

Dark Aspects of Emotional Intelligence: How can it be improved in the Light of Islamic Perspective?

Dr. Asfandeyar Fida^I Dr. Abdul Ghaffar^{II} Dr. Mohammad Niqab^{III}

Abstract

Emotional intelligence is a worthy construct associated with career accomplishments, acquisition and everyday life. It energizes all human activities. There are assorted conceptions of emotional intelligence which have unveiled diverse components of emotional intelligence. The main aspects are recognition and regulation of emotions. This study is pointed to appraise the dissemination of the levels of various factors, to ascertain the weakest facet and to highlight it in the Islamic viewpoints. The Davies, Stankov and Roberts¹ conception was used as a base for investigation and Wong and Law Emotional intelligence Scale² as instrument for collecting information. The outcomes provided that on the average most of the learners were weaker on the 'regulation of emotions.' Regulations of emotions include the capacities of being patience, optimism, self-control, persistency, adaptability, marinating relations, civility etc. Islam has provided ample guidelines on all these facets to grip one's emotions effectively, therefore, stakeholders are opined to seek guidance from it.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, Regulation of Emotions, Islam

Introduction

Emotions are vital to every human endeavor. In fact, human lives revolve around emotions. Emotions are cognitive reports acquired from inward or outward experiences those steer reactions and ascribed to cogitating and circumstances. There is individuality in emotional exhibition³. Often, same person tackle similar situations differently. The individual's approach in dealing emotions is called emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence reveals the capacity of individuals to get informed of their emotions and regulated them appropriately. Emotional intelligence is a tendency to merge thoughts, emotions and practices⁴. Mayer and Salovey⁵ considered emotional intelligence as the capacity to get awareness of and articulate emotions, merging them with thoughts and directing individualized emotions and of others. Various models of emotional

I Elementary & Secondary Education, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
II Associate Professor, Department of Education, AWKU Mardan
III Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Sheringal University Dir

intelligence have provided diverse aspects of emotional intelligence, particularly, identifying and managing emotions (see, e.g. Ability Model, Trait Model, and Mixed Model etc.). This investigation was intended to highlight the intensity of various elements of emotional intelligence and identify the feebleness aspect.

Islam is a complete code of life and there are no situations or circumstances where Islamic canons are not applicable. It focuses on the growth of all round personal development⁶. It has thoroughly discussed the moral, social, spiritual, social, political and emotional developments. The investigation is directed to discuss the feebleness aspect of emotional intelligence in terms of Islamic perspective. This enquiry is meant to detect the feeblest component of emotional intelligence and to propose measures to tackle it in accordance with Islamic doctrine.

Objectives

- To estimate the levels of the various facets of emotional intelligence
- To determine the weakest facet of emotional intelligence
- To discuss the feeblest aspect of emotional intelligence in the light of Islamic script

Review of Related Literature

There are diverse conceptions of emotional intelligence. Mayer and Salovey⁷ (1997) narrated that emotional intelligence contains the capacities to perceive, comprehend, incorporate and regulate emotions. They declared their model as ability based^{8, 9}. Likewise, Goleman¹⁰ used the term competence instead of intelligence and declared it as the capacity of acquiring certain skills which facilitate performance in working environments. Emotional competence is a composite of personality and cognitive proficiencies¹¹. It contains the elements of awareness about and management of one's self and society and relationships¹². Similarly, Bar-On Model¹³ viewed emotional intelligence as the conglomeration of societal and sentimental attributes of an individual. The elements of this conception are interpersonal, intrapersonal, managing tension, adjustability and typical dispositions. Further, Petrides and Furnham¹⁴, the advocates of trait model, viewed emotional intelligence in the light of personality characteristics. They refer to this as a trait. Feelings of comfort, self-discipline, emotionality, sociability, adjustability and self-motivation are the constituents of the trait conception¹⁵.

Davies et al. (1998) thoroughly studied many instrument of emotional intelligence and deduced their own conception of emotional cognizance of four facets including appraisal (personal and others' emotions), use and regulation of emotions. Appraisals of personal emotions reveal the capacity of the recognition and transmission of personal sentiments. Likewise, the 'appraisal of others emotions' denote the knack to judge and asses the emotional status of other individuals. Further, the 'use' reveals the capacity to properly employ emotions in certain beneficial assignments in relation to the context. In addition, 'regulation of emotions' denotes the control and governance of emotions to reinstate from anguishes^{16, 17}.

The analysis of the conceptions revealed that emotional intelligence is mainly associated with identification and governance of personal and others' emotions. Regulations of emotions represent deliberate command over emotions. People higher in regulating sentiments have strong hold on their emotions. They keep themselves clear and calm even in annoying situations. They make reflective decisions usually considering their feelings and remain optimistic and facilitate them in easing their emotions^{18, 19, and 20}.

Emotional intelligence is associated with success, motivation and overall personal growth of individuals. The literature has inferred positive association between emotional intelligence and accomplishment²¹. Emotional intelligence is a critical forecaster of scholastic accomplishments. Research indicated that emotional intelligence is also related with personality factors, social interaction, meta-cognition, self-esteem and motivation etc.^{22, 23, 24}. It can be deduced that emotional intelligence is an inevitable factor for academic and personal growth of learners.

Islam being an all-inclusive system of life has emphasized the worth of emotions and emotional intelligence. The guidelines regarding emotional intelligence could be traced from the Holy texts of Al-Quran and Sunnah. Quran has referred to emotional wisdom on various occasions prior to traditional formal researches²⁵. In the Quran and Sunnah, there are plentiful discussions on the various aspects of emotional sagacity. On numerous occasions it has guided individuals on how to tackle and express emotions wisely in diverse situations²⁶. It can be deduced that Quran and Sunnah have sufficient literature about dealing emotions.

Methodology

It was a simultaneous mixed method approach. In the first instance, data was gathered through a survey to determine the weakest element of

emotional intelligence. It was followed by content analysis of Islamic manuscripts to proposed measures for strengthening regulating emotions.

Wong and Law²⁷ thoroughly analyzed the Davies et al. ²⁸input and developed an instrument labeled as ‘Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale’ (WLEIS). This scale was employed in this enquiry for executing survey. It is short instrument and highly suits survey purposes. The Quranic verses and Hadiths of Prophet (PBHU) pertinent to regulation of emotions were reviewed and discussed.

Data Analysis

The outcomes of this enquiry were presented and discussed through percentage, mean and graphical modes.

**Table 1
Percentage Distribution of Emotional Intelligence**

		Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
Self-emotion appraisal	Male	1.2%	9.4%	25.4%	46.1%	18.0%
	Female	0.6%	6.6%	20.9%	49.7%	22.2%
Others’ emotion appraisal	Male	2.1%	10.2%	28.9%	40.0%	18.8%
	Female	0.3%	9.2%	29.7%	38.0%	22.8%
Use of emotion	Male	0.8%	15.6%	27.3%	37.7%	18.6%
	Female	0.3%	12.7%	27.2%	43.0%	16.8%
Regulation of emotion	Male	4.7%	25.6%	28.9%	32.4%	8.4%
	Female	5.1%	21.2%	30.7%	29.1%	13.9%
Overall emotional intelligence	Male	0.8%	17.6%	28.7%	44.9%	8.0%
	Female	0.3%	12.3%	30.1%	46.8%	10.4%

It is evident from the Table 1 that study participants were better on ‘self-emotion appraisal.’ This superiority is evident for both male (high, 46.1%, very high, 18%) and female learners (high, 49.7%, very high, 22.2%). In opposite, majority of the learners exhibited weakest percentage on the ‘regulation of emotions’ by both male (high, 32.4%, very high, 8.4%) and female (high, 29.1%, very high, 13.9%) learners. It can be drawn that majority of the students were poor on the ‘regulation of emotion.’

Table 2
Overall Emotional Intelligence

		Self-emotion appraisal	Others Emotion Appraisal	Use of emotion	Regulation of emotion	Overall EI
Male	Mean	3.70	3.66	3.58	3.14	3.42
	Std Dev	.910	.956	.988	1.042	.896
Female	Mean	3.86	3.74	3.63	3.26	3.55
	Std Dev	.858	.924	.918	1.096	.851
Total	Mean	3.76	3.69	3.60	3.19	3.47
	Std Dev	.893	.944	.962	1.063	.881

The mean outcome reveal that overall basis majority of the students were feeble on the ‘regulation of emotions’ (M = 3.19). This phenomenon is also exhibited both for male students (M = 3.14) as well as female learners (M = 3.26). In general, the female students outdone on all variables of emotional intelligence. The findings are vividly shown in the Figure 1.

Gender wise Distribution of Emotional Intelligence

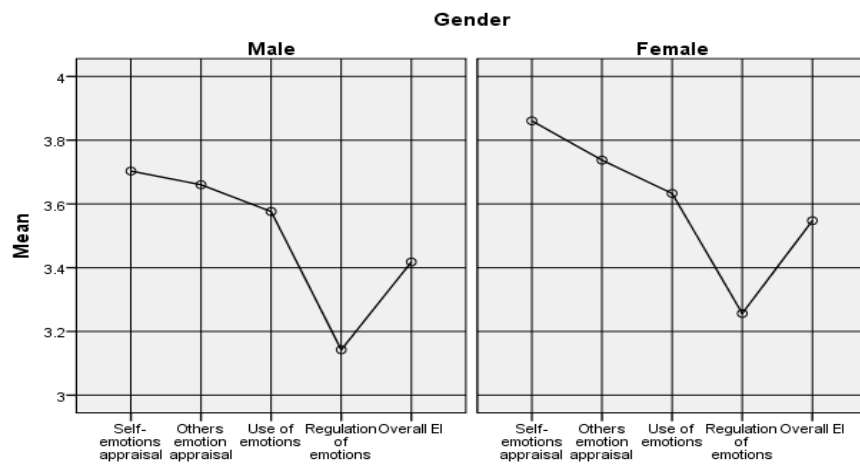


Figure 1. Comparing Emotional Intelligence

The Figure 1exhibited that the point of ‘self-emotions appraisal’ is quite overhead the mean line. Conversely, the point of ‘regulation of emotion’

is quite beneath the mean line representing the feeble statue of learner on this aspect of emotional cognizance.

Table 3
Gender Dissemination of EI across Faculties

	Faculty	Self-emotion appraisal	Others emotion appraisal	Use of emotion	Regulation of emotion	Over all EI
Male	Arts & Humanities	3.49	3.36	3.19	2.97	3.19
	Business & Economics	3.75	3.60	3.71	3.26	3.46
	Chemical & Life Sciences	3.65	3.70	3.70	3.19	3.47
	Physical & Numerical Sciences	3.79	3.72	3.53	3.08	3.44
	Social Sciences	3.73	3.82	3.63	3.17	3.44
Female	Arts & Humanities	3.72	3.62	3.49	3.11	3.45
	Business & Economics	4.17	4.15	3.62	3.38	3.65
	Chemical & Life Sciences	3.91	3.69	3.78	3.44	3.59
	Physical & Numerical Sciences	3.76	3.73	3.57	3.24	3.55
	Social Sciences	3.89	3.67	3.77	3.24	3.58

The Table 3 provides a detailed picture of the spread of the various facts of emotional intelligence through learning faculties. The data reflect that learner of all faculties of both gender were feebler on the ‘regulation of emotion’ that other facets. On overall basis the female learners of Chemical and Life Science faculty were ahead with average value (M = 3.44). Conversely, the male students from Arts and Humanity stood lower with

average (M = 2.97) to regulate their emotions. The ‘regulating emotions’ is the frailest feature of emotional intelligence across learners, both male and female, of all faculties. A clear picture of this data is depicted in Figure 2.

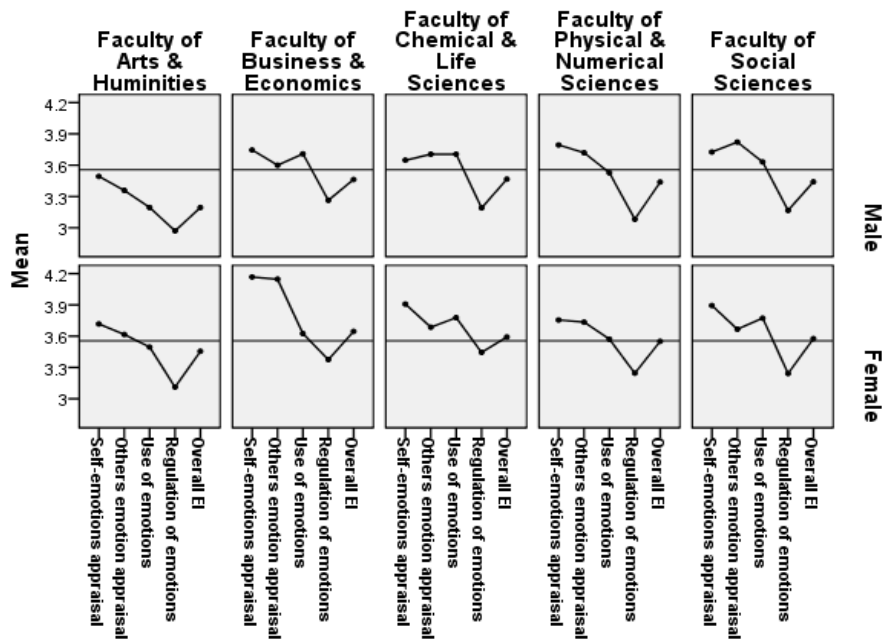


Figure 2. Distribution of Emotional Intelligence

The Figure 2 illustrates the faculty wise depiction of emotional intelligence. The graph revealed that the point for regulation of emotions is quite beneath the mean line for all faculties. The phenomenon is existed in the finding of both genders. The point is at quite distant position in the faculty of Arts and Humanity, particularly for male learners, representing their feebler statutes on this particular factor.

Discussion

This study identified regulation of emotions as the feebler aspect i.e. majority of the learners provided lower mean scores on this facet. BarOn has provided a detailed description of this facet and named it as stress management. It includes stress tolerance – efficient and positive management of emotions in tough times, pressure situations and in unpleasant environment and impulse control – capacity to oppose or holdup an aspiration, an ambitions or an enticement through guiding one’s emotions. He further, described ‘adaptability’ as distinct element in his mode²⁹. Similarly, Goleman provided

two aspects of regulation i.e. self-management and relationship management. These indicate the capacities to be controlled, reliable, meticulous, conflict resolver and collaborative etc³⁰. In addition, Davies et al. asserted that it is the capability of an individual to quickly rehabilitate him from psychological strains and dejections. It signifies cool headedness and command emotions in times of anger³¹. In trait model, Petrides and Furnham have specified an element labeled as ‘self-control’ which is the knack to manipulate emotions, resist environmental strains and persistence in goal achievement³². Individuals who are superior with this knack are pensive, adaptive and controlled, influential and led a prosperous emotional life. On the opposite, individuals feeble with emotional regulation are panic; maladaptive, ineffectual, feeling dominated and led a broken socio-emotional life³³.

Islam has highly stressed the overall growth of people including emotional development. It is a religion of peace and harmony. It has identified, discussed and stressed the various elements of the ‘regulation of emotions’ like good manners patience, steadfastness, conflicts resolution, politeness, optimism, flexibility etc.

Islam has laid great emphasis on good manners and maintaining sound relations with others. It has declared a person with good manners as supreme individual. The Prophet (PBUH) has asserted that the best among you is the person who has good manners. On another occasion, it was told that every good deed is a charity. Meeting with your Muslim brothers with smiley face is also a charity (Tirmidhi) ^{34, 35}. It can be deduced that having positive body gestures is also a worthy feat. In addition, the Prophet (PBUH) has declared that a perfect Muslim is one who has sound character and who is very generous to his family (Tirmidhi) ³⁶. The ultimate aim of the Islamic teachings may be the production of individuals with high moral nature. Hence, if a person wants to be a superior individual he must bear healthy temperament as there is no worth of mean practices.

Mostly emotions are verbally expressed either positively or negatively. In this regard, Islam has vastly emphasized the use of good and polite language. Quran has directed Muslims to communicate to human being with civility and graciousness (Al-Baqarah)³⁷. Prophet (PBUH) has addressed to Hazrat Aisha that Allah loves politeness (Muslim, 6601)³⁸. Likewise, True Muslim is not the individual who satire, curse, brazen and abusive (Tirmidi)³⁹. Likewise, Quran communicates that those who satire harshly will be in the bottom of hell (Al-Humaza)⁴⁰. Hence, Islam has massively discarded the use of

harsh language, insulting remarks and irony. Moreover, the Prophet (PBUH) conveyed that when two exchange abusive language than the person has committed sin that has begun it. It could be drawn that use of abusive language is forbidden in Islam (Muslim)⁴¹. It could be drawn that Muslims should adapt soft tone for communication purposes. In addition, they should not harm others with their harsh and abusive comments.

The character of an individual is truly exhibited in emotional laden situations. Regulating emotions involves the capability to overcome one's anger. Islam has highly revered the individuals with capacity of controlling their angers and forgiving others. Quran has asserted that "If you remained patient and virtuous then it is among great deeds (Ale-Imran)⁴². Likewise, those who forgive the violence of others are the beloved of Allah. Quran conveys, "those who control their irritations and are exonerators of others; Allah loves those generous people" (Ale-Imran)⁴³. Similarly on another occasion Quran described that individuals with high characters are those who refrain themselves from major offences and immoral practices and when annoyed they pardon others (Al-shura)⁴⁴. It is the quality of a superior Muslim who has the capacity to overcome his furious mood. They do not believe in taking revenge and when they have command they forgive the felonious.

Islam also wants its followers to be persistent, steadfast and sufferers of hard times. The Quran illustrate that superior Muslims are those who demonstrate tolerance, self-discipline and determination (Ale Imran)⁴⁵. Similarly, Quran has advised, "endurance in hard times: Indeed Allah will not lost the return of virtuous" (Hud)⁴⁶. Quran has clearly elaborated that Allah will definitely judge you with anxiety, vaster, loss of capital and relatives and crops; give delight reports to tolerant individuals (Al-Baqarah)⁴⁷. It guides people to suffer hard times with patience and never be disappointed as these miseries are a test from Allah Almighty and the successful individuals will be rewarded.

Islam attributed true Muslims being optimist, capable of resorting from miseries and avoids despair. It has been professed in Quran that after tough times, Allah will shortly bestow relief (Atalaq)⁴⁸. Similarly, and don't be gloomed from the Mercy of Allah. Indeed, the disbelievers become despair from the mercy of Allah (Yousaf)⁴⁹.

Muslims with superior character avoid conflicts and are inclined towards peace. Quran explains that the obedient individuals of Allah are those who gait smoothly, and when the oblivious dispute with them they express

sentence of peace (Al-Furqan)⁵⁰. It means that they readily avoid conflicts and useless disputes. Anas bin Malak has quoted from Prophet (PBUH) that do not keeps animosity, envies and hostility with one another and live like brothers and it is not permitted for Muslims to break relations with another Muslim for more than three days (Muslim)⁵¹. Ayub Ansari's citation could be added that better of these combatants is one who initiate towards a truce for peace (Muslim)⁵². Hence, there should be an environment of peace among Muslims. In addition, breaking relations is strictly prohibited. Likewise, Quran illustrate that undoubtedly all believers in Islam are brothers so resolve their clashes whenever needed and be afraid of Allah in order to receive His benevolence (Al-hurt)⁵³. It reveals the social model of universal brotherhood. It means they should lead their life in brethren and should care for one other and live in peace. Similarly, clashes among Muslims have been discarded. However, whenever such situations arise, it is the responsibility of other Muslims to resolve their clashes. This discussion is just a glimpse of what Islam has accentuated the 'regulation of emotions' and has provided tactics for managing it.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study determined 'regulation of emotions' as the feebler aspect of emotional intelligence. The various sub-facet of this aspect are patience, persistence, self-discipline, optimism, mannerism, politeness, flexibility etc. The discussion revealed that these attributes are also highly emphasized by Islam as narrated by Quran and Sunnah. It can be drawn that Islam has focused on the all aspect of personal growth. Hence, guidance could be taken in dealing these deficiencies and consequently promoting personal and community growth.

It is recommended that the concerned stakeholders i.e. course designers, curriculum developers, book writers, social scientists, instructors and psychologists etc. may seek guidance from Islam in dealing this issue. In addition, researchers are advised to undertake detailed researches on the various angles of this issue.

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