					
b2. Dependent Variable: Reliability					

**R value** indicates the correlation coefficient between various dimensions of emotional intelligence and service quality in the education sector. In case of Lovely Professional University  $R=0.739$  indicates a strong hypothesized relationship between the emotional intelligence of teachers and their responsiveness to offer service quality. In case of Punjab Technical University  $R=0.649$  indicates a good hypothesized relationship between the emotional intelligence of teachers and their reliability to offer service quality.  $R^2$  is the coefficient of determination. It is 0.546 in case of Lovely Professional University, indicating the authenticity of the research. Closer the value of  $R^2$  to 1, greater is the authenticity of the research (Wiswanathan, 2005). The results of analysis exhibit that in case of Lovely Professional University, 54.6% variation in the service quality is

because of emotional intelligence and only 45.4% is explained by the error indicating that the research is authentic. **Adjusted R square value** = .427 in case of LPU and .269 in case of PTU indicating the adjustment in  $R^2$  to reflect the reality. **F Statistics** indicates that the model fitted is fairly accurate. The p value in case of both the universities is less than 0.05 showing that null hypothesis in case of both the universities have been rejected and research hypothesis has been accepted.

### CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Emotional intelligence of the employees of the two universities is correlated with the dimensions of service quality and following results are obtained:

**Table 3: Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Service Quality Dimensions**

University	Responsiveness vs. social	Empathy vs. motivation	Reliability vs. change	Tangibility vs. change
LPU	.573**	.334	-.014	-.228
PTU	.294	-.067	.433*	.411*

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
 \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The above values indicate the correlation between emotional intelligence and service quality dimensions. In case of LPU, there is a significant correlation between teachers' willingness to help the students and their ability to establish mutually satisfying relationships and relate well with students. In case of PTU, teachers' ability to effectively solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature and to be sympathetic and reassuring when students have problems is correlated.

### CONCLUSIONS

From the above analysis, it is concluded that use of emotional intelligence skills is high in case of a private university i.e. LPU. The research findings have also indicated that emotional intelligence is a positive predictor of higher responsiveness of service quality in the Indian private education sector. Hence we can say that emotional intelligence is strongly related to dimensions of service quality indicating that when employees of the organization practice the skills of emotional intelligence, it enhances service quality.

Furthermore, in case of Punjab Technical University, emotional intelligence is a

predictor of service quality. It means that in Punjab Technical University, both the variables i.e. emotional intelligence and Reliability of service quality are strongly associated, and hence it can be said that practice of emotional intelligence skills by the teachers when delivering services to the students is present in the Indian public education sector.

The findings of the research may be passed on to the higher authorities of the universities so that these can be implemented. Instead of using two universities, the scope of the research should be broadened and two public and two private sector universities should be included in the future research. As the results of data indicate that there is a positive relationship between EI and Responsiveness of SQ in case of LPU. The future studies could expand it by finding out the relationship between EI and other dimensions of service quality.

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