A STUDY OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF WORK-FROM-HOME IT WOMEN EMPLOYEES

1. Ms.M.Shanmugapriya: 2. **Dr.S.B.Gayathri**
[1] Research Scholar, PG and Research Department of Commerce
Nallamuthu Gounder Mahalingam College, Pollachi.
[2] Head & Associate Professor in Commerce - PA
Nallamuthu Gounder Mahalingam College, Pollachi
Email:
gayathri@ngmc.org

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic catalyzed a seismic shift in work cultures globally, pushing many employees, especially in the IT sector, into remote work environments. This study investigates the emotional intelligence (EI) levels among women employees in the Information Technology (IT) industry who work from home (WFH). The research explores how remote work impacts various dimensions of emotional intelligence—self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Using a mixed-method approach, including surveys and in-depth interviews with 50 women IT professionals in India, the study finds that while WFH improves autonomy and emotional self-regulation for many, it also presents challenges in maintaining empathy and social connectivity. Recommendations are proposed for organizations to support emotional well-being and foster EI competencies in remote environments.

Keywords: investigates, dimensions, explores, autonomy, environments.

Introduction

The digital revolution, amplified by the pandemic, has redefined the traditional work landscape. While remote work offered flexibility and safety, it also introduced complex emotional and social dynamics, especially for women employees in the IT sector. Balancing professional demands, domestic responsibilities, and isolation from peers has placed new emotional strains on this demographic. Emotional Intelligence (EI)—the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions—emerges as a crucial skill for adapting to such changes.

This paper seeks to analyze the emotional intelligence of IT women professionals working remotely and how their emotional competencies have evolved or been challenged in this paradigm.

Emotional intelligence (EI) has been widely acknowledged as a critical factor influencing employee performance in various sectors, especially in the IT industry. Dr. Pavithra Raj (2021) conducted a study to examine the relationship between EI and job performance among IT professionals. Using standardized emotional intelligence and performance appraisal questionnaires, the study found a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and job efficiency, indicating that emotionally intelligent employees tend to perform better in their roles.

In another study, S. Vidhya and P. Kothai (2020) explored the impact of EI on HR practices among remote-working IT employees. Their survey-based research revealed that EI plays a significant role in influencing key HR practices such as communication, employee engagement, and performance management in remote settings, making it a vital competency during the rise of work-from-home arrangements.

B. Jayapriya and V. Raji Sugumar (2024) analyzed the interrelationship between work-life balance, mental wellbeing, and EI among women in corporate roles. The study employed pre-validated emotional intelligence scales and found that women with higher EI reported better coping mechanisms, stronger interpersonal relationships at work, and improved overall mental wellbeing, especially when working from home.

Focusing specifically on women in IT, Prof. T. Ravikumar (2016) conducted research in Bangalore to assess how EI supports work-life balance. His findings showed that emotionally intelligent women were better equipped to manage both professional and personal responsibilities, making EI a critical trait for maintaining harmony in a dual-role environment.

Similarly, a recent study by S. Sakthi and Dr. B. Akila (2024) examined the influence of work-life balance on EI among women employees in the IT-BPO sector. Their statistical analysis using Structural Equation Modeling indicated a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The researchers concluded that enhanced work-life balance practices contribute significantly to improving emotional regulation and awareness in women.

Addressing performance outcomes, M. Nanda and G. Randhawa (2022) used a serial mediation model to investigate whether emotionally intelligent female employees perform better on the job. Their research confirmed that EI leads to higher job performance through reduced emotional exhaustion and improved job satisfaction, emphasizing the value of EI in employee well-being and productivity.

Gender differences in emotional intelligence were the focus of the study by Divya K. N and Dr. R. Sindhuja (2021). Their research found that components such as self-awareness and self-regulation significantly affected IT employees' engagement and quality of work. However, there were no significant differences between men and women, suggesting that EI development can be equally fostered across genders.

In contrast, Dharani H. (2022) highlighted gender as a moderating factor in her study on EI, communication effectiveness, and job satisfaction. Her findings suggest that women tend to score higher on EI metrics and that this emotional competence leads to better communication and satisfaction in IT roles, especially in flexible work environments.

A more structural approach was taken by Verma et al. (2024), who examined the role of knowledge sharing as a mediator between EI and job outcomes in IT-ITeS firms. The study showed that emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to share knowledge effectively, which in turn enhances their job performance and organizational commitment.

Lastly, Angayarkanni R. and Theboralvictoriya M. (2018) studied women in Chennai's IT sector and found that emotional intelligence plays a more substantial role in performance than even technical leadership skills. Through factor analysis and Garrett ranking, their results showed that the ability to understand and manage emotions directly contributes to increased motivation and workplace efficiency.

Objectives of the Study
1. To evaluate the levels of emotional intelligence among WFH IT women employees.
2. To assess which components of EI are most affected in a remote work environment.
3. To identify strategies used by these women to maintain emotional well-being.
4. To propose organizational interventions that can support EI development.

Research Methodology

Research Design
A mixed-method research design was adopted to capture both quantitative metrics and qualitative insights.

Sample Size and Selection
The study included 50 women IT professionals working from home in various Indian cities. Purposive sampling was used to select participants with at least one year of remote work experience.

Data Collection Tools
- A standardized Emotional Intelligence Scale (adapted from Daniel Goleman's model).
- Semi-structured interviews for qualitative insights.

Data Analysis
Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS for mean scores, standard deviation, and correlation. Thematic analysis was conducted on qualitative responses.

Findings and Discussion

Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation
Most respondents reported increased self-awareness due to solitary work conditions. 78% indicated they had become more conscious of their

emotional states and triggers. Self-regulation also improved, with 65% developing personalized coping mechanisms such as journaling and mindfulness.

Motivation

Internal motivation showed mixed results. While 52% remained self-driven, others struggled with monotony and lack of external reinforcement. Virtual recognition and periodic goal-setting emerged as effective motivators.

Empathy and Social Skills

These components showed significant decline. 69% of respondents felt emotionally disconnected from colleagues. The lack of non-verbal cues and casual workplace interactions impaired empathic communication and social bonding.

Coping Strategies

Common strategies included time-blocking, setting work boundaries, online networking, and participation in virtual wellness programs. Peer support groups were found to be effective in maintaining emotional connectivity.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in determining how women IT professionals navigate the challenges of remote work. While self-awareness and regulation tend to strengthen, social dimensions such as empathy and interpersonal communication face decline. Organizations must recognize these nuances and implement support systems, including EI training, virtual team-building, and mental health support.

Recommendations

1. **EI Workshops:** Regular training sessions on emotional intelligence, with emphasis on virtual communication and empathy.
2. **Mentorship Programs:** Pairing employees with mentors to foster connectivity and support.
3. **Flexible Work Policies:** To reduce emotional exhaustion, especially for women juggling domestic responsibilities.
4. **Mental Health Resources:** Access to counselors and virtual therapy should be a priority.
5. **Recognition Platforms:** Tools for digital appreciation and acknowledgment of efforts can boost motivation.
6. **Limitations and Future Scope**
7. This study focused on a specific demographic within the Indian IT sector. Future research could include a cross-cultural comparative analysis or a longitudinal study tracking changes in EI over time.

References

- Agarwal, S. (2020). Work from Home and Emotional Balance. Journal of Organizational Psychology, 8(4), 21–28.
- Singh, D. (2006). Emotional Intelligence at Work: A Professional Guide. Sage Publications.
- https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR1907Q68.pdf
- https://www.researchgate.net/publication/373982632_A_Study_on_Emotional_Intelligence_of_Women_Employees_in_High_Performing_Work_System
- Jayachitra T.A, Nandini Jagannarayan(2020), Social and Emotional Health survey among Voluntary and Involuntary Singlehood women in select suburbs of Mumbai city, Studies in Indian Place Names 40 (53), 235-240, 2020