Theoretical Architecture of Social Intelligence

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Abstract

Social intelligence has an immense importance in the present lifestyle because of various complexities and challenges that we face in our day-to-day life. It can be used as an effective tool for our mental and social well-being in order to prosper in all walks of life. Over the past few years, Social Intelligence has captured the attention of the psychologists, researchers, educationists and philosophers. It has emerged as one of the important skills for overall development of human resources in all fields across the globe. The present paper attempts to outline the construct of social intelligence in an organised way in terms of conceptions, definitions and theories by collecting, categorizing and synthesizing scattered literature of social intelligence over the years. The study provides a strong fundamental understanding on the history and construct of social intelligence.

Key words: *Social intelligence, Emotional intelligence, ESI, COVID-19 pandemic.*

Introduction

The word 'social' is derived from the Latin word 'socius' meaning 'friend'. It means to live in community and enjoy life with others. Man is a social animal. We live in a society where we are bound to adhere to certain rules and regulations conforming to the ideals of the society. We are all driven by our emotions, whether we like or not, we need to regulate our emotions and manage our actions as per the demands of the situation. we always appreciate people who are composed, cheerful and adjustable, compared to those who constantly react and behave abnormally due to sudden outbursts. People who can regulate their emotions, respond to the feelings from a logical bent of mind are often considered mentally sound, their actions reflect thoughtfulness and they are often called social charmers. This in turn is a reflection of a mature social behaviour. However, it is very easy to lose the human touch in the process of digitalization as there is very little scope for physical or visual interaction especially among technology saturated generation. Internet offers a platform for online interactions and could also help in the development of social intelligence among young people. (Lau, J., 2016) reported that While internet is a good platform for social interactions, it cannot be a substitute for face-to-face interactions. Emojis may help to provide an emotional response, but deeper understanding of social intelligence among individuals may require facial expressions, voice and body language. Moreover, the skills like rapport building, negotiating and communicating effectively with others, understanding a diverse workplace cannot be replaced by technology. These specific skills are important in the development of social intelligence which are considered to be the key attributes for our personal well-being as well as for potential impact on the economy. (Lau, J. 2016).

The degree of success in social settings varies from one individual to another and this individual difference is often termed as social intelligence. (Silvera, Martinussen & Dahl, 2001). Intelligent Quotient (IQ) is given due importance, but in recent times, emotional intelligence and social intelligence have captured the attention of the psychologists, researchers, educationists and philosophers. The priorities of the employers too have changed in the job sectors. "Most employers now place greater emphasis on being able to understand, navigate and negotiate social situations and social relationships than they do on academic abilities." (Lau, J. 2016). It has been noticed that lack of social intelligence among people always resulted in personal, social, regional and national problems. Social intelligence promotes social cohesion and social adjustment or makes one a social misfit. (Habib, S. et al.,2013). People with high level of social intelligence have magnetic powers to

attract others whereas people with low level of social intelligence are a misfit in the society as they face problems in interpersonal relationships. (Joseph, C., & Lakshmi, S. S. 2010).

Purpose of the study

- To review theoretical, historical and empirical studies in this area.

- To collect, summarize and synthesize literature on social intelligence.

- To discuss the notions, concepts, psychometric properties and models of social intelligence according to the available literature.

- To provide a strong and sound fundament of social intelligence in terms of conceptions, definitions and theories.

Theoretical background/ concept of Social intelligence

The construct of social intelligence has undergone many changes over the years. It's "use in research and applied settings has been limited by definitional problems and the complexity of most existing measures of social intelligence." (Gini & Iotti,2004). The concept of social intelligence was first introduced by Edward Thorndike in 1920 who defined social intelligence as the ability "to act wisely in human relations". Social intelligence is an ability of a person to get along with people in society, who is susceptible to outside stimuli and has an insight to understand the personality traits of strangers. (Vernon, 1933). Wechsler (1958) defined social intelligence as "just general intelligence applied to social situations." There have been several definitions of social intelligence given by theorists, but all of them primarily share two common components a) awareness about others and b) adaptation to different social situations (Kobe, Rester-palmon and Rickcrs, 2001).

Gardner in his 1983 book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences,* pointed out that, all people possess different kinds of "intelligences." Intrapersonal intelligence (to understand others) and interpersonal intelligence (introspection and self- reflection) are the two kinds of intelligence amongst them. Both of these intelligences are perceived as social intelligence. Supporting this construct of multiple intelligence by Gardner, Saxena, & Jain remarked that social intelligence has two main dimensions namely: interpersonal intelligence, which is an ability of a person to make distinctions among other people and the other one is intrapersonal intelligence which is an ability of a person to understand his or her own internal and emotional life. (Saxena, S., & Jain, R. K. 2013). Socially intelligent people display an appropriate behaviour to achieve desired social goals. (Bjoerkqvist, K. et al., 2000). Social skills are very important in a learning environment for maintaining positive relationships and to perform well in practical life. (Hopkins & Bilimoria, 2008). A socially intelligent person possesses some key social traits like social skills, social empathy, social adaptability and social manipulation that are present in all forms of interpersonal relationships for social survival. (Habib, S. et al.,2013). Development of social intelligence in the early years could reduce loneliness and can impact well- being of a person during adulthood. (Lau, J. 2016).

Social skills like social perception, social adaptability and expressiveness contributes to the success of entrepreneurs in an organizational context. (Baron, R. A., & Tang, J. 2009). In this context, Rahim,et.al., (2018) reported that social intelligence influences problem solving strategy to resolve conflicts in organizations and academic institutions. The problem -solving approach is a collaborative process involving open communications between the two parties, clearing up misunderstanding, identifying the cause of conflict and ultimately finding solution to the problem. It is a set of interpersonal competencies that contributes to effective leadership. (Goleman D, & Boyatzis R., 2008). "Successful intelligence" is a combination of analytical, practical and creative intelligence. An effective leader not only analyses the present situation (analytical intelligence) but must also possess a vision of how and where to lead people (creative intelligence) and must have the power to convince people (practical intelligence). (Sternberg, R. J. 2002). In addition to this, Zaccaro, S. J. et.al., (1991) opined that social perceptiveness as well as behavioural flexibility, the two elements of social intelligence determine quality of effective leadership in an organization. The social elements in an organization like interaction among members, problem related issues, team work among organizational members and organizational goals are taken care of by an expert and successful leader. Socially and emotionally intelligent

people perform better in the workplace which leads to occupational success. They can effectively express themselves, interact well with others, handle challenging situations and cope with stress and pressures. (Parveen, N., & Soomro, A. M. 2014). Social intelligence plays a vital role while taking decisions about vocational career as one has to "consider the interpersonal and societal implications of their choices and career construction methods." Pinto, J. C. et.al., (2015).

Overlapping constructs of Social intelligence and Emotional intelligence

Landy (2006) considered research on Social intelligence as a fruitless search, ending up in its "replacement with the more modern term emotional intelligence." Effective leaders should possess both social and emotional competencies. (Goleman, D. 2006). The interrelationship of social and emotional intelligence is vividly explained by (Bar-On,2006). The model shows emotional and social competencies regulate how we express ourselves, the way we cope with social situation and how we get along with other people. (Bar-On, R. 2006). The Bar- On model has given a well -grounded construct and measure of ESI (Emotional and Social intelligence). Salovey and Mayer also opined that the concept of emotional intelligence and social intelligence are inter-related to each other. They defined emotional intelligence as the "subset" of social intelligence. (Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. 1990). Boyatzis and Goleman (2006) in their succeeding works exhibited their array of competencies in two different aspects. The interpersonal dimension was relabelled as social intelligence (SI) and intrapersonal dimension was relabelled as emotional intelligence (EI). The new term, ESI (emotional and social intelligence) thus got defined as **"an ability to recognize, understand, and use emotional information about oneself (EI) or others (SI) that leads to or causes effective or superior performance."** The National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2000 and NCF, 2005) emphasizes on the development of social intelligence quotient and emotional intelligent quotient along with intelligence quotient to make children emotionally, socially and academically sound. Social and emotional intelligence help teachers to solve problems related to society and self. (N. Pranjal, 2015). Song et al. (2010) reported that global cognitive ability as well as socio-emotional intelligence greatly influence academic achievement.

Karl Albrecht in 2005 took the initiative to recast the concept of multiple intelligence given by Howard Gardner and coined the memorable acronym A.S.P.E.A.K. Karl Albrecht proposed six dimensions of intelligence namely; abstract intelligence, social intelligence, practical intelligence, emotional intelligence, aesthetic intelligence and kinaesthetic intelligence. He defined social intelligence as "interacting successfully with others in various contexts", with a close term emotional intelligence as "self-insight & the ability to regulate or manage one's reactions to experience". (Albrecht, K. 2006). Karl Albrecht, in the year 2009, further elaborated the five major dimensions of social intelligence as situational radar, presence/bearing, authenticity, clarity and empathy and the acronym for this is **S.P.A.C.E**. Karl Albrecht uses the term "toxic" for the people with low social intelligence and the people with high social intelligence have magnetic powers to attract others. (Albrecht, 2009).

Role of Social intelligence in the assessment of developmental disorders

While most of the researchers focussed the functioning components of social intelligence on normal adults, developmental psychologists regarded social intelligence plays a very important role in the assessment of developmental disorders like mental retardation and autism. Deficit in social skills like interpersonal skills, social relations, peer relationships, communication skills and other related social reciprocity are the diagnostic features to differentiate between normal and disabled population. (Kihlstrom, J. F., & Cantor, N. 2000).

Social Intelligence and COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The social cognition among some adults has been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown. They faced reduction in positive feelings due to lack of social connectedness. Many children especially the toddler group and those attending kindergarten schools, have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 lockdown because of reduced social interactions. The reason being social skills like sharing, conflict solving and empathy are being learnt at rapid pace during these formative years. (ABS CBN NEWS 2021). Along with this, living in isolation have delayed their cognitive, emotional and social development which may follow them for the rest of their lives. (Robson, D. 2020). This situation is described as "a social crisis in the making." (Van Lancker, W., & Parolin, Z. 2020).

Social Intelligence Quotient (SQ)

The social quotient is being defined as social age divided by chronological age; the ratio thus obtained is multiplied by 100. Hence SQ = (SA/CA) × 100. The social quotient was used as an index of social maturity in the Vineland Social Maturity Scale. It is now commonly called as the social intelligence quotient. (Patel, P. K. 2014).

Existing Measures of Social intelligence

The literature review unravelled the existence of several types of measures of social intelligence. The tables 1, 2 and 3 lists the different methods to measure social intelligence.

TABLE 1

METHOD	AUTHOR/(S) & YEAR	DIMENSIONS/SUBTESTS
George Washington Social Intelligence Test GWIST	HUNT (1928), MOSS (1931), OMWAKE (1949) and WOODWARD (1955)	- Judgment in Social Situations; - Memory for names and faces - Observation of human behaviour - Recognition of the mental states behind words - Recognition of mental states from facial expression - Social information - Sense of humour
Six Factors Test of Social Intelligence	O'SULLIVAN (1966)	- Cognition of behavioural units - Cognition of behavioural classes - Cognition of behavioural relations - Cognition of behavioural systems - Cognition of behavioural transformations - Cognition of behavioural implications
Sternberg Triarchic Abilities Test STAT	STERNBERG et al. (1993)	- Analytical abilities - Creative abilities - Practical abilities

TABLE 1 – **Shows the methods based on achievement characteristics.**

Note: Adapted from Vasiľová, K., & Baumgartner, F. (2005). Why is social intelligence difficult to measure. *Internetový časopis Človek a spoločnosť*, *8*(4).

TABLE - 2

	METHOD	AUTHOR/(S) & YEAR	DIMENSIONS/SUBTESTS
1.	Matson Evaluation of Social Skills with Youngsters MESSY	MATSON, ROTATORI and HELSEL (1983)	• Appropriate Social Skills • Inappropriate Assertiveness • Impulsive / Recalcitrant • Overconfidence • Jealousy / Withdrawal
2.	Social Skills Rating System SSRS	GRESHAM and ELLIOTT (1990)	• Social Skills • Problem Behaviour • Academic Competence • Parent's support
3.	Inventory of social skills	LORR, YOUNISS and STEFIC (1991)	• Social skills • Empathy
4.	Tromso Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS)	SILVERA, MARTINUSSEN & DAHL (2001)	• Social Information Processing (SIP) • Social Skills (SS) • Social Awareness (SA)
5.	Social Intelligence Profile (SIP)	KARL ALBRECHT (2009)	• Situational Radar (Awareness) • Presence (Bearing) • Authenticity • Clarity • Empathy Acronym includes the initials of these five factors - "S.P.A.C.E.".
6.	Social Intelligence Scale (SIS)	Dr. N.K Chaddha and Usha Ganesan (1986)	• Patience • Co-cooperativeness • Confidence • Sensitivity • Recognition of social environment • Tactfulness • Sense of humour • Memory
7.	Social Intelligence Scale (2007)	Dr S. Mathur (2007)	• Social Adjustment • Social skill • Social Competency • Social Leadership
8.	Social Intelligence Test Magdeburg, SIM.	Weis, S. (2008).	Cross-classified 3 operative ability domains (i.e., social understanding, social memory, and social perception) and four material related content domains (i.e., written and spoken language, pictures, and videos).

TABLE 2 - Shows the methods based on self-evaluation.

TABLE - 3

	METHOD	AUTHOR/(S) & YEAR	DIMENSIONS/SUBTESTS
1.	Social Competence Scale – Parent Version	CORRIGAN (2003)	• Prosocial/communication skills • Emotional regulation skills
2.	Peer-Estimated-Social-Intelligence PESI	BJÖRKQVIST, ÖSTERMAN and KAUKIAINEN (1995)	• Perception of others • Social flexibility • Successful achievement of one's goals • Behavioural outcomes

TABLE 3 - Shows the methods based on evaluation by others.

Note: Adapted from Vasiľová, K., & Baumgartner, F. (2005). Why is social intelligence difficult to measure. *Internetový časopis Človek a spoločnosť*, 8(4).

Models of social intelligence

A discussion on social intelligence is incomplete without mentioning the existing models of social intelligence. The survey on related literature gives description about various kinds of models related to social intelligence which are outlined in the Table No. 4.

TABLE -4

	MODEL	AUTHOR(S) &YEAR	FOCUS AREAS
1.	Greenspan's Hierarchical Model of Social Intelligence	GREENSPAN, S. (1979)	• Social Sensitivity • Social Insight • Social Communication
2.	Maslow's Model of Social Performance Skills	ABRAHAM MASLOW (1986)	• Pro-social attitudes • Social performance skills • Empathetic ability • Emotional Expressiveness • Confidence
3.	Albrecht's Model of Social Intelligence	KARL ALBRECHT (2005)	• Situational Radar (Awareness) • Presence (Bearing) • Authenticity • Clarity • Empathy Acronym includes the initials of these five factors - "S.P.A.C.E.".
4.	Goleman's Model	GOLEMAN, D. (2006)	• Social Awareness • Social Facility
5.	A Cognitive Performance Model of Social Intelligence	WEIS, S., AND SUB, A., (2008)	• Social Understanding • Social Memory • Social Perception • Social Creativity • Social Knowledge

TABLE- 4 CONTINUED

6.	The Bar-On Model	REUVEN BAR-ON (1997)	• Interpersonal • Decision-making • Self-expression • Self-participation • Stress management
7.	The Goleman Model	GOLEMAN, D (1998;2001)	• Self-Awareness • Self-Regulation • Motivation • Empathy • Social Skills
8.	Emotional Social Intelligence (ESI) Competency Model	GOLEMAN, BOYATZIS, AND MCKEE (2002)	• Self-Awareness • Self-Management • Social Awareness • Relationship Management
9.	The Triune Intelligence Model abbreviated symbolically as "3IM."	KARL ALBRECHT (2008)	• Emotional Intelligence ("EI") • Social Intelligence ("SI") • Practical Intelligence ("PI") Acronym "E.S.P."

TABLE -4 Shows the models of Social Intelligence

Conclusion

In the present paper, social intelligence is discussed from various perspectives as revealed from related literature survey. It is a multidimensional construct and is described in several sections as social behaviour, social adjustment, social awareness, adaptation to different social situations, social empathy and social manipulation. All these abilities are undoubtedly the key ingredients for attainment of social success. It must be pointed out here that, in the present era, rapid advancements in various fields all over the world and rising complexities, call for the need of tolerance, adjustment, sensitivity and tactfulness. The ability of a person to adjust in different social situations and to develop harmonious and healthy co- existence with others is the hallmark of a stable society. All these abilities are the essence of an interpersonal skills. Therefore, it is difficult to lead a prosperous and balanced life without social intelligence. The construct of social intelligence has gained widespread acceptance in one's personal, social and professional life. The importance of social connectedness is greatly felt in the present pandemic situation. Month long quarantine, social distancing and living in isolation have resulted in reduction of positive feelings among children as well as adults.

However, the overlapping construct of social intelligence and emotional intelligence discussed earlier is worth mentioning here. Now- a- days, social interaction with friends, family and partners is a priority in the lives of people. Social and emotional skills lead a person to engage in positive social interactions. Healthy social relationships contribute to psychological well-being, happiness and benefit physical health among individuals. According to the literature, ESI has a significant role in both personal and professional life. Successful integration of ESI competencies lead to greater organizational achievement, prosperity and create a healthy work environment. Thus, application of ESI competencies is indeed very helpful to reduce work stress and resolve conflicts in various organizational settings.

In the present era, social intelligence is very important for successful functioning in life. The life skills which we face on everyday basis like adjusting and adapting to the challenges in the society enhances our lifestyle in a better fashion. In the long run, these social skills serve as predictors of future success and equips us to adjust well in work and community life. Apart from personal life, appropriate social behaviour seems to be more important in academics and job sectors. In order to cope up with the challenges and opportunities of 21st century, successful integration of ESI competencies in everyday life is the need of the hour in this fast-changing digital age.

Therefore, we can safely conclude that the present study may help to understand the concept of social intelligence more clearly starting from its origin and subsequent developments in various fields.

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