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The Role Of Age, Gender, And Work Experience On The Emotional Intelligence Of Working Professionals

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Abstract:
Emotional Intelligence (EI) is acknowledged as a crucial determinant of success in both personal and professional realms. Individuals with elevated emotional intelligence not only possess a heightened ability to perceive and understand their own emotions but as well as those of others. The current research study focuses on investigating the influence of demographic variables of working professionals like – age, gender, and work experience—on emotional intelligence. The study comprised a diverse sample of 103 female professionals and 71 male professionals, ranging in age from 21 to 60, from a single firm – ShoreWise Consulting. Data collection utilized the Emotional Intelligence Scale for Working Professionals (EISWP), a questionnaire developed by Gauri et al. (2024) to assess the EI of the participants. The Emotional Intelligence Scale for Working Professionals (EISWP) demonstrates a reliability of 0.76 and concurrent validity of 0.68, suggesting high validity. The study found that EI scores in this diverse cohort were significantly influenced by demographic variables such as age [F(5, 168) = 3.280, p = 0.007] and working experience [H(4) = 20.027, p = 0.000493], supporting the directional hypothesis that higher age and more working experience would positively impact EI scores. Conversely, there was no significant association between gender and EI Scores [U = 3406.500, p = .444] was observed, rejecting our directional hypothesis. Gender had no notable impact on EI scores, suggesting an equal standing of EI between male and female participants.

Keywords*: Emotional Intelligence; EISWP Questionnaire; Age; Gender; Work Experience*

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I. Introduction

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is defined as "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

In the business world, emotions are crucial. Employees' intrapersonal relationships, performance, and professional relationships are all impacted by emotions (Karthikeyan & Lalwani, 2019).

EI plays a crucial role in enhancing capabilities to achieve organizational goals and job objectives, fostering improved teamwork characterized by cooperation and trust (Arfara & Samanta, 2016). Employees with higher EI tend to exhibit a positive mindset, increased contentment, dedication, and loyalty to both their profession and organization. These attributes contribute to creating a conducive work environment that positively influences job performance (Miao et al., 2016).

Effectively managing and regulating one's emotions, as facilitated by high EI, has been linked to a decrease in workplace burnout (Arfara & Samanta, 2016). Research by Sanchez-Gomez & Breso (2020) further supports that employee with elevated levels of EI experience lower burnout rates in task performance.

II. Literature Review

Emotional Intelligence and Age

Iqbal & Elahi (2022) research examines the impact of age and gender of professional employees on their EI level. Analysis of results helped in summarizing that age of professional employees did not have significant impact on their EI level whereas gender of professional employees had a significant impact on their EI level.

Marembo & Chinyamurindi (2018) examined impact of demographic variables on EI levels amongst a sample of early career academics at South African higher education institution. However, no significant differences in EI levels were found based on the respondents' gender, age, and work experience.

Nagar (2017) study delves into the relationship between EI of branch (bank) managers and demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, educational qualifications, and work experience. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between age and EI and the same was found for experience also, but no relationship was found between other factors such as gender and EI.

Jinalee & Singh (2017) study has been designed to determine the relationship between emotional stability and age as well as with work experience. The study reveals that emotional stability was not significantly related to age and work experience. Being in a higher position, older aged or having many years of experience did not signify EI and emotional stability.

Emotional Intelligence and Gender

Selvi & Aiswarya (2022) examined EI among automobile sector employees in Chennai. It was found that males scored higher on EI compared to women. Similarly, while assessing the role of gender-based EI in Corporate Financial Decision-Making, Ran et al. (2021) found that there was a higher impact of male EI on CFD than their counterparts in the corporate sector organizations.

Contrarily, when Han et al., (2019) assessed the relationship between job performance and EI across 162 male and female executives, it was revealed that even though female executive had usually higher EI as compared to male executives, their concrete emotional skills were not acknowledged by their supervisors, nor did they enhance supervisors' assessments of their current job performance and prospects for advancement, even when supervisors recognized their emotional capabilities.

Aligning with this, Stami et al. (2018) assessed demographic predictors of EI among radiation therapists. The findings showed that gender was a significant predictor of the EI emotionality dimension. In fact, Female RTs had higher global EI scores compared to their male counterparts. These results were also corroborated by Dhani & Sharma (2017) where they found that female employees score more on EI than their male counterparts when they were investigating the nature and extent of the relationship between EI and Job performance with respect to the gender of the respondents.

Emotional Intelligence and Work experience

Uniyal et al. (2020) examined the impact of work experience on trait EI in the workplace. The result showed that the duration of service did not play a significant role in any emotional dimensions except social awareness dimensions.

Similarly, while comparing trait EI in private and public sector banks, Anand et al. (2019) found that there was a significant relationship between the factors of EI and work experience. Among the factors, self-motivation as a part of EI was the one most influential on work experience.

Gautam & Khurana (2019) focused on exploring the impact of demographic variables namely age, gender, education, and total working experience on EI. The study's results showed that demographic variables such as age, gender and working experience significantly impacted the EI score of middle level managers.

Priyadharsini & Jayakumar (2017) examined the impact of EI and demographics among social work professionals. The findings proved that relationship between EI does not differ across gender, age, and tenure, meaning that regardless of whether an employee is male or female, young or old, or having short or long tenure, they equally benefited from EI. However, Shukla & Srivastava (2016) investigated the effect of EI on socio-demographic variables and job stress among retail employees. The results revealed that age, education, annual income, and work experience found significant positive relationship with EI. This indicated that EI increased with increasing age and work experience.

Significance of this study

The existing literature emphasizes research on EI concerning various factors like performance, work satisfaction, and leadership. While studies have explored the connection between EI and demographic factors such as age, gender, and work history, none have utilized an ability-based measure of EI or the EISWP instrument. Despite the abundance of studies, the mixed findings in the literature among working professionals underscored the need for further empirical research exploring these factors among working professionals, especially employing the EISWP instrument.

III. Research Objectives And Hypotheses

Research Objectives

Following an in-depth review of the diverse and extensive literature, the research objectives for the present study are delineated as follows:

1. To assess the influence of age on the EI of working professionals.
2. To examine disparities in EI between male and female working professionals.
3. To investigate variations in EI among working professionals based on their years of work experience.

Hypotheses

We hypothesized that:

1. Older age groups of working professionals will exhibit significantly higher EI scores compared to younger age groups.
2. Female working professionals will have significantly higher EI scores compared to male working professionals.
3. Working professionals with more years of work experience will demonstrate significantly higher EI scores compared to those with fewer years of experience.

IV. Methodology

Sample

The study's sample comprised 174 corporate employees employed at a single firm, ShoreWise Consulting, spanning across diverse departments within the organization. Among these respondents, 103 were female professionals, and 71 were male professionals, with ages ranging from 25 to 60 years. Convenience sampling was employed to ensure representation from fields of various types and sizes.

Instrument

The data from the respondents were collected using an ability-based EI questionnaire aimed at assessing the EI of the workforce. The questionnaire utilized was the Emotional Intelligence Scale for Working Professionals (EISWP), developed by Gauri et al. (2024) specially for working professionals. Comprising 17 items, this scale evaluates four crucial aspects of EI: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions. The scale has demonstrated high reliability with a coefficient of 0.76 and concurrent validity of 0.68, indicating high validity.

Procedure

Responses from these employees were collected using a Microsoft Form, with all employees providing consent prior to participation. To ensure standardized instructions and administration, employees were convened in a virtual team meeting while completing the form. This approach aimed to encourage sincere responses and promptly address any concerns or queries employees may have had.

The Microsoft Form comprised two sections: the first section included questions regarding demographic variables, while the second section contained the Emotional Intelligence Scale for Working Professionals (EISWP). It took approximately 10 to 15 minutes for participants to complete the questionnaire.
Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22.

V. Results

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the study participants. The results indicate that a notable majority, comprising 59% of the respondents, are females, whereas 41% are males. The largest proportion of participants falls within the age bracket of 26 to 30 years. Additionally, the majority of respondents (59%) have accumulated work experience ranging from 0 to 5 years.

Table no. 1: Distribution of demographic characteristics of participants.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	71	41
Female	103	59
Total	174	100
Age		
21-25 years	49	28
26-30 years	52	30
31-35 years	29	17
36-40 years	25	14
41-45 years	11	6
46 and above years	8	5
Total	174	100
Work Experience		
0-5 years	102	59
6-10 years	41	24
11-15 years	14	8
16-20 years	13	7
20 and above years	4	2
Total	174	100

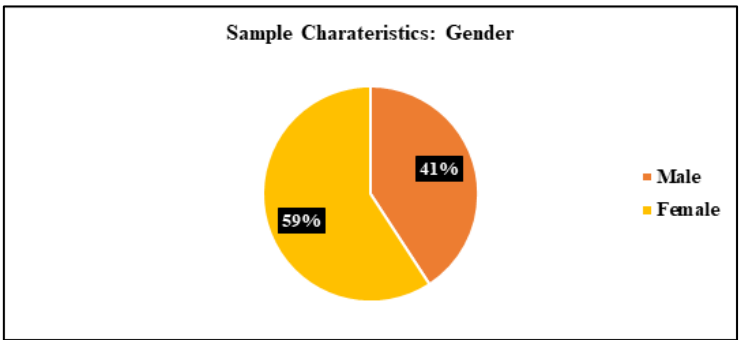

Figure no. 1: Percentage of Gender Distribution in the Sample.

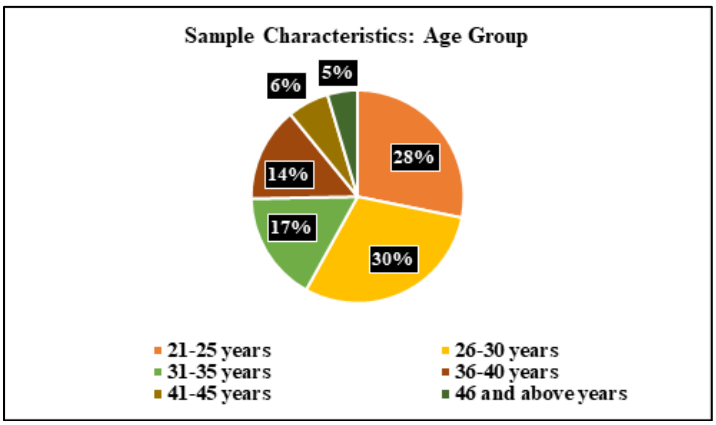

Figure no. 2: Percentage of Age Distribution in the Sample.

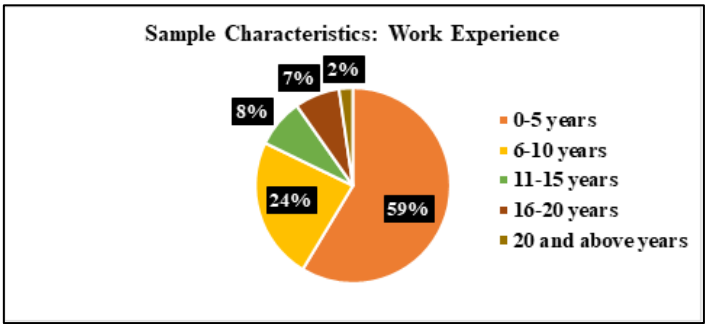

Figure no. 3: Percentage of Work Experience Distribution in the Sample.

Normality Test

The Shapiro-Wilk test was utilized to evaluate the normality of the entire dataset, and the results are detailed in Table 2. The table indicates a significant departure from normality (Figure 4), as evidenced by a p-value of .000. This leads to the assumption that the data does not adhere to a normal distribution.

Table no. 2: EI Score Descriptives and Test of Normality.

	Skewness		Kurtosis		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	df	Sig.
EI Score	-.735	.184	-.041	.366	.949	174	.000

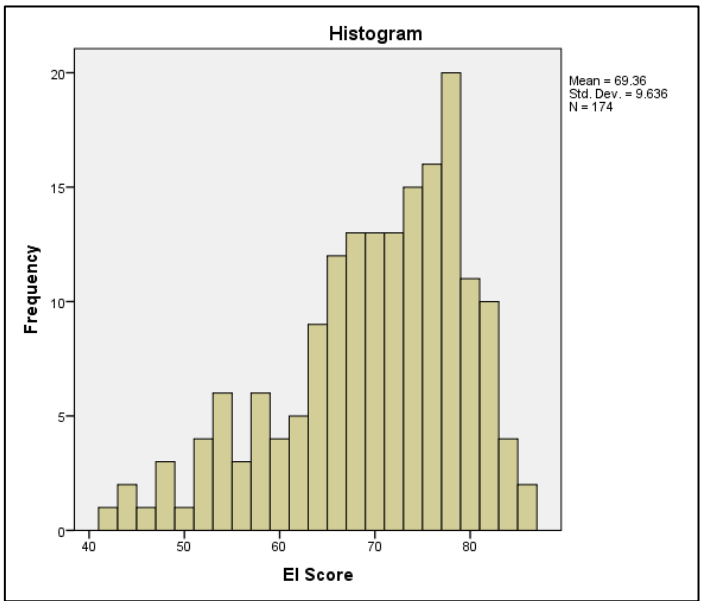

Figure no. 4: Normality Assessment: Entire Dataset.

Age

The Shapiro-Wilk test was utilized to evaluate the normality of the dataset across different age ranges, with the results summarized in Table 3. The EI Scores across various age groups exhibit negative skewness and demonstrate no significant deviation from normality according to the Shapiro-Wilk test. Specifically, the p-values for age groups 21-25 years, 26-30 years, and 31-35 years are 0.085, 0.054, and 0.065, respectively, suggesting no departure from normality. Similarly, age groups 36-40 years, 41-45 years, and 46+ years also display negative skewness, with corresponding p-values of 0.117, 0.448, and 0.313, respectively, indicating no compelling evidence against normality. Hence, while the Shapiro-Wilk test results indicate deviation from normality for the entire dataset, the distribution of EI Scores within each age group appears to conform to normality.

Table no. 3: Age Descriptives and Test of Normality.

	Age	Skewness		Kurtosis		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	df	Sig.
EI Score	21-25 years	-.469	.340	-.554	.668	.959	49	.085
	26-30 years	-.701	.330	.047	.650	.956	52	.054
	31-35 years	-.925	.434	.692	.845	.933	29	.065
	36-40 years	-.677	.464	-.166	.902	.936	25	.117
	41-45 years	-.376	.661	-.947	1.279	.934	11	.448
	46 years and above	-.519	.752	-1.050	1.481	.904	8	.313

As indicated in Table 3, the dataset demonstrates normal distribution. Consequently, a One-way ANOVA was conducted.

Table no. 4: Analysis of Variance (One-way ANOVA) between Age groups and EI

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1428.535	5	285.707	3.280	.007*
Within Groups	14635.655	168	87.117		
Total	16064.190	173			
*Significant at level 0.01					

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed a statistically significant difference in EI scores among different age groups [F(5, 168) = 3.280, p = .007]. The between-groups variance (285.707) was found to be significant at the 0.01 level. This suggests that age has a significant impact on EI scores among the participants.

Table no. 5: Multiple Comparisons: Tukey HSD Post Hoc Test: Age groups and EI

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
21-25 years	26-30 years	-2.896	1.858	.627	-8.25	2.46
	31-35 years	-2.961	2.187	.754	-9.26	3.34
	36-40 years	-6.017	2.294	.097	-12.63	.60
	41-45 years	-10.584*	3.114	.011	-19.56	-1.61
	46 years and above	-7.107	3.559	.348	-17.37	3.15
26-30 years	21-25 years	2.896	1.858	.627	-2.46	8.25
	31-35 years	-.065	2.163	1.000	-6.30	6.17
	36-40 years	-3.122	2.272	.742	-9.67	3.43
	41-45 years	-7.689	3.098	.135	-16.62	1.24
	46 years and above	-4.212	3.545	.842	-14.43	6.01
31-35 years	21-25 years	2.961	2.187	.754	-3.34	9.26
	26-30 years	.065	2.163	1.000	-6.17	6.30
	36-40 years	-3.057	2.547	.836	-10.40	4.29
	41-45 years	-7.624	3.305	.197	-17.15	1.90
	46 years and above	-4.147	3.727	.876	-14.89	6.60
36-40 years	21-25 years	6.017	2.294	.097	-.60	12.63
	26-30 years	3.122	2.272	.742	-3.43	9.67
	31-35 years	3.057	2.547	.836	-4.29	10.40
	41-45 years	-4.567	3.377	.755	-14.30	5.17
	46 years and above	-1.090	3.791	1.000	-12.02	9.84
41-45 years	21-25 years	10.584*	3.114	.011	1.61	19.56
	26-30 years	7.689	3.098	.135	-1.24	16.62
	31-35 years	7.624	3.305	.197	-1.90	17.15
	36-40 years	4.567	3.377	.755	-5.17	14.30
	46 years and above	3.477	4.337	.967	-9.03	15.98
46 years and above	21-25 years	7.107	3.559	.348	-3.15	17.37
	26-30 years	4.212	3.545	.842	-6.01	14.43
	31-35 years	4.147	3.727	.876	-6.60	14.89
	36-40 years	1.090	3.791	1.000	-9.84	12.02
	41-45 years	-3.477	4.337	.967	-15.98	9.03
*Significant at 0.05 level						

The Tukey Honestly Significant Difference (HSD) post hoc test was conducted to examine pairwise differences in EI scores among different age groups. The results reveal no statistically significant differences in EI scores between most age groups, as indicated by the non-significant p-values (> .05). However, a significant difference in EI scores was observed between the age group 21-25 years and the age group 41-45 years (mean difference = 10.584, p = .011), suggesting that individuals aged 41-45 years tend to have significantly higher EI scores compared to those aged 21-25 years. This significant difference observed between both age groups is consistent with the overall ANOVA significance (p = .007). This suggests that the significant variation in EI scores among different age groups, as determined by the ANOVA, is reflected in the specific difference observed between these two age groups.

No other significant differences were found between the remaining age groups.

Gender

The normality of the EI Score dataset was evaluated separately for males and females using the Shapiro-Wilk test, with results summarized in Table 6. Analysis by gender revealed negative skewness and kurtosis for both males and females, indicating a slight leftward skew in the distribution. However, the Shapiro-Wilk test

demonstrated non-normality for both groups, supported by low p-values of 0.001. This compelling evidence leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating that EI scores for both genders deviate from a normal distribution.

Table no. 6: Gender Descriptives and Test of Normality

		Skewness		Kurtosis		Shapiro-Wilk		
	Gender	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	df	Sig.
EI Score	Male	-.647	.285	-.605	.563	.933	71	.001
	Female	-.783	.238	.512	.472	.953	103	.001

Table 6 indicates non-normal distribution of the data of EI between both the genders. Thus, to examine differences in EI scores between genders, the Mann-Whitney U test was conducted.

Table no. 7: Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test: Gender and EI

Total N	174
Mann-Whitney U	3406.500
Wilcoxon W	5962.500
Test Statistic	3406.500
Standard Error	326.314
Standardized Test Statistic	-.766
Asymptotic Significance	.444

The Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to assess the differences in EI scores between genders. As can be seen in Table 7, the analysis revealed no statistically significant difference in EI scores between males and females (U = 3406.500, p = .444). Therefore, based on this test, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that there is a significant difference in EI scores between genders.

Work Experience

The normal distribution of work experience data was evaluated using the Shapiro-Wilk normality test. Table 8 presents the outcomes of the normality test along with descriptive statistics for EI score across different work experience ranges. The results indicate that individuals with 0-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11-15 years of work experience exhibit a departure from normality, as indicated by the Shapiro-Wilk test results (p-values: 0.004, 0.011, 0.013, respectively). However, no significant deviation from normality is observed in the other groups.

Table no. 8: Work Experience Descriptives and Test of Normality

	Work Experience	Skewness		Kurtosis		Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	df	Sig.
EI Score	0-5 years	-.539	.239	-.442	.474	.960	102	.004
	6-10 years	-1.004	.369	1.192	.724	.926	41	.011
	11-15 years	-1.617	.597	2.453	1.154	.833	14	.013
	16-20 years	-.483	.616	.115	1.191	.982	13	.986
	20 years and above	.000	1.014	.621	2.619	.996	4	.986

As shown in Table 8, the data displays a departure from normal distribution for most groups. Therefore, a non-parametric test, specifically the Kruskal-Wallis test, was conducted to measure the impact of work experience on EI of working professionals.

Table no. 9: Independent-Samples Kruskal-Wallis Test: Work Experience and EI

Total N	174
Test Statistic	20.027[a]
Degree Of Freedom	4
Asymptotic Sig. (2-sided test)	0.000493*
[a] The test statistic is adjusted for ties *Significant at 0.0005 level	

The Kruskal-Wallis test was performed to assess the differences in EI scores across different levels of work experience. As can be seen in Table 9, the analysis revealed a statistically significant difference in EI scores among the various work experience ranges [H(4) = 20.027, p = 0.000493]. Therefore, based on this test, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there are significant differences in EI scores across different levels of work experience. To further analyze the differences in EI scores based on the work experience of the employees, a pairwise comparison of work experience level was conducted.

Table no. 10: Pairwise Comparisons of Work Experience Levels

Sample 1-Sample 2	Test Statistic	Std. Error	Std. Test Statistic	Sig.	Adj. Sig.
0-5 years - 6-10 years	-22.912	9.308	-2.462	.014	.138
0-5 years - 20 years and above	-24.909	25.656	-.971	.332	1.000
0-5 years - 11-15 years	-41.999	14.346	-2.928*	.003	.034
0-5 years - 16-20 years	-49.304	14.823	-3.326*	.001	.009
6-10 years – 20 years and above	-1.997	26.366	-.076	.940	1.000
6-10 years - 11-15 years	-19.086	15.581	-1.225	.221	1.000
6-10 years - 16-20 years	-26.391	16.021	-1.647	.100	.995
20 years and above - 11-15 years	17.089	28.537	.599	.549	1.000
20 years and above - 16-20 years	24.394	28.780	.848	.397	1.000
11-15 years - 16-20 years	-7.305	19.387	-.377	.706	1.000
Each row tests the null hypothesis that the Sample 1 and Sample 2 distributions are the same. P-values are adjusted to avoid Type I error. Asymptotic significances are displayed. The significance level is .05. * Significant at .05 level.					

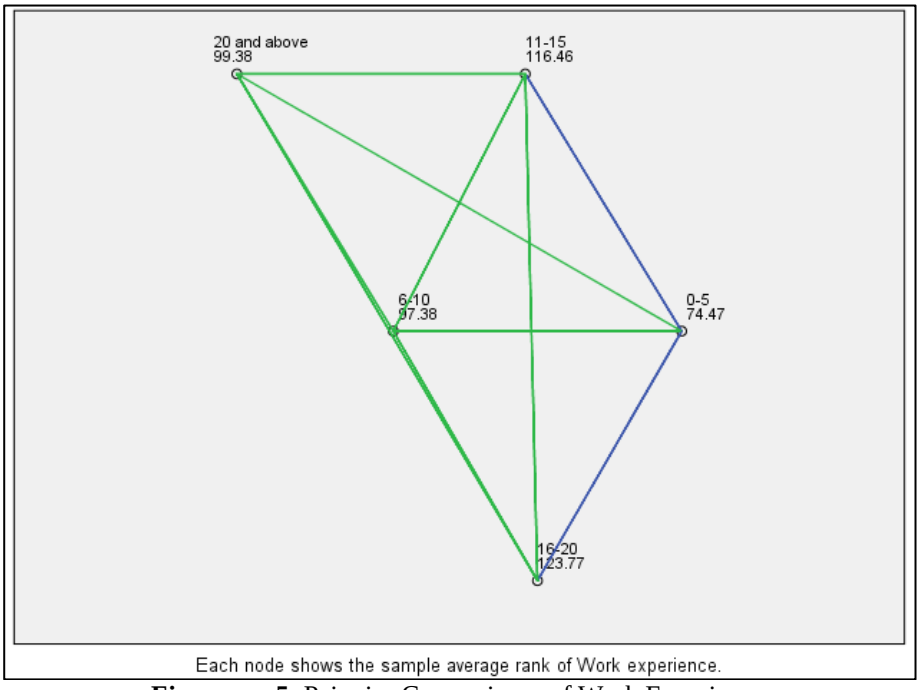

Figure no. 5: Pairwise Comparisons of Work Experience

The results from the pairwise comparisons outlined in Table 10, indicate significant differences between several pairs of work experience levels. Specifically, individuals with 0-5 years of work experience exhibited

significantly lower EI scores compared to those with 11-15 years (Test Statistic = -41.999, p = 0.003) and 16-20 years of experience (Test Statistic = -49.304, p = 0.001). No other pairwise comparisons reached statistical significance after adjusting for multiple comparisons. These findings underscore the impact of work experience on EI, with longer work experience generally leading to higher EI scores.

VI. Discussion

The analysis of age groups revealed a statistically significant difference in mean EI scores ($F = 3.280$, $p < 0.01$, $p = 0.007$). Notably, individuals aged 41-45 years exhibited significantly higher EI scores compared to those aged 21-25 years. This observation aligns with our initial hypothesis, which anticipated that older age groups among working professionals would manifest notably higher EI scores than their younger counterparts. Consequently, we substantiate our directional alternative hypothesis based on these findings. Moreover, this outcome corroborates existing research indicating variations in EI with age, with older employees often demonstrating higher EI levels (Pooja & Kumar, 2016). Additionally, the increase in total EI with age, as observed by Sharma (2017), further emphasizes age-related differences in emotional competence, with EI levels peaking in the mature age group. These results underscore the importance of considering age as a factor in understanding EI levels among working professionals.

Similarly, the examination of gender differences in EI levels found no significant disparity between males and females ($U = 3406.500$, $Z = -.766$, $p > 0.05$). Despite our initial hypothesis positing that female working professionals would exhibit significantly higher EI scores compared to their male counterparts, the outcomes of this study contradict this directional alternative hypothesis. Nonetheless, these results find support in prior studies such as Delgoda & Weerasinghe (2021) and Yadav (2018), which similarly reported no significant gender differences in EI. These findings suggest that gender may not be a significant predictor of EI levels in professional settings, highlighting the need for further exploration of other factors that may influence EI.

Regarding work experience, significant differences in EI scores were observed across different experience categories [$H (4) = 20.027$, $p = 0.000493$]. Individuals with 0-5 years of experience displayed lower EI scores compared to those with 11-15 years and 16-20 years of experience. These findings suggest that work experience plays a crucial role in shaping EI levels among professionals. Furthermore, these outcomes substantiate our initial hypothesis, which posited that professionals with greater years of work experience would demonstrate notably higher EI scores than those with fewer years of experience, thereby affirming our hypothesis. Consistently, prior research by Agbelie & Aliyu (2022) and Chandra & Sivasakthi (2022) has highlighted the impact of work experience on EI of employees. This highlights the importance of considering professional tenure when assessing and developing EI skills in the workplace.

The examination of our hypotheses reveals that two out of the three hypotheses were validated by our findings. Specifically, our hypotheses regarding the relationship between age and EI, as well as work experience and EI, were supported by the data. However, our hypothesis concerning gender and EI was rejected, as no significant disparities were found between male and female employees in terms of EI levels. Overall, the findings contribute to our understanding of the factors influencing EI levels among professionals. Age, gender, and work experience all play significant roles in shaping EI, with age and work experience demonstrating particularly strong associations.

These insights can inform organizational strategies aimed at enhancing EI among employees. Tailored training programs that cater to the EI needs of different age groups could be instrumental in enhancing overall EI among employees. Moreover, the study indicates that gender-neutral approaches to EI training may be effective, fostering equitable workplace cultures. Furthermore, the influence of work experience on EI underscores the importance of ongoing professional development initiatives. This investment in employee development can contribute to improved workplace relationships, communication, and overall organizational effectiveness. Integrating demographic insights, like the nuances of age, gender, and work experience, into strategic planning allows organizations to recognize the impact of workforce diversity on culture, productivity, and innovation, fostering proactive management and enhancing employee satisfaction and retention.

However, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations that could affect the relevance and generalizability of the results. Firstly, the use of non-probability convenience sampling may limit the ability to extend the findings to broader populations. Additionally, the unequal gender representation in the sample, predominantly consisting of females, may impact the generalizability of gender-related findings and might not accurately reflect the broader workforce. Furthermore, the choice of non-parametric tests due to non-normal data distribution affects the interpretation of findings. Moreover, the study identifies a specific research gap, highlighting the need for further investigations to refine and expand upon the current findings. Additionally, the potential influence of the sociability effect, where participants may adjust their responses on the EISWP due to social desirability, introduces a potential confounding factor that could impact the accuracy of self-reported data.

Despite these limitations, this study underscores the importance of considering demographic factors in understanding EI in the workplace. Future research with larger and more diverse samples, incorporating multiple assessment methods and longitudinal designs, could provide further insights into the complex interplay between age, gender, work experience, and EI. By addressing these limitations and building upon the current findings, future studies can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of EI and its implications for organizational effectiveness and employee well-being.

VII. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the relationships between age, gender, work experience, and emotional intelligence among working professionals. The findings highlight the significance of age and work experience in shaping emotional intelligence levels, while also indicating no significant gender differences. These insights have important implications for organizational policies and practices aimed at fostering emotional intelligence skills in the workplace. Despite some limitations, this study contributes to our understanding of the factors influencing emotional intelligence and paves the way for future research in this area**.**

VIII. Acknowledgement

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