Demographic Correlates of Emotional Intelligence (EI) among Teachers in Nepal

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Abstract: Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to know and manage emotions well. Identifying how the socio-demographic factors relate to teachers' emotional intelligence was the general objective of this study. A correlational study was conducted among 519 teachers of Kathmandu and Palpa from 20 schools and 5 colleges. Data were collected by convenience sampling using the survey method. Assessment of Emotions Scale (AES), a psychological test to assess EI, was translated to Nepali language and used as a tool for data collection. Data about some demographic characteristics (like age, gender, religion, etc.) were also collected. The EI did not correlate to age, r= .08, p>.05 and income, r=-.02, p>.05. It was also found by a t-test that gender, marital status, religious affiliation, and family type did not affect the EI of teachers. Lack of relationship may imply emotional intelligence as an inherited ability, not an acquired one.

Keywords: Emotion; empathy; self-awareness; school teachers; college teachers

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to know and manage one's own emotions and know others' emotions. It is the ability to attend to, process, and act upon emotional experiences in a way that caters to one's valued goals (Gardner & Moore, 2007). It has been considered an intelligence among many. So, simply put, EI is the intelligence to comprehend emotions and behave accordingly. Some people are more intelligent in emotions than others. It is a mental ability (Mayer, Caruso, et al., 2016). This ability includes four factors- perceiving emotions, understanding them,

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managing them, and facilitating thought using emotions (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso, & Sitarenios, 2003). Theoretically, it is a cooperative combination of intelligence and emotions (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004). Goleman (1995) has proposed five dimensions to EI – knowing one's emotion, managing one's emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others (also known as empathy), and handling relationships (Muchinsky, 2006).

Ponmozhi and Ezhilbharathy (2017) found a significant correlation of EI with school teachers' age and the number of children. They also found gender to be a strong predictor of EI. Similarly, age was found to be correlated to emotional intelligence among teachers (Birola et al., 2009). Educational level did not have an effect on the EI of teachers (Birola et al., 2009) in Turkey. In Malaysia, teachers in residential schools were higher in EI than in regular schools (Ishak et al., 2010). Intuitively, we expect EI to correlate to age and educational level and female gender to be keener in EI.

This research aims to investigate demographic variables of teachers as correlates of emotional intelligence. Such studies that see the influence of age, income, gender, and other demographic variables among teachers of Nepal have not been carried out yet. The correlation and association might provide good insights about EI which has been shown to play an effective role in career or life successes. In the case of teachers, EI can have effects on students' performance. In Pakistan, teachers' EI was clearly correlated with their own performance (Asrar-ul-Haq et al., 2017). For another example, Rybak et al. (2010) suggest that the emotional intelligence of educators has a direct impact on the academic achievement of students and they can model EI for students. It is also necessary for their own personal development as shown by research among counseling teachers (Mustaffa et al., 2013). In Iran, more emotionally intelligent sports teachers suffered less burnout (Saiiari, et al., 2011). Emotional intelligence is correlated positively to work satisfaction and life satisfaction (Ignata & Clipa, 2012). The empirical pieces of evidence show that emotional intelligence is necessary for work-related factors ranging from performance to satisfaction. The study of demographic correlates of EI is useful to have insight for the selection of new teachers or other kinds of employees or make necessary interventions for existing educators.

This study aims to identify the degree of correlation between age, income, and family size with EI. Another objective is to compare two genders, family types, and marital statuses in terms of EI. Do ethnicities, educational qualifications, religious

affiliation, and teachers' departments affect EI? This research question will also be addressed.

Method

In the quantitative design, a survey was administered to 519 teachers working in 5 colleges and 20 schools of Kathmandu and Palpa for correlational study using the Assessment of Emotions Scale (AES) which was formerly called Schutte Self-report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT), a reliable and valid psychological test to measure emotional intelligence. Demographic variables were added to the questionnaire. AES consists of 33 items on a Likert scale with three items reverse-scored. AES, made by Schutte et al. (2009), was translated to Nepali, and items were kept in both Nepali and English languages. Scores in AES range from 33 to 165. Data were collected by convenience sampling with the help of trained assistants. The participants were informed of the purpose of the research orally and their signature was collected for consent. Their name was not asked to ensure that they gave a genuine response. Kathmandu means Kathmandu valley and consists of three districts. AES measured EI. Since the survey used a questionnaire as a tool of data collection, participants self-reported their responses including their biographical information like age, education, gender, religion, and marital status.

Results

The mean emotional intelligence score for teachers was 128.02 (SD=11.75). Age (M=31.58, SD=9.67), monthly income (M=26015.13.46, SD=15363.34), and family size (M=5.07, SD=2.11) were other quantifiable demographic variables asked from participants. Table 1 shows that 11 participants did not reveal their income.

Tabel 1. Descriptive Statistics of Age, Income, and Family Size

|	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	519	18	69	31.58	9.673
Monthly Income	508	5000	110000	26015.13	15363.343
Family size	516	1	18	5.07	2.115

Correlation coefficients for age and EI (r=.077, p>.05), for monthly income and EI (r=-.016, p>.05), and for family size and EI (r=-.03, p>.05) were all insignificant. Table 2 and figure 1 illustrate them further.

Tabel 2. Coefficients of Correlation

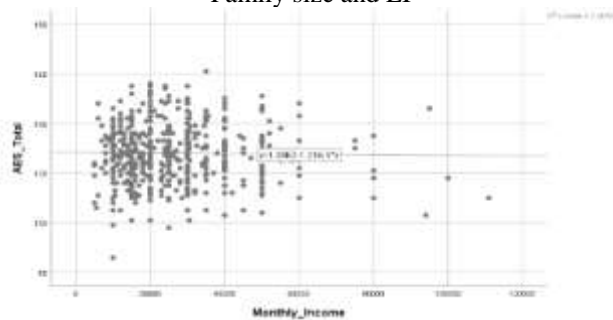| Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation coefficient	p value
Age	EI	.077	.079
Monthly Income	EI	-.016	.722
Family Size	EI	.03	.492
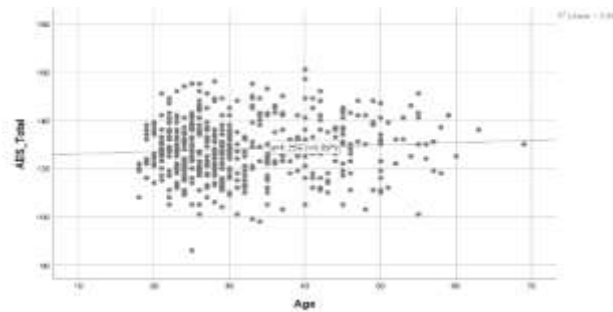
Age and EI
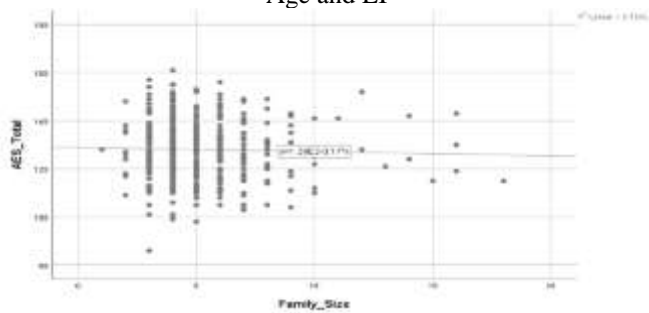
Family size and EI

Monthly income and EI
Figure 1. Scatterplots for Correlates of EI

t-tests for independent means revealed that gender of teachers, location of teaching, teachers' family type, and their marital status did not affect emotional intelligence. Table 3 below shows t values and corresponding p values.

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Table 3. t Values for Various Independent Means

Basis of comparison	Levene's Test		t-test		
	F	p	t	df	p
Location (Kathmandu/Palpa)	.034	.853	-.701	517	.483
Gender (Male/Female)	.078	.780	.191	517	.849
Family type (Nuclear/Joint)	.009	.925	-1.266	516	.206
Marital Status (Single/Married)	.073	.787	-.820	516	.413

One-way ANOVA showed that there is no difference in EI of teachers based on their faculties (or departments), educational levels (academic qualification), ethnicities, and religious affiliation. The ANOVA tables are given in table 4. Departments considered were arts, education, management science, and others. Educational levels considered were literate (for 10th grade), high school, bachelor, master, and MPhil-PhD. Ethnicities considered were Brahman (or Bahun), Chhetri, Newar, Indigenous group 1(that included Tamang, Gurung, Magar, Rai) and Indigenous group 2 (that included Dalit, Muslim). Religions included Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, and others.

Table 4. ANOVA Tables of EI Scores for Teachers' Department, Education, Ethnicity and Religion

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Department	Between Groups	974.509	4	243.627	1.761	.135
	Within Groups	70151.234	507	138.365		
	Total	71125.742	511			
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Educational Level	Between Groups	305.093	4	76.273	.550	.699
	Within Groups	71146.714	513	138.688		
	Total	71451.807	517			
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Ethnicity	Between Groups	470.904	4	117.726	.852	.493
	Within Groups	70860.324	513	138.129		
	Total	71331.228	517			
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Religious affiliation	Between Groups	363.249	3	121.083	.877	.453
	Within Groups	71089.595	515	138.038		
	Total	71452.844	518			

Discussion

Lack of significant correlation means teachers' increasing age or income does not increase EI. Similarly, family size does not matter for EI. Likewise, family type, marital status, location of teaching, gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, educational degree, and department do not determine EI. This lack of association implies that emotional intelligence is not very much biographically or demographically determined. Emotional intelligence, as a learned ability, is questionable. It might be very much genetically determined. However, we cannot conclude about it based only on the study of teachers' EI.

The results did not correlate age to EI as Ponmozhi and Ezhilbharathy (2017) had found. Regmi et al. (2012) found that Nepalese adolescents are not different in terms of anger ethnically. That study was concerned with the expression of only one emotion. This study also shows that emotional intelligence is determined neither by ethnicity nor by religion. The EI also was not significantly different for males and females as previous studies had found (Ponmozhi & Ezhilbharathy, 2017). Similar to the finding of Birola et al. (2009), academic qualification did not influence teachers' EI.

The results of this study should be cautiously considered. Sampling was non-probability. Participants from Palpa were quite few (60) compared to those of Kathmandu (459). All respondents did not provide answers for all items. Income was noticeably not responded to. Since only four districts have been considered, the findings may not be generalizable for the whole country with 77 districts.

In the future, research can be carried out to determine how EI correlates to job performance, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, counterproductive work behaviors (deviant workplace behaviors), quality of work-life, and other work-related variables. This study has ignored the correlation of subscales of AES (or SSEIT) with demographic variables. Follow-up studies can be done in that direction too.

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