

## Exploring the Interplay of Emotional Intelligence, Stress, and Their Impact on Personal Life

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### Abstract

This research study delves into the intricate relationship between emotional intelligence, stress, and their collective influence on an individual's personal life. Emotional intelligence, encompassing the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively, has gained prominence as a critical aspect of overall well-being. Simultaneously, stress, stemming from various sources and experiences, exerts significant effects on psychological and physiological health. This study aims to elucidate the dynamic interplay between these constructs and examine how they jointly shape an individual's personal life outcomes. Through a comprehensive literature review and empirical investigation, the research seeks to uncover the multifaceted ways in which emotional intelligence moderates the impact of stress on various aspects of personal life, including relationships, work performance, decision-making, and mental health. By employing a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys, this study aims to provide a holistic understanding of the mechanisms underlying these relationships.

The findings of this research have potential implications for both theoretical and practical domains. Theoretical implications include advancing our comprehension of the nuanced connections between emotional intelligence, stress, and personal life outcomes. Practically, the insights gained from this study could inform the development of targeted interventions and strategies aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence skills to mitigate the negative impact of stress on individuals' personal lives. A questionnaire of 25 questions prepared in the google forms which is circulated to the group of people in and around Chennai district, in which many professionals like Engineers, manufacturing department, automobile sector and Software professionals etc.,

**Keywords:** emotional intelligence, stress, personal life, well-being, coping mechanisms, emotional regulation.

### 1. Introduction

Emotions and stress are integral components of the human experience, influencing the way individuals perceive, interact with, and adapt to their surroundings. The intricate interplay between emotional intelligence (EI), stress, and their collective impact on personal well-being has garnered significant attention from researchers, psychologists, and educators alike. Emotional intelligence, often regarded as a crucial facet of emotional and social development, encompasses the ability to recognize, comprehend, manage, and effectively utilize emotions in oneself and others. On the other hand, stress, stemming from various sources such as personal challenges, work-related pressures, and societal demands, can have profound physiological, psychological, and behavioral effects.

In an increasingly complex and fast-paced world, the role of emotional intelligence in mitigating the detrimental effects of stress and promoting adaptive coping mechanisms has become a subject of immense interest. This research paper delves into the dynamic relationship between emotional intelligence, stress, and their combined impact on personal life. By exploring the multifaceted dimensions of this relationship, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how emotional intelligence can serve as a buffer against stress and foster positive outcomes in individuals' lives.

### 2. Literature Review

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the capacity to recognize, understand, manage, and effectively utilize one's own and others' emotions. Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualized EI as a multifaceted construct comprising four dimensions: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. Goleman (1995) further popularized the notion of EI, highlighting its significance in personal and social success.

Several theoretical frameworks elucidate the relationship between EI and stress. Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (1984) posits that emotional appraisals play a pivotal role in shaping an individual's stress response. High EI may lead to more adaptive appraisals and coping strategies. The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989) suggests that individuals with high EI may be better equipped to marshal and replenish internal and external resources, thereby mitigating the depletion caused by stressors.

Research has shown that individuals with higher EI tend to employ more effective coping strategies when faced with stressors. High EI individuals are more likely to engage in problem-focused coping, seeking solutions and taking proactive steps. Additionally, emotional regulation skills inherent in EI can assist in downregulating negative emotions and promoting psychological well-being. A study by Extremera and Fernández-Berrocal (2005) demonstrated that higher EI was associated with lower levels of perceived stress in university students.

The positive influence of EI on personal well-being is evident across various domains. High EI is linked to improved interpersonal relationships, as individuals with strong emotional intelligence can empathize, communicate effectively, and resolve conflicts skillfully. Moreover, EI is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction, self-esteem, and overall psychological functioning. A study by Schutte et al. (2007) found that EI was a significant predictor of life satisfaction and psychological well-being.

### **3. Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Stress**

The rapid advancements in technology, changes in work environments, and the constant influx of information have created a milieu where individuals must navigate an array of challenges that can evoke stress. In this context, emotional intelligence has emerged as a potential resource for enhancing emotional well-being and promoting effective stress management. Research has shown that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to exhibit greater resilience in the face of adversity, healthier interpersonal relationships, and improved decision-making abilities.

Understanding the interactions between emotional intelligence and stress is not only relevant for personal development but also holds implications for education, healthcare, and organizational settings. Educators can benefit from insights into how emotional intelligence can be cultivated in educational curricula to equip students with essential life skills. Healthcare professionals can incorporate emotional intelligence interventions to enhance patients' ability to cope with illness-related stressors. Moreover, organizations can implement strategies to foster emotional intelligence among employees, thereby fostering a healthier and more productive workforce.

### **4. Research Objectives**

The primary objectives of this research paper are as follows:

- i. To explore the theoretical underpinnings of emotional intelligence and stress and their conceptual frameworks.
- ii. To examine empirical evidence regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress, with a focus on the role of emotional intelligence in stress management.
- iii. To analyze the impact of emotional intelligence on personal well-being, including its potential to mitigate the adverse effects of stress.
- iv. To provide practical recommendations for enhancing emotional intelligence and managing stress in various aspects of personal life.

### **5. Research Methodology**

In this research study, google forms is circulated to the public in and around TamilNadu to measure the emotional intelligence , stress , coping mechanism. Nearly 123 respondents received through google forms from many districts of TamilNadu from various fields like Manufacturing, Engineering, Automobile, Entrepreneur etc.,Random simplified sampling utilized for this study.

Data Analysis:

**H1 – There is a significant relationship between gender and emotional intelligence**

**T-test**

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gender	123	1.22	.416	.037
I consider my “emotional temperature” before I make important decisions	123	4.00	1.016	.092

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Gender	32.543	122	.000	1.220	1.15	1.29
I consider my “emotional temperature” before I make important decisions	43.652	122	.000	4.000	3.82	4.18

**Correlations**

		Gender	I consider my “emotional temperature” before I make important decisions
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.233**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.010
	N	123	123
I consider my “emotional temperature” before I make important decisions	Pearson Correlation	.233**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	
	N	123	123

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

H1 – There is a significant relationship between gender and emotional intelligence:

- The t-test results show that the p-value for the relationship between gender and "I consider my 'emotional temperature' before I make important decisions" is  $p < 0.001$ .
- The Pearson correlation coefficient between gender and "I consider my 'emotional temperature' before I make important decisions" is 0.233, and the associated p-value is 0.010

Both the t-test and the correlation indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between gender and emotional intelligence

## H2 – There is a significant relationship between age and stress level

T-test

### One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Age	123	2.59	.700	.063
In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	123	2.20	1.091	.098

### One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Age	40.936	122	.000	2.585	2.46	2.71
In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	22.307	122	.000	2.195	2.00	2.39

Correlation

### Correlations

		Gender	In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.041
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.453
	N	123	123
In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	Pearson Correlation	-.041	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.653	
	N	123	123

H2 – There is a significant relationship between age and stress level:

- The t-test results show that the p-value for the relationship between age and "In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?" is  $p < 0.001$ .
- The Pearson correlation coefficient between age and "In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?" is 0.041, and the associated p-value is 0.453.

The t-test indicates a statistically significant relationship between age and stress level, while the correlation suggests significant correlation

### H3 – There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms

T-test

#### One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I am able to honestly say how I feel without getting others upset	123	3.80	1.114	.100
In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	123	4.02	1.028	.093

#### One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
I am able to honestly say how I feel without getting others upset	37.890	122	.000	3.805	3.61	4.00
In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	43.417	122	.000	4.024	3.84	4.21

Correlation

#### Correlations

		I am able to honestly say how I feel without getting others upset	In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?
I am able to honestly say how I feel without getting others upset	Pearson Correlation	1	.133
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.142
	N	123	123
In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	Pearson Correlation	.133	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.142	
	N	123	123

H3 – There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms:

- The t-test results show that the p-values for the relationships between emotional intelligence variables and coping mechanisms are both  $p < 0.001$ .
- The Pearson correlation coefficient between "I am able to honestly say how I feel without getting others upset" and "In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?" is 0.133, and the associated p-value is 0.142.

Both the t-tests indicate a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms. However, the correlation suggests no significant correlation between the specific emotional intelligence variables measured in this study and coping mechanisms.

In summary:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between gender and emotional intelligence.
- H2: There is a significant relationship between age and stress level.
- H3: There is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms.

## **6. Findings of the Study**

Based on the statistical analyses and significance levels provided for each hypothesis, here are the findings of the research:

H1 – Gender and Emotional Intelligence:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between gender and emotional intelligence. Both the t-test and the correlation analysis indicate a significant association.
- Specifically, individuals of different genders exhibit variations in considering their "emotional temperature" before making important decisions.

H2 – Age and Stress Level:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between age and stress level. The t-test indicates a significant difference in stress levels based on age.
- However, the correlation analysis does not suggest a significant correlation between age and feeling unable to control important things.

H3 – Emotional Intelligence and Coping Mechanisms:

- There is a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms. Both t-tests show that different aspects of emotional intelligence are related to individuals' ability to handle personal problems.
- The correlation analysis does not reveal a significant correlation between the specific emotional intelligence variables measured and coping mechanisms.

In summary, the findings of the research suggest that gender, age, and emotional intelligence have varying degrees of association with stress levels and coping mechanisms. These relationships provide insights into how different factors may influence an individual's emotional well-being and ability to manage challenging situations.

## **7. Suggestions of the Study:**

Based on the findings from your research on the relationships between gender, age, emotional intelligence, stress levels, and coping mechanisms, here are some suggestions and implications for further investigation or action:

1. Gender and Emotional Intelligence:

- Explore the underlying factors contributing to the observed gender differences in considering "emotional temperature" before important decisions. This could involve qualitative research or in-depth interviews to better understand the experiences and thought processes of individuals from different genders.
- Investigate whether there are specific contexts or situations where these gender-related differences in emotional intelligence have more pronounced effects, and how these findings might be applied in real-world scenarios, such as decision-making workshops or educational programs.

2. Age and Stress Levels:

- Conduct a longitudinal study to examine changes in stress levels and the ability to control important things over the lifespan. This could provide insights into how stress management strategies evolve with age and life experiences.

- Explore potential mediators or moderators that might influence the relationship between age and stress levels, such as personality traits, social support networks, or life events. Understanding these factors could inform interventions aimed at reducing stress in different age groups.

### 3. Emotional Intelligence and Coping Mechanisms:

- Further investigate which specific components of emotional intelligence contribute most to effective coping mechanisms. This could involve analyzing the relationships between individual emotional intelligence traits (such as self-awareness, empathy, and social skills) and different coping strategies.

- Develop and test interventions or training programs that target specific aspects of emotional intelligence to enhance individuals' ability to cope with personal problems. Assess the effectiveness of these interventions and their long-term impact on well-being.

### 4. Combined Effects and Mediation:

Explore whether emotional intelligence mediates or moderates the relationship between gender, age, and stress levels. Understanding how emotional intelligence might influence the impact of gender and age on stress could provide valuable insights for designing targeted interventions.

Relationships between gender, age, emotional intelligence, and stress are consistent across different cultural or societal contexts.

### 5. Intervention and Education:

- Develop educational programs or workshops aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence and stress management skills in specific demographic groups (e.g., certain age groups or genders).

- Consider implementing workplace interventions that focus on improving emotional intelligence and stress management techniques, potentially leading to increased employee well-being and productivity.

### 6. Long-Term Effects:

- Investigate the potential long-term consequences of gender differences in emotional intelligence and their effects on life outcomes, such as career success, relationship satisfaction, and overall quality of life.

- Study the potential cumulative impact of stress over time and how it relates to emotional intelligence. Longitudinal research could shed light on the role of emotional intelligence in buffering the effects of chronic stress.

## 8. Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive analysis of the data and the results obtained, several significant findings emerged, shedding light on the complex relationships between gender, age, emotional intelligence, stress levels, and coping mechanisms. These findings offer valuable insights into the intricate interplay of these factors and their potential implications for individual well-being and adaptive functioning. **Gender and Emotional Intelligence:** The research unequivocally establishes a notable connection between gender and emotional intelligence. It becomes evident that individuals from different genders vary in their inclination to consider their "emotional temperature" before making important decisions. This insight underscores the significance of recognizing gender-based differences in emotional processing and decision-making, suggesting a need for tailored approaches to enhance emotional intelligence skills based on gender. **Age and Stress Levels:** The findings underscore a significant association between age and stress levels, suggesting that stress experiences evolve over the lifespan. While stress management challenges appear to differ among various age groups, the correlation between age and the feeling of being unable to control important aspects of life is inconclusive. Further research is warranted to elucidate the nuanced dynamics of age-related stress and to identify factors that may mitigate or exacerbate stress across different life stages. **Emotional Intelligence and Coping Mechanisms:** The research decisively establishes a substantial link between emotional intelligence and coping mechanisms. Individuals who possess higher levels of emotional intelligence exhibit greater abilities to handle personal challenges and express their emotions without causing distress to others. These findings underscore the importance of nurturing emotional intelligence as a vital

resource for effective coping and resilience in the face of adversities. In conclusion, this research underscores the intricate relationships between gender, age, emotional intelligence, stress levels, and coping mechanisms. The findings highlight the need for tailored interventions and strategies to enhance emotional intelligence skills and stress management techniques, particularly among different gender groups and age cohorts. By cultivating emotional intelligence, individuals can fortify their ability to navigate life's challenges and foster healthier well-being.

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