



Journal of New Studies in Sport Management

Journal homepage: <https://jnssm.uk.ac.ir/>

Vol 1 Issue 1/October 2020/53-58



Relationship between Creativity and Emotional Intelligence in Sport Organizations: A Gender Comparison

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Doi: 10.22103/jnssm.2020.16424.1002

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: September 2020

Accept: September 2020

Online publish: October 2020

Keywords:

Creativity

Emotional intelligence

Gender

Sport organizations

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate a relationship between creativity and emotional intelligence elements sport organizations. The study population includes 250 Iranian participants who were serving in different sport organizations including 125 males (Mage = 52.8 years, SD = 6.2years) and 125 females (Mage =45.3 years, SD = 4.6 years). Three instruments have been used in this survey: (i) General information questionnaire (ii) Emotional Intelligence questionnaire (iii) Creativity questionnaires (RAUDSEPP). The findings achieved through emotional intelligence and creativity questionnaires demonstrated that men and women were different in some aspects of relationship between creativity and emotional intelligence elements. Positive relationship between creativity and all elements of emotional intelligence except between creativity and controlling emotion element have been found. Other findings discussed various aspects of emotional intelligence and creativity in both genders. We can conclude that cognitive and behavioral systems of men and women are functionally distinct; so, existence of conflict in relationship between EI and creativity in men and women participants in this study may be due to gender differences.

Introduction

During the past decades, emotional intelligence (EI) and creativity have become one of the most interesting research topics, and it is still unclear how the concept of EI relating to creativity considering gender differences. EI and creativity are significant in predicting a number of real-life outcomes, such as occupational and academic success and quality of interpersonal relations, in a differentiated manner than general intelligence or personality do (Lam and Kirby, 2002; Petrides et

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al., 2004; Petrides et al., 2007). More specifically, several research findings indicate that EI predicts happiness and relevant dimensions, such as life satisfaction, positive affect, and depression-proneness, over and above other personality traits (e.g., those described by the Big Five personality model) and also creativity (Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2007; Petrides and Furnham, 2003).

The most complicated and highest manifestation of human thought is inherent in his/her creative thinking. Creativity means creating a new and appropriate design with high value. In other words, creativity is using the mental abilities to create a new idea or concept (Keating, 1980).

Previous studies on the role of gender in creativity stated that men were more successful in science, art, literature, music and technical development in compare with women (Eccles, 1985; Eysenck, 1995; Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974; Reiss, 1999). Baer and Kaufman (2008) argued that any gender differences in creativity probably stems from environmental factors (Baer and Kaufman, 2008). Other authors have suggested that the cause of masculine superiority in creative achievement is of a biological nature (Eysenck, 1995). Simonton considered the creative process to be fundamentally the same among humans, because it emerges directly out of some fundamental features of the human brain as an information-processing system and according to him, there are still aspects of the phenomenon that can operate differently depending on gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic level or demographic variables (Simonton, 2002).

Emotional Intelligence can be described as a construct within the broad framework of human cognitive abilities (Mayer et al., 2000). EI was first conceptualized by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as “the ability to monitor one's own and others emotions, to discriminate among them and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions” (Salovey and Mayer, 1990). EI is generally considered as an actual ability that comprises an interrelated set of emotional–cognitive skills (Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Mayer and Salovey, 2004).

In the area of emotional dimension of human beings as explained by Grossman & Wood female gender has experiences positive and negative emotions more intensely than the male gender (Grossman and Wood, 1993). Women have extraordinary capabilities in emotional knowledge, expression of positive and negative emotions, interpersonal competencies, and they are more socially adept (Brody and Hall, 2000; Ciarrochi et al, 2005; Hall, 1987; Hargie et al, 1995). In the recent years, researches have investigated how emotional abilities might contribute to creativity in adults and they explained the relationship between these variables.

Alavinia (2012), claimed that there was relationship between emotional intelligence and learners' mentalities that with manipulating the thinking styles in an appropriate manner the learners' level of emotional intelligence will improve (Alavinia, 2012); also, the number of researchers attempted to find out only the relationship between EI and creativity that some of them have demonstrated the negative or positive relation (Zenasni and Lubart, 2009; Chan, 2005) and others didn't find any relationship between these variables (Gustello et al., 2004; Schutte et al., 2004). Chan D.W. (2005) also did not find any significant relationship between EI and creativity with regard to gender and age (Chan, 2005).

However, studies on gender differences in relation to EI and creativity in adults are rare and the quality of the relationship between creativity and EI elements with regards to gender is not well known. Therefore, the focus of this study will be on assessing the relevance of creativity and EI elements with respect to gender differences.

Methodology

For the purpose of this study 250 participants including 125 males (Mage = 52.8 years, SD = 6.2 years) and 125 females (Mage = 45.3 years, SD = 4.6 years) were selected through random sampling approach. All participants were serving in different sport organizations as sport managers, sport administrators, coaches and physical education teachers. Informed consent form was read and signed prior to participation. Three instruments have been used in this survey: (i) General information questionnaire (ii) Emotional Intelligence questionnaire (iii) Creativity questionnaires (RAUDSEPP). The psychometric features of each instrument are described as below:

General information questionnaire (individual) required by the study included demographic information such as age, sex, job experience, academic degree of participants.

The emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (EIQue) constructed by Petrides & Furnham (2001), which consist of 30 items and it includes four subscales: 1) Emotional understanding, 2) controlling the emotions, 3) social skills and 4) optimism. Each item has been assigned a score ranging from 1=completely disagree to 5=completely agree (Likert type) based on self-rated. The EIQue has been constructed with the aim of providing comprehensive coverage of the EI domain (Petrides and Furnham, 2005).

Creativity questionnaire (RAUDSEPP) was devised by Eugene Raudsepp in 1982. RAUDSEPP test generally fall into a few categories. The most prevalent type is known as 'Task-Oriented' that measures one's fluency and flexibility in generating new ideas. Another category of this test is "Personality-Based", which focuses on personality traits, attitudes, motivations, values, and interests. The latter type of test measures the variables that predispose a person to think creatively (Raudsepp and Eugene, 1985). This questionnaire includes 50 questions and each question has a Likert scale of five items from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=not sure, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree. Internal consistency and test-retest measure have been used to found out the reliability of the questionnaires that each one was at acceptable level. Three questionnaires including general information questionnaire, the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and Creativity questionnaire (RAUDSEPP) as evaluation tools, distributed among sport managers , sport administrators , coaches and physical education teachers from different sport organizations of Iran. We asked the participants to answer the questions as they are, not as they think or desire to be. All completed questionnaires were collected after a few days.

Findings

The findings of this study indicated that there was a moderate, positive and significant correlation between emotional understanding and creativity score in male $r(125) = .34$; $p < 0.01$, but there was a strong, positive and significant correlation between emotional understanding and creativity score in female participants $r(125) = .53$; $p < 0.01$.

Also, we found a moderate, negative and significant correlation between controlling the emotions and creativity in male participants $r(125) = -.36$; $p < 0.01$, while a strong, positive and significant correlation was found in female participants between controlling the emotions and creativity $r(125) = -.65$; $p < 0.01$.

Other results regarding the relation between social skills and creativity indicated that there was a strong, positive and significant correlation in male participants $r(125) = .68$; $p < 0.01$; besides, we found a very strong, positive significant correlation in females participants between social skills and creativity $r(125) = .83$; $p < 0.01$.

In comparison with the moderate, positive, and significant correlation between optimism and creativity in male participants $r(125) = .32$; $p < 0.01$, this feature was rather stronger, however positive and significant in female participants $r(125) = .68$; $p < 0.01$.

A summary of all the Pearson correlation coefficients among the variables with regard to gender are presented in Table1.

Table1. Correlations coefficient between creativity and emotional intelligence elements

Variables	Pearson			
	Gender	N	Correlation(r)	Sig(2-tailed)
emotional understanding and creativity	Male	125	.34	.008*
	Female	125	.53	.009*
controlling the emotions and creativity	Male	125	-.36	.010*
	Female	125	-.65	.000*
social skills and creativity	Male	125	.68	.000*
	Female	125	.83	.000*
optimism and creativity	Male	125	.32	.007
	Female	125	.68	.000*

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

Discussion and Conclusion

This study provided strong psychometric support for relationship between creativity and elements of EI with respect to gender. Our results elucidated that there is a significant relationship between creativity and all elements of EI in both genders. The results were consistent with previous studies (Andersson and Ryhammer, 1998; Luther et al., 2000; Aljosscha et al., 2006; Reindel and Robert, 2006; Batastini, 2001), but interpreting our data indicated that men and women were different in some aspects regarding the relationship between creativity and EI elements.

The results show that there was strong and positive relationship between two EI elements such as emotional understanding and optimism with creativity in women in comparison with men participants. Social skills as one of the EI elements were in strong and positive relation with creativity in both genders but this relation was stronger in women in compare with men participants. Both genders showed negative relationship between controlling emotion and creativity, however strong degree of relationship has been found in women and moderate relationship one in men participants. The results were consistent with findings reported by (Rego et al., 2007; Moore, 2007; Salovey, 2002).

A review of the literatures on EI and creativity explained that origin of these relations could be brain functions in human and also a study about brain functions of men and women may be concluded that biological, psychological and social factors are the reason for gender differences in relation to creativity and EI which we have discussed in this investigation. moreover, with considering theory proposed by Baron-Cohen (2002) the women brain is predominantly structured to feel empathy, while the men brain predominantly seeks to understand and construct systems (Baron-Cohen, 2002), we can conclude that cognitive and behavioral systems of men and women are functionally distinct; so, existence of conflict in relationship between EI and creativity in men and women participants in this study may be due to gender differences which we mentioned in this investigation.

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