

## SOCIO – EMOTIONAL SKILLS IN WORK ENVIRONMENT

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the problem of aspects of social and emotional intelligence in work environment. Our aim has been to find answers to whether managers, executive workers and students are socially and emotionally skilled; whether social and emotional intelligence are viewed differently according to sex and whether there are any connections between the mentioned aspects and the age of respondents. The research was carried out by means of the TSIS and TEIQue-SF questionnaires on the sample of 569 participants.

**Keywords:** social intelligence, emotional intelligence, work environment

### 1 Social intelligence

We all know one: someone who, after you interact with him or her, leaves you feeling devalued, inadequate, angry, frustrated, or guilty. According to Karl Albrecht (Salopek, 2004), management consultant and author, these are people with low social intelligence. Their opposites are people with magnetic or "nourishing" personalities – people who make you feel good and want to go back for more. Albrecht defines social intelligence as "the ability to get along well with others and to get them to cooperate with you". His model uses a self-assessment to measure social intelligence as a combination of social skills, self-awareness, and interaction style, then helps participants select key areas for improvement. He was meeting people wrestling with the insight issue. People who have high social intelligence don't understand why everyone doesn't, he says. However many people haven't had the occasion to be guided and developed. They lack insight into what their behaviour really is and its impact on other people. They are preoccupied with themselves.

Ever since Harvard's Howard Gardner put forth his theory of multiple intelligences, social scientists have been exploring each one. Gardner (1993) set the stage and Goleman (1997) explored the first concept. However, social intelligence has never been brought together into a single, cohesive concept. The concept of social intelligence was introduced by Thorndike in 1920 (Ruisel, 2004). The original definition of social intelligence is "an ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls and act wisely in relationships". Marlowe (1986) definition is similar, he understands it as an ability to understand people and social interactions and implement the knowledge in leadership and interaction with others, to mutual satisfaction.

Both main components – understanding and ability to act in accordance with social demands have become the bearing solutions of another theoretical conceptions – here belongs trials for operational definition of social intelligence as ability to deal with people. Empathy, social sensitivity, interpersonal judgements belong to another characteristics and constructions which were assigned to social intelligence in 1950's.

Thurstone (Nakonečný, 1997) defines social intelligence as competence for effective solution of different social problems, whereas he regards social intelligence as a specific feature, relatively independent to general intelligence. It consists of two components:

- perceptive – meaning ability to understand other people, competence for recognition of another person and choosing the suitable way of behaviour towards him/her, with respect to known specialities,

- action, behavioural – ability to act wisely in relationships; individual way of social behaviour, which fills up specific intentions of an individual.

When delimiting social intelligence, perceptive, cognitive-analytical and behavioural components are being used. In some definitions cognitive component of social intelligence or ability to understand other people are therefore accented; in other definitions the accent is put on behavioural substance (to be able to successfully develop interaction with other people). Another authors more and more rely on psychometric substance and define social intelligence in the meaning of performance measured in tests for social competence.

It is not important how much of social intelligence a person has, but what kind of social intelligence he/she has. Baumgartner, Frankovský (2004) think that usage of behavioural-situational approach to study social intelligence is at least equally productive as cognition, or disposal approach. Allowance for structural approach in relation to the problems is regarded to be one of the most important solutions when theoretical definition. It is the same in relation to methodology of construction of tools for measuring attributes of social intelligence.

Social style is fundamentally who you are, it isn't going to change much. The two concepts look in opposite directions to increase interpersonal effectiveness:

- social style is how others see you;
- versatility is how you understand and work with others' social styles to gain what the company terms "social endorsement".

Points plotted on the four quadrants determine social style (Salopek, 2004):

1. Analytical – ask assertive, control responsive. This person tends to ask questions, gather facts, and consider data seriously.
2. Driving – tell assertive, control responsive. This person is results oriented and gives limited attention to relationships.
3. Expressive – tell assertive, emote responsive. This person is imaginative, creative, and can generate enthusiasm, but tends to rely on hunches and intuition.
4. Amiable – ask assertive, emote responsive. This person is relationship oriented and looks for personal motives in the actions of others.

Versatility is very changeable, and social intelligence comes into play as well. The complementary dimension of versatility is measured by tendencies in four areas (as identified by a rater group) that together represent a person's ability to gain social endorsement from others:

1. Image – physical appearance and style that are appealing and appropriate.
2. Presentation – ability to communicate effectively.
3. Competence – skills that gain the respect and confidence of others, as well as such traits as a willingness to take responsibility.
4. Feedback – ability to maximize understanding and minimize tension, and make adjustments accordingly.

While an assessment will reveal a person as one Social Style, versatility is measured on a scale from low to high. We get specific, actionable recommendations on how to improve the workplace performance.

### 2 Emotional intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence is very close to comprehension of social intelligence. According to Porvazník (2007) emotional intelligence is connected with qualities of the person, his/her character, temperament, perceptive, creative and

physical (somatic) dispositions. Schulze, Roberts (2007) understand emotional intelligence as psychometric range of intuitively attractive idea that people differ in their emotional skills and that these differences reflect in their real lives. Bar-On et al. (2003) defined emotional intelligence as "complex of emotional and social competence and skills, which help to put up with everyday's troubles and to be more efficient in both personal and social life."

Salopek (2004) says, that Daniel Goleman in his book "Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ", brought emotional intelligence to top of mind and top of marketplace. Emotional intelligence is also back in the news and enjoying renewed credibility. A new study shows that business leaders rank emotional intelligence competencies as more important than traditional leadership attributes to leadership success. Also, in the study "What makes a successful leader", participants were asked to evaluate a set of standard leadership attributes, including emotional intelligence (such as relationship building and self-awareness) and traditional leadership attributes (such as execution and financial acumen). Here are the significant findings:

- vision topped the list of critical leadership competencies across nearly all levels, experience, and personality types; also ranked in the top five are strategic thinking, relationship building, execution, and people development,
- emotional intelligence attributes are viewed as essential to successful leadership, especially the complex capabilities of vision, relationship building, and people development,
- of the remaining attributes, leaders rated all of the EI competencies – including adaptability, optimism, empathy, and self-awareness – as more important than all other general leadership attributes presented.

Emotional intelligence comes from fulfilling conditions of seven problematic fields: self-awareness, self-motivation, persistence, control of impulses, regulation of moods, empathy, hope or optimism. Five wider types of abilities important for emotional intelligence according to Gardner (1993) are:

1. Knowing own emotions – self-awareness; people who are more sure of their feelings can make better decisions in their lives.
2. Handling of emotions – working with the emotions in responsive way; people who lack this ability feel anxious moments quite often, those who excel here can recover faster from shocks and disappointments in life.
3. Ability to self-motivation – emotional self-control: putting off rewards or satisfaction, along with suppressing excitable actions, is the essence for being successful.
4. Empathy – as a basic human quality; empathic people are tuned in to react to others' wishes and needs. That's why they excel in professions where they can "care" for someone, like teaching, management, or marketing.
5. The art of interpersonal relationships - to be empathic and act in such way, this art is in the background of popularity, dominant position or ability to constructive dealing with people.

Our each emotional quality is to considerable extend created by some habit – when we make an effort, we can change our reactions for better. Emotional competence is achieved through leader's approach to own personality, improving of interpersonal skills and it results in professional and personal success; this begins with empathy. Person must know his/her own self, his/her own motives and aims, values, feelings and way of thinking – only afterwards he/she can make decisions more freely and purposely. Right choice and good performance in emotionally demanding conditions characterize success. The tool for harmonizing is creation, such skills as self-motivation, self-discipline, relationships building and empathy. Socially

competent person is someone who is able to build relationships without problems, who skillfully recognize reactions and feelings of people, someone who belongs among leaders and organisers – it's the type of person with whom people feel comfortable because he/she spreads good humour (Birknerová, 2010).

Social interactions in everyday's life and relationships are based mainly on social and emotional intelligence – their improvement can prevent from existence of many conflicts (Vavrová, 2009). Well-developed social-psychological competence, according to Ferencová, Jurková (2010); Ali Taha, Čverhová (2010), accelerate adaptation to concrete environment and enable active working. Holková, Gyurák Babefová, Vaňová (2008) agree with opinion that development of these competence depend on level of ability to absorb new knowledge and put them into practice. According to Droppa (2008) development of an individual requires careful study of the surroundings; interpersonal qualities and study of others' opinions, effort to understand them, support for mutual bonds, teambuilding, orientation to further development and helping others' in their development consists mainly in education, as well as development of other social-emotional competence.

### 3 Research

The main aim of the research was to discover connections between social and emotional intelligence of our respondents, in relation to their position in organisation, gender and age. Emotional intelligence was measured by TEIQue-SF questionnaire (Petrides, Furnham, 2006) and social intelligence was measured by TSIS (Silvera, Martinussen, Dahl, 2001) questionnaire.

The target group made 297 executive workers, 157 managers and 115 students. The research sample represented 569 respondents, where women (N=414, 72,76%) had bigger representation than men (N=155, 27,24%). The average age of respondents was 27,82; the youngest respondent was 18 years old and the oldest was 55 years old. The collecting of data was being made from January to October 2010. The results were worked out in SPSS statistic programme.

#### 3.1 Research method

For purposes of our research we used two methodologies (TSIS and TEIQue-SF). The social intelligence scale – TSIS: The methodology originated in 2001. It has 3 subscales, each subscale has 7 items in questionnaire, 21 items together. The first scale is Social information processing = SP, second scale is Social skills = SS and the third scale is Social awareness = SA. The authors state the values of Cronbach  $\alpha$  for individual subscales: SP = 0,79; SS = 0,85; SA = 0,72 (Silvera, Martinussen, Dahl, 2001). The items are evaluated on 7-points' scale, where 1 means it refers to me a little and 7 means it refers to me a lot.

TEIQue-SF methodology – questionnaire of emotional intelligence (shortened form): TEIQue-SF, shortened formular, consists of longer form of TEIQue (Petrides, Furnham, 2003) and includes 30 items representing 7-points's Likert scale, where 1 means I totally disagree and 7 means I totally agree. For each question there are 2 of 15 subscales, which were chosen from TEIQue for integration, and based especially on their correlation with the whole subscales' score. The model of emotional intelligence successfully integrates and broadens the connected thoughts on emotional intelligence in general scope – consisting of 15 concrete specific aspects: adaptability, control of emotions, low impulsivity, self-motivation, the feature of empathy, assertiveness, expressing emotions, relationships, social awareness, the feature of happiness, emotional appreciation, handling of others' emotions, self-respect, coping with stress, the feature of optimism. TEIQue evaluates all above mentioned aspects on 15 subscales. Besides that it provides score on 4 factors of wider importance: satisfaction, self-control, emotiveness and social behaviour. It is important to keep

realizing that the results don't reflect cognitive abilities (IQ, e.g.), but more self-perceptive abilities and relations' disposals.

### 3.2 Results and interpretations

By research we tried to find out connections between social and emotional intelligence in relation to position in organisation, gender and age.

#### 1. Position in organisation

In the first part of analysis we tried to find out differences between position in organisation and subscales of social intelligence, as well as between aspects and factors of emotional intelligence. We used Post-hoc comparison for this purpose. Statistically significant differences were discovered between position in organisation and EQ aspects: self-respect (table 1, graph1), low impulsivity (table 2, graph2), adaptability (table 3, graph3) and factor of self-control (table 4, graph4). Statistically significant differences weren't discovered between subscales of social intelligence and position in organisation.

On the basis of analysis of dispersion  $F=3,069$ ,  $Sig.=0,048$  we discovered significant differences in EQ aspect of **self-respect**, in relation to position in organisation.

Table 1: Post-hoc comparisons of average values in EQ aspect **self-respect** according to position in organisation (Tukey HSD)

| Position in organisation | Position in organisation | Mean Difference | Sig.         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| manager                  | executive worker         | 0,687           | <b>0,041</b> |
| executive worker         | student                  | 0,233           | 0,417        |
| student                  | manager                  | 0,920           | <b>0,011</b> |

Graph 1: Average values of aspect self-respect according to position in organisation

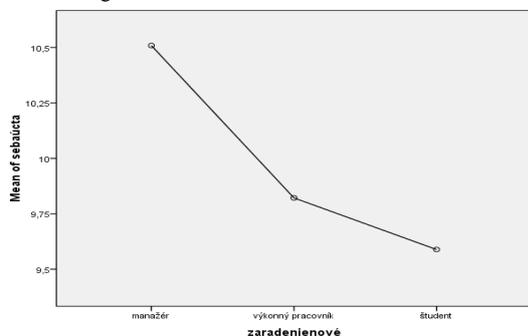


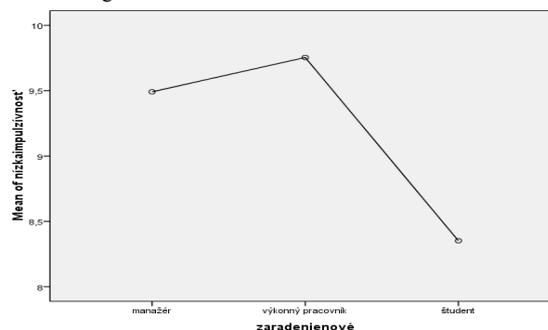
Table 1 and graph 1 show that statistically significant differences in aspect of self-respect exist between managers and executive workers, as well as between managers and students, always to managers' advantage. The addressed managers know their own value, they have enough self-confidence and respect for their own personality. Generally, they can evaluate their own merits. We also discovered significant differences in EQ aspect of **low impulsivity**, in relation to position in organisation on the basis of analysis of dispersion  $F=9,684$ ,  $Sig.=0,000$ .

Table 2: Post-hoc comparisons of average values in EQ aspect of **low impulsivity** according to position in organisation (Tukey HSD)

| Position in organisation | Position in organisation | Mean Difference | Sig.         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| manager                  | executive worker         | 0,263           | 0,484        |
| executive worker         | student                  | 1,402           | <b>0,000</b> |

| student | manager | 1,139 | <b>0,010</b> |
|---------|---------|-------|--------------|
|---------|---------|-------|--------------|

Graph 2: Average values of aspect low impulsivity according to position in organisation



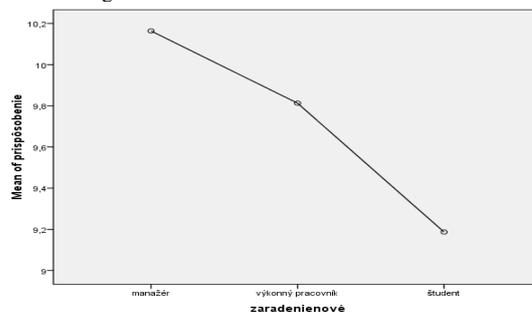
In table 2 and graph 2 we can see that in the EQ aspect of low impulsivity there are statistically significant differences between students and managers, always to students' disadvantage. Students seem to behave more impulsively than executive workers and managers.

On the basis of analysis of dispersion  $F=3,620$ ,  $Sig.=0,028$  we also discovered significant differences in EQ aspect of **adaptability**, in relation to position in organisation.

Table 3: Post-hoc comparisons of average values in EQ aspect of **adaptability** according to position in organisation (Tukey HSD)

| Position in organisation | Position in organisation | Mean Difference | Sig.         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| manager                  | executive worker         | 0,290           | 0,351        |
| executive worker         | student                  | 0,626           | <b>0,037</b> |
| student                  | manager                  | 0,977           | <b>0,010</b> |

Graph 3: Average values of aspect adaptability according to position in organisation



We discovered statistic significance between students and executive workers and also between students and managers in EQ aspect of adaptability, always to students' disadvantage. In this aspect of EQ, students can least adopt to existing situations and their surroundings.

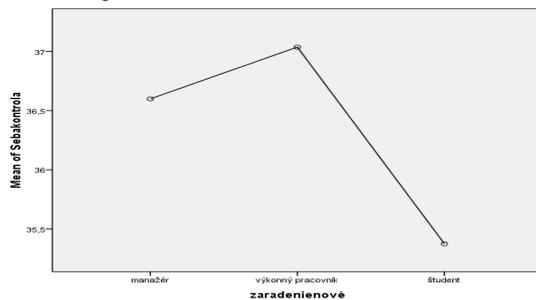
On the basis of analysis of dispersion  $F=3,443$ ,  $Sig.=0,048$  we discovered significant differences also in EQ factor of **self-control** in relation to position in organisation.

Table 4: Post-hoc comparisons of average values in EQ factor of **self-control** according to position in organisation (Tukey HSD)

| Position in organisation | Position in organisation | Mean Difference | Sig.         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| manager                  | executive worker         | 0,438           | 0,619        |
| executive worker         | student                  | 1,664           | <b>0,029</b> |

|         |         |       |       |
|---------|---------|-------|-------|
| student | manager | 1,226 | 0,227 |
|---------|---------|-------|-------|

Graph 4: Average values of factor of self-control according to position in organisation



Self-control is the basic condition for achieving desired result. Executive workers we addressed have a high level of this factor, in comparison to students. The students should realize that people with insufficient self-control not only don't have their emotions under control, but also they can't be perceptive to emotions of others. A person who has the ability to self-control tries to respond to stimuli properly, with regard to probable answer from others.

## 2. Sex

In the second part of analysis we tried to find out differences between sex and subscales of social intelligence, as well as between aspects and factors of emotional intelligence. We used t-tests for this purpose. Statistically significant differences (table 5) were discovered between age and aspects of EQ: control of emotions, self-motivation, coping with stress, low impulsivity, assertiveness, relationships, adaptability. We discovered statistical significance between sex and factors of EQ: self-control, social behaviour. Statistical significance wasn't discovered between factors of social intelligence and sex.

Table 5: Statistic significance in the field of gender

| Emotional intelligence | Gender | Mean  | Std. Deviation | t     | Sig (2-tailed) |
|------------------------|--------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| Control of emotions    | man    | 9,45  | 2,424          | 2,070 | <b>0,039</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 8,98  | 2,323          |       |                |
| Self-motivation        | man    | 9,16  | 2,386          | 1,826 | <b>0,058</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 8,77  | 2,200          |       |                |
| Coping with stress     | man    | 9,52  | 2,243          | 2,736 | <b>0,006</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 8,92  | 2,321          |       |                |
| Low impulsivity        | man    | 9,58  | 2,565          | 2,095 | <b>0,035</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 9,05  | 2,623          |       |                |
| Assertiveness          | man    | 9,34  | 2,503          | 3,561 | <b>0,000</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 8,45  | 2,600          |       |                |
| Relationships          | man    | 9,94  | 2,355          | 2,241 | <b>0,039</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 9,49  | 2,211          |       |                |
| Adaptability           | man    | 10,04 | 2,254          | 2,066 | <b>0,044</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 9,60  | 2,285          |       |                |
| Self-control           | man    | 37,72 | 6,150          | 3,444 | <b>0,001</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 35,76 | 5,829          |       |                |
| Social behaviour       | man    | 38,49 | 6,360          | 2,948 | <b>0,002</b>   |
|                        | woman  | 36,54 | 7,024          |       |                |

All mentioned aspects and factors of emotional intelligence are statistically significant always to advantage of the addressed men. Knowing own emotions means knowingly discern emotions in the moment of their occurrence. When we realize our emotions, it doesn't mean we aren't defenceless. Men who are more aware of their emotions, can make better decisions because they know what influenced them – they make their decisions more carefully and stick to them more closely. Men are also, unlike women, more assertive in their behaviour and can handle stressful situations better.

## 3. Age

In the third part of analysis we tried to find out connections between the age of respondents and subscales of social intelligence, as well as between aspects and factors of emotional intelligence. We used Pearson correlation coefficient for this purpose. Statistically significant connections are presented in the table 6.

Table 6: Connections between age and factors of SQ and EQ

|     | social awareness (SA) | self-respect | coping with stress | low impulsivity | Assertiveness | self-control |
|-----|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Age | -,120**               | -,090*       | ,130**             | ,150**          | -,094*        | ,143**       |

We discovered connections between the age of the respondents and subscale of social intelligence – social awareness. Negative correlation shows that with increasing age the sensitivity for perception and deciphering of social signals descends. Negative correlation can also be seen between the age and aspects of EQ: self-respect and assertiveness, which also descend with increasing age. Positive correlation exists between the age and aspects of EQ coping with stress and low impulsivity. Older respondents cope with stress more easily and they are also less impulsive than younger respondents. Factor EQ of self-control is in positive relation to the age of respondents. Older respondents have their emotions under control and can be perceptive to emotions of others.

## Conclusion:

The aim of the presented research was to find answer to question whether managers are socially and emotionally competent and to compare them with executive workers and students. Our intention also was to discover differences between perception of social and emotional intelligence between men and women, as well as among respondents in relation to their age.

Social and emotional competence create our character, they enable us to understand our personal and interpersonal feelings and relationships. The intrapersonal part of emotional intelligence is responsible for our ability to feel positive or negative emotions and command their outward displays. We set the aims, we solve problems or we face obstacles standing in our way. Interpersonal development includes our relationships with other people, social abilities, such as empathy, acceptance of others' opinions and ability to live, work and cooperate with others.

The art of relationships consists in creation and keeping satisfactory relationships, in being adoptable. This is the substance for popularity, dominant position and abilities for constructive working with people. People who are strong in this field are social stars, they can cooperate very well with others. These are the people with whom we feel emotionally well. These people are popular, charming. These people can calm down negative emotions of others – we seek their company in time of distress or when there is some conflict going.

The higher we go in company's hierarchy, the more important the emotional intelligence is. It creates from 85 to 90% of working profile of top managers. Emotional intelligence means

intelligent handling of our emotions – communication with people from different cultures, developing sense for unwritten rules and ability to adopt to them. The addressed managers seem to be self-confident people with high level of self-respect - unlike students, who have low level of self-control and adaptability. Executive workers are distinguished mainly by low impulsivity.

Unlike IQ, which is congenital, emotional competence can be improved in each age. We can learn conviction, team-work or self-confidence by training, e.g. When we want to learn something from emotional competence, we must learn from models, practice and repetition. Emotional competence can be developed mainly by young people, where also belong students. Račková (2010) present here the possibility of active work on seminars or lessons, using some innovation form. Ali Taħa, Tej (2010) see advantages of such work with students in learning to cooperate with others, developing their creativity, self-assessment and other social-emotional competence necessary for their future profession.

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