

# Impact of Emotional Intelligence in Managing Stress: A Critical Analysis in Respect to Healthcare Sector through Literature Review

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**Abstract-** The COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on health systems in most countries, and in particular, on the mental health and well-being of health workers on the frontlines of pandemic response efforts. The purpose of this study is to provide an evidence-based overview of the adverse mental health impacts on healthcare workers during times of crisis and other challenging working conditions and to highlight the importance of prioritizing and protecting the mental health and well-being of the healthcare workforce, particularly in the context of the emotional intelligence.

**Index Terms-** Emotional Intelligence, Stress, Mental Health

## I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the issues of mental as well as occupational stress among healthcare workers across the globe. Most health care professionals are trained to put patients first. Self-care is not always prioritized among clinicians, as they may fear judgment from others or feel selfish at the thought of attending their own needs. Practicing self-care could however be imperative to coping with the obligations, workload, and demands of their profession, and help health professionals gain a better balance or integration between their work and their spare time— as well as help protect their health, well-being, and satisfaction with both their work and overall life. Emotional Intelligence helps to improve the performance of healthcare leaders. Healthcare leaders with higher emotional intelligence they have marvelous leadership qualities. Healthcare sector is a blooming sector in this era so negative feelings must be turned into a positive one by the effect of emotional intelligence specially after the outbreak of COVID.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Let us quickly be acquainted with the psychological constructs under study. Ensuring provision of professional, emotional and social support in the workplace as part of stress management should be seen as being preventative. One of the main problems in this respect is that assessment tools are not predictive (Rick et al. 2001).

In the cluster where higher levels of mental health problems were reported, the medical and nursing staff showed more interest in skills for self-rescue and showed more urgent

desires to seek help from psychotherapists and psychiatrists. Medical and nursing staff with sub threshold disturbances did not think they needed help from others. The other workers saw a greater need to obtain help from professionals than from close family and friends. Also, the modalities of obtaining services vary according to their levels of mental health problems. Medical and nursing staff with sub threshold and mild disturbances preferred to obtain such services from media sources, while staff with heavier burdens wanted to seek services directly from professionals (Kang et al., 2020).

Lazarus (1966) considered stress to be a transactional phenomenon between the person and the environment. The hypothesis of this theory is describing an individual's process which including cognitive evaluations and coping responses. The consequence of stress is not only affecting work performance, but also its effects on the individual's physical and psychological health. Levels of health problem that can occur when stress is prolonged or cannot be avoided. For instance, experiencing physical and mental symptoms, it is starting from a headache, backache, feeling mentally fatigued at the end of the day, frustrated, tense or angry, developing to chronic illness like cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, colitis, depression and/or anxiety (Wright K 2014; Wicks 2010)

Homaei (2009) stated that, under the best of circumstances, Intelligence Quotient determines only up to 20% of one's success. The remaining 80% is dependent on other factors such as emotional intelligence. In fact, EI can justify a person's failure with high level IQ and unexpected success of persons with medium IQs

Goleman (1998) on the other hand points out to emotional self-awareness, self-control, empathy, problem solving, conflict management, leadership, etc. as the characteristics of an emotionally intelligent person.

Sharma (2012) Emotional Intelligence is a concept that is not new to the Indian reader. Though there is hardly any serious research on EI from the Indian perspective anyone who has read through the ancient Indian literature will be aware that EI is embedded in every text.

Culture plays a significant role in deciding a person's response to any given situation and it has been recognized that basic psychological processes depend on socio-cultural practices and meanings (Triandis, 2000)

This is important because effective leadership skills in healthcare workers enable them to develop relationships with colleagues and patients and achieve desired results of patient care and management through coordination of these relationships (Taft, 2011).

Goleman (1995) argues that, in achieving life success, emotional intelligence has been found to matter twice as much as intellectual and technical skill. The healthcare profession is a helping profession or vocation that gives direct service to dependent individuals through interpersonal relationships.

The relationship between the carer and the patient plays a very important role and a person's emotional intelligence helps them to identify the patient's emotions, needs and requirements and helps create an environment in which more effective care can be provided (Eriguc et al, 2014)

The importance of emotional intelligence has been 10 emphasized more strenuously in the past decade in the healthcare industry (Freshwater and Stickley, 2004)

Research indicates that a typical manager in the Healthcare industry can spend as much as 40% of their time managing conflict. If a manager is spending up to 40% of their time managing conflict, then the work environment is emotionally charged and stressful for both patients and healthcare providers. The healthcare providers may feel under supported, overworked or not equipped to handle the day-to-day challenges (Copperman, 2010).

Krueger et al (2000) states that the area of Emotional Intelligence should be taken very seriously in the recruitment and selection process by using EQ competencies to help predict how potential employees will behave in the future and how they will interact with another employee

This research study follows the realist paradigm of research which means that the research situation is viewed from an

objective point of view but it is also understood that the researcher's knowledge will help in making the observations (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2000).

Quantitative methods have been used by several researchers in research papers on measuring emotional intelligence (Quoidback and Hansenne, 2009, Fernandez et al, 2012, Beauvais et al, 2011).

The quantitative methods of research are objective methods of research that provide a rational perspective on the situation. They are deductive methods that show the existing situation in the form of numbers and explain the facts with an emphasis on prediction (Kaplan, 2004).

Saunders et al (2011) research is the development of knowledge of a particular subject area in a particular field. It is an activity that explores and determines reasons for a subject to be examined in order to describe, explain, forecast and control the subject matter in order to increase knowledge

#### Objectives of the Study

- To comprehend the role of emotional intelligence of employees in various sectors.
- To understand the role of emotional intelligence in dealing the stress levels of healthcare employees.
- To recommend the interventions required
- To develop strategies to overcome stress and
- To analyze the role of emotional intelligence in coping with stress of healthcare sector employees.

### III. METHODOLOGY

A complete review of obtainable literature is done to find out the importance of emotional intelligence and its effect on stress management practices carried out by the healthcare sectors. The literature review is done within the broad objectives of the research. The various sources of the review are books, research articles, journals, case studies, thesis and form of publications. The available literature on the subject and objective has been put into bibliographic tools to classify the trends and gaps available for further research. Literature not appropriate with our field of study and deficient validity are not elaborated further. The studies from the various literature are enumerated and presented here in appropriate citation style.

#### Analysis

We first start with role of emotional intelligence in different sectors. Many research papers have specified that people want abilities or competencies and use their intellect to realize their objectives in life. The capabilities can be cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills which are very critical for success in work. The second and third ability can be to

coupe up with own's emotional intelligence leading to success by dealing with all toughest attributes. Developing individual's emotional intelligence is an optimal process in the success story. It can be implemented by following four phases namely the preparation, training, transfer and maintenance and evaluation phase as outlined by Goleman to achieve success (Aarti Singh, 2012).

In the manufacturing sector it was also recognized that pivotal factors like self-awareness, empathy, motivation, social skills and self-regulation are vital in analyzing and forecasting the employees work performance (Khokar & Kush, 2009). On the other hand, a vivid study done in the software industry to measure the influence of emotional intelligence on their work attitude demonstrated that emotional intelligence does not have much of an impact on the worker's attitude in this sector (Imran Basha et al, 2020).

From the following literature review the said independent variables are determined to initiate our research process;

- Mental Health
- Occupational stress
- Individual support.

### Stress in Healthcare Sector

Healthcare workers jobs is very strenuous and stressful as because there is no fixed schedule in this sector. Duty timings is totally based on rotational basis so high emotional intelligence plays a very important and integral role as because low emotional intelligence can lead to more stress in the work place. Stress can lead to depression if it is not controlled in the right time. During Covid times we had seen how the healthcare workers effected physically, mentally & emotionally during those hardship days. Emotional Intelligence creates empathy among all sections of healthcare workers as a result it improves relationship with patient and patient parties. During difficult and stressful situations health workers can be more patient and understanding. As we know healthcare workers always have to deal with difficult and stressful situations as because a patient's stability of health can be predicted it can change time to time specially in case of cardiac arrest, renal failure, septic shock, road traffic accidents etc. So, in case of these kind code blue and code brown is declared as soon as it is declared a healthcare workers became cautious about the situation and they have to run for their duty in this kind of situation so it involves great amount of stress.

### Occupational Stress of Health workers

Health workers suffer from depression due to excessive work pressure particularly their due time is not fixed it is prepared as per the requirement of the hospital, no job satisfaction due to irregular routine and along with that they cannot compromise with the services provided to the patients and they to work on emergency basis. Seniors always over dominate the junior and pressure is on both sides due to this

they suffer from physical stress also and suffer from different health issues.

Comprehending the influencing factor of emotional intelligence and its effect on stress and adopting stress management practices thereof, exhibits the role of emotional intelligence in managing stress levels of healthcare employees.

A consolidative review paper observed the relationship between emotional intelligence and health related issues like stress, burnout, employee turnover and lack of motivation. Thus indicating there is a huge scope of emotional intelligence practices which can leads to reduced stress levels, better performance in the workplace and job satisfaction (Deeba Hasan & Kamalanabhan (2018). Some important aspects are also enumerated below based on the in-depth literature review in the essence of the healthcare sector;

- Stress management will result into by reducing absenteeism
- It is very important to retain trained healthcare workers in health sector so stress management plays a very integral role.
- If employees have emotional wellbeing, then they are physically well and can contribute their best for the organization especially in healthcare sector.
- Company's culture should be such that the stress can be managed easily and their productivity will increase along with creativity.
- Time management plays a very important role in stress management
- It is very important to create a safe working environment for the employees in healthcare sector.
- Issues and grievances must be discussed and actions must be taken earliest to reduce stress.
- Demands of the employees must be listen and fulfilled in judicious manner in tune with the corporate policies.
- Employee engagement increases in workplace if stress is reduced and vice versa.

### Outcome of Mental Stress

Stress is multifaceted and it depends on individual to individual. So emotional intelligence helps in delivering better patient care along with delivering quality patient care. Emotional Intelligence in healthcare have a positive outcome for proving long term care setting.

It helps in understanding one's emotion and thereby identifying it. As we know healthcare workers jobs are more complex and stressful so it is very important to be flexible, have self-control, to be positive where emotional intelligence plays a very important and integral role in it. Thus, it helps in reducing stress, achieving goals, building strong relationship etc.

#### IV. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

Emotional intelligence is one's capacity to act according to the stress. It helps an individual to cope with ornery emotions, low confidence & morale thus supplanting it with high morale, insight & positive emotions. Individuals with low emotional intelligence struggles with anxiety & other stress related issues. The person with higher emotional intelligence has more ability to work in a team especially applicable to healthcare workers during emergency situation, to be successful at work, fulfilling goals along with personal growth EI plays a major role. EI necessitates understanding & distinction of sentiments for oneself and everyone else, controlling of one's emotions, compassion for others and social accomplishment. An individual with high motivation doesn't capitulate in front of stress.

##### Methods to measure Emotional Intelligence

- Perceived Stress Scale
- Self-report
- Scoring Pattern
- Other reports assessment
- Ability based assessment

A study on emotional intelligence and stress coping styles of doctors was done by Sharma and Kumar (2016) among very selected private hospital doctors in Chandigarh. The research revealed that the emotional intelligence and stress coping styles are moderately high among the doctors which is indeed a matter of great concern. In order to take immediate remedial interventions, certain program like assertiveness training, personality development programs and the introduction of recreational activities to reduce stress was initiated. Measures were also taken to build a conducive work environment for the doctors.

#### V. CONCLUSION

An inclusive review of literature depicts the importance of emotional intelligence and associate stress management of employees in various sectors and specifically the healthcare sector. The healthcare sector elaborated the need for improving emotional attributes like self-emotional aspect, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills. Inculcating these factors will produce visible results in improving the employees' productivity, quality of work life and job satisfaction. It will also result in reducing the stress levels, boasting interpersonal communication and decision-making skills. All these things can be achieved both in individual and professional growth (Aelita Skarbaliene 2019). A significant change can be brought in the coping with strategies like staying strong and healthy and using stress

management practices effectively can boost the morale of the employees (Smith and Pergola)

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