

# Self- Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence among Creative Professionals: A Study on Gender Differences

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## Abstract

Self-efficacy is the individuals' assessment of their capabilities to organize and execute actions required to achieve successful levels of performance. Emotional intelligence is defined as the composite set of capabilities that enable a person to manage himself/herself and others. The present study attempted to assess the impact of gender on self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of 100 creative professionals (dancers, musicians and painters), having a minimum of 5 years professional experience. For the present study, data was divided into two groups (i.e. 50 males and 50 females) of creative professionals randomly selected from three private academies of the tri-city (Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula). The t-test was applied for the purpose of statistical interpretation to test the significance of difference between these two means. Results indicated that males were found to be higher on the dimension of emotional intelligence than female creative professionals. However, no significant difference was found among male and female creative professionals on the dimension of self- efficacy. Further research however, is needed to comprehend the same.

**Keywords:** Self-Efficacy, Emotional intelligence, Gender, Creative Professionals

A 'creative professional' is a person who is employed for the extraction of skills in creative endeavours. Creative professions include writing, art, design, theatre, television, radio, motion pictures, related crafts, as well as marketing, strategy, scientific research and development, product development, engineering, some types of teaching and curriculum design, and more. Since many creative professionals (actors and writers, for example) are also employed in secondary professions, estimates of creative professionals are often inaccurate. By some estimates, approximately 10 million U.S. workers are creative professionals; depending upon the depth and breadth of the definition, this estimate may be doubled.

## **Self-Efficacy**

According to Bandura (1994) self-efficacy is “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations.” In other words, self-efficacy is a person’s belief in his or her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Bandura described these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel.

Since Bandura published his seminal paper on “Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change,” in 1977, the subject has become one of the most studied topics in psychology. As Bandura and other researchers have demonstrated, self-efficacy can have an impact on everything from psychological states to behavior to motivation.

## **The Role of Self-efficacy**

Virtually all people can identify goals they want to accomplish, things they would like to change, and things they would like to achieve. However, most people also realize that putting these plans into action is not quite so simple. Bandura and others have found that an individual’s self-efficacy plays a major role in how goals, tasks, and challenges are approached.

People with a strong sense of self-efficacy:

- View challenging problems as tasks to be mastered
- Develop deeper interest in the activities in which they participate
- Form a stronger sense of commitment to their interests and activities
- Recover quickly from setbacks and disappointments

People with a weak sense of self-efficacy:

- Avoid challenging tasks
- Believe that difficult tasks and situations are beyond their capabilities
- Focus on personal failings and negative outcomes
- Quickly lose confidence in personal abilities.(Bandura, 1982)

## **Sources of Self-Efficacy**

Beliefs begin to form in early childhood as children deal with a wide variety of experiences, tasks, and situations. However, the growth of self-efficacy does not end during youth, but continues to evolve throughout life as people acquire new skills, experiences, and understanding.

According to Bandura, there are four major sources of self-efficacy.

### **1. Mastery Experiences**

“The most effective way of developing a strong sense of efficacy is through mastery experiences,” Bandura explained. Performing a task successfully strengthens our sense of self-efficacy. However, failing to adequately deal with a task or challenge can undermine and weaken self-efficacy.

### **2. Social Modeling**

Witnessing other people successfully completing a task is another important source of self-efficacy. According to Bandura, “Seeing people similar to oneself succeed by sustained effort raises observers’ beliefs that they too possess the capabilities master comparable activities to succeed.”

### **3. Social Persuasion**

Bandura also asserted that people could be persuaded to believe that they have the skills and capabilities to succeed. Consider a time when someone said something positive and encouraging that helped you achieve a goal. Getting verbal encouragement from others helps people overcome self-doubt and instead focus on giving their best effort to the task at hand.

### **4. Psychological Responses**

Our own responses and emotional reactions to situations also play an important role in self-efficacy. Moods, emotional states, physical reactions, and stress levels can all impact how a person feels about their personal abilities in a particular situation. A person who becomes extremely nervous before speaking in public may develop a weak sense of self-efficacy in these situations (Bandura, 1997 and Zimmermen, 2000)

### **Self-Efficacy- A Review of Literature**

A study conducted by Kumar and Lal (2006) among 200 students (100 boys and 100 girls) regarding gender differences in self efficacy and related variables revealed that the high self-efficacy (HSE) group scored better on intelligence test than the low self-efficacy (LSE) group. High self-efficacy (HSE) subjects are more confident about their potentialities.

Reports on meta-analyses of the relations of self-efficacy beliefs to academic performance and persistence revealed positive and statistically significant relationships between self-efficacy beliefs and academic performance and persistence outcomes across a wide variety of subjects, experimental designs, and assessment methods. The relationships were found to be heterogeneous across studies, and the variance in reported effect sizes was partially explained by certain study characteristics. (Multon, *et.al*, 1991)

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is somewhat unusual in psychology, as the majority of writers and researchers are in agreement as to its definition, at least at the broadest level. Daniel Goleman (1996, 1998) has probably influenced the definition of emotional intelligence more than any other writer, due to the popularity of his books on the subject, though he draws heavily on the landmark work of Salovey and Mayer who previously defined emotional intelligence as: “*the ability to monitor one’s own and other’s emotions, to discriminate among them, and touse the information to guide one’s thinking and actions*” (1990).

Three distinct aspects of emotional intelligence follow from Salovey and Mayer’s definition:

- The ability to accurately appraise emotions in the self and others, through both verbal and nonverbal channels.
- The ability to regulate or control emotion in the self and others.
- The ability to use emotion to regulate and direct thought.

## Components of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has five components which are: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.

- The **first** component of emotional intelligence is self awareness which means, “having a deep understanding to one’s emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs and drives” (Goleman, 1995). People who possess this quality avoid the extremes of being overly crucial and unrealistically hopeful. Furthermore, these people know how their feelings affect them, others and their job performance (Goleman, 1995).
- The **second** component of emotional intelligence is self-regulation. This is an ongoing conversation people have with themselves, which frees them being prisoners of their feelings (Goleman, 1995). People who have high degree of self regulation have much capability of facing the ambiguities of an advancing industry than those who has low degree of self regulation.
- The **third** component of emotional intelligence is motivation, which extends to the deep inner desire to achieve for the sake of achievement. Motivated individuals want to achieve beyond their and everyone else’s expectations. Motivation makes people restless; therefore they continuously explore new horizons to find better ways of doing their jobs.
- The **fourth** component of emotional intelligence is empathy which means to be considerate and aware of other’s feelings. Empathic individuals are also effective in retaining talent because they are able to develop personal rapport with others.
- The **last** component of emotional intelligence is social skills. Individuals use their friendliness in order to have people do what they want. Social individual is an effective persuader. (Cited in, Singh, and Chauhan, 2013 ).

## **Emotional intelligence- A Review of Literature**

Studies indicate that women, on an average, are more aware of their emotions i.e show more empathy and are more adept interpersonally. Men, on the other hand, are more self-confident, optimistic, and adaptable. It was found that men are also able to handle stress better than women. In general, however, far more similarities exist than differences. Some men are empathetic as the most interpersonally sensible women are, while some women are just as able to withstand stress as the most emotionally resilient men. One plausible explanation for gender being an essential determinant for emotional intelligence could be due to the differential treatment given to boys and girls since infancy by parents and elders. Furthermore, culturally, girls are expected to be more expressive of feelings than their male counterparts.

Tapia (1999) and Dunn (2002) observed higher emotional intelligence among girls can also be explained in terms of some of their personality characteristics. As per their research girls score higher with regard to empathy, social responsibilities and interpersonal relationships than boys. More sensitivity was found towards their relationships with parents, friends and siblings. All these traits help them to acquire more emotional intelligence as compared to boys. This study is only a stepping stone in the field of emotional intelligence. Kaneez(2006). studied about the gender differences on emotional intelligence and findings showed that there is a significant difference between men and women on some subscales of emotional intelligence i.e. assertiveness, Independence, Stress Tolerance and Impulse Control.

Studies conducted by King and Sutarso (1999); Wing and Love (2001); and Singh (2002) concluded that females are higher on emotional intelligence than their male counterparts. Duckelt and Raffalli (1989) and Sandhu and Mehrotra (1999) found that females tend to be more emotional and intimate in relationships as compared to males, so their emotional intelligence ought to be higher than that of males. One plausible explanation cited for this difference was that society imposes different demands of socialization on the two genders.

## **Self-Efficacy and Emotional Intelligence : A Review of Literature**

Bandura (1977) proposes the key sources of self-efficacy as performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, and emotional arousal. Self-efficacy pertains to optimistic beliefs about being able to cope with a variety of stressors. Litt (1988) finds that self-efficacy expectations affect performance beyond what would have been expected from past performance alone.

Emotional intelligence is a dynamic construct influenced by diverse biological, psychological, and social factors. A good deal of research has been conducted on emotional intelligence and it was found to be appearing as an important factor in the prediction of personal, academic and career success. Studies on emotional intelligence with respect to various psychosocial correlates have been found in a variety of fields.

According to one study by Abdolvahabi, *et al.*, (2012) among 100 physical education teachers consisting 124 males and 74 females whose aim was to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy in practical courses among physical education teachers. The results indicated that emotional

awareness, empathy, and problem solving components has a positive and significant relationship with self-efficacy in teaching practical course and the level of job self-efficacy, while there is no significant relation in other components. Due to relationship between some of components of emotional intelligence with self-efficacy of physical education teachers lead to direct relationship overall level of emotional intelligence with self-efficacy.

Though, the above review of literature has indicated that gender has contributed to self-efficacy and emotional intelligence independently, but there is dearth of related literature on how gender has impacted both self-efficacy and emotional intelligence cumulatively, especially on a sample of creative professionals which is a major gap in research. Taking this into consideration, the present investigation is almost a first of its attempt to quantify the same especially in the Indian set-up.

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To study the effect of gender on self-efficacy of creative professionals.
2. To study the effect of gender on emotional intelligence of creative professionals.

### **Hypotheses**

1. Females will be higher on Self-Efficacy than Male creative professionals.
2. Males will be higher on Emotional Intelligence than Female creative professionals.

### **Methodology**

**Sample:** The sample for the present investigation comprised of 100 creative professionals (artists, dancers and painters), consisting of 50 males and 50 females, age ranging, 30-45 years from three Private academies of the tri-city (Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula), having a professional experience of not less than 5 years.

### **Tools**

#### **1. Emotional Intelligence Scale (from Schutte, *et al.*, 1998)**

The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT) is a 33 item Self-report measure of emotional intelligence developed by Schutte, *et al.*, (1998). The SREIS has been designed to map onto the Salovey and Mayer (1990) model of EI. Items to the test relates to three aspects of EI i.e. appraisal and expression of emotion, regulation of emotion and utilisation of emotion. The test has been found to yield positive significant relationship with Self-esteem, positive mood, persistence of effort, openness to new experiences, optimism, impulse control, grade point average, empathy and social skills on varied population.

## 2. General Self-efficacy Scale Scale (GSE; Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995)

The General Self Efficacy (GSE) scale is a self - report inventory used to assess one's level of self-efficacy. It consists of ten statements to which the respondents are to respond on a 4 point scale. The total score ranges from 10-40. It typically yielded internal consistencies between alpha .75 and .91 (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995).

### Results and Discussion

The present study attempted to assess the impact of gender on self-efficacy and emotional intelligence among 100 creative professionalists for which the data was divided into two groups i.e. 50 males and 50 female professionals randomly selected from three private academies of the Tri-city (Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula). The t-test was applied for the purpose of statistical interpretation to test the significance of difference between these two means. Results and discussion for the present study are as follows:

**Table 1: Showing Significance of Difference between Means (t-ratio) of Male and Female Creative Professionals on Self - Efficacy**

| Gender | N   | Self Efficacy |      | t-value |
|--------|-----|---------------|------|---------|
|        |     | Mean          | SD   |         |
| Male   | 50  | 34            | 2.69 | 0.679   |
| Female | 50  | 33.6          | 3.2  |         |
| Total  | 100 | 33.8          | 2.95 |         |

# Not Significant at .01 and .05 level (d.f=98)

Results summarized in Table 1 indicate the effect of gender on self- efficacy among creative professionals. The mean value for males was found to be 34 which is less than females i.e. 33.6. However, the t-value on the dimension of self efficacy was 0.679 which was found to be not significant at .01 and .05 level which indicates that gender does not play a significant role on the Self- efficacy of both male and female creative professionals. Therefore, our first hypothesis is rejected which states females will be higher on Self-Efficacy than Male creative professionals.

**Table 2: Showing Significance of Difference between Means (t-ratio) Creative Professionals on Emotional Intelligence**

| Gender | N   | Emotional Intelligence |       | t-value |
|--------|-----|------------------------|-------|---------|
|        |     | Mean                   | SD    |         |
| Male   | 50  | 122.2                  | 12.64 | 5.71*   |
| Female | 50  | 134                    | 7.29  |         |
| Total  | 100 | 128.1                  | 10.31 |         |

# Significant at .01 and .05 level (d.f=98)

Results summarized in Table 2 indicate the effect of gender on emotional intelligence among creative professionals. The mean value for males was found 122.2 while for females it was 134. However, the t-value on the dimension of emotional intelligence was 5.71 that were found to be significant at .01 and .05 level which indicates that gender does play a significant role on the emotional intelligence of both male and female professionals, where males were found to be higher on emotional intelligence than their female counterparts. Therefore, second hypothesis is accepted which states that males are higher than female professionals on the dimension of emotional intelligence.

Our present investigation reveals that gender does not have a significant effect on the self efficacy. One plausible explanation is because of the changing role and socialization of women as a result of women empowerment movement; females are better equipped with the needed skills and competencies to regulate themselves better even in the creative fields. This has been possible because of a newer wave of awareness spreading day by day for the welfare and encouragement of women in every walk of life and the creative endeavours being no exception to it. This has led to females being more assertive, financially independent and in a better position to realize their potential to the fullest and make a judicious use of it, if not better almost at the similar wavelength as their male counterparts.

Our study however reveals that male creative professionals were found to be higher on the dimension of emotional intelligence than their female counterparts in creative endeavours. One reason could be that males are found to be able to better regulate themselves emotionally and motivate themselves professionally than female creative professionals due to being able to focus better and give in their best for the up-gradation of their career due to the limited role played by them in comparison to their female counterparts, who need to play a dual role both at home and as a career women. This may have contributed to them being less balanced emotionally to strike a homeostasis between home and work.

This study however, is a novel attempt especially in the Indian Set-up to study how gender impacted both emotional intelligence and self efficacy among creative professionals. However, more researches need to be conducted on diverse populations to comprehend the same.

## **Recommendations**

When we talk about living our life happily and confidently we need to have a good control on some dimensions of our personality throughout our life, Emotional intelligence and Self Efficacy are two such dimensions which are highlighted in this investigation. Review of literature indicates that people higher on self-efficacy and emotional intelligence succeed better at work, achieve personal goals resiliently and are better at developing interpersonal relationships. Following techniques can help one to manage the two dimensions:

Skill 1: Develop the ability to control the emotions in public areas.

Skill 2: Develop the ability to solve the problems confidently.

Skill 3: Develop the ability to have a positive attitude towards the conflicts.



Skill 4: Develop the ability to bond up with others both personally and professionally.

Skill 5: Develop the ability to have control over your stress and overcome it quickly.

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