

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SELF-ACTUALISATION

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ABSTRACT

There is a wide variety of psychological wellness constructs and correlation studies may promote a clear and valid understanding of them. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between two wellness constructs, emotional intelligence and self-actualisation.

*The sample consisted of 71 employees from the South African mining industry. Participants were assessed using the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (**BarOn EQ-i**) to measure emotional intelligence and the Personal Orientation Inventory (**POI**) to measure self-actualisation. Participants also completed a biographical questionnaire.*

Pearson's product moment correlation coefficients between the five composite scales on the BarOn EQ-i and the 12 POI scales led to rejection of the alternative hypothesis. The research hypothesis was partially substantiated by the results, which show a significant statistical relationship between some emotional intelligence factors and some self-actualisation factors. Predominantly positive correlations emerged between adaptability and intrapersonal behaviour, as an integral part of an individual's emotional intelligence with most areas of self-actualisation. Major limitations of the study relate to the construct validity of the POI and the fact that the small sample size negatively affects the generalisability of the results.

1 INTRODUCTION

Industrial and organisational psychology has long been concerned with studying the determinants of maladjusted behaviour such as stress and burnout in the workplace (Campbell & Cellini 1981; Coetzee & Cilliers 2001; Lowman 1993; Nowack 1991). The focus on pathology, maladjustment and illness has, however, gradually shifted towards a comprehension that includes the

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determinants of health, stress resistance and work adjustment (Holahan & Moos 1990).

According to Wissing (2000), the wide variety of constructs in the study of wellness (Cilliers & Coetzee 2001; Lopez & Snyder 2003) requires a sound scientific base because it relates to workplace behaviour. Lopez and Snyder (2003) confirm continuous scientific exploration in the operationalisation of these constructs, implying a need to explore construct similarities and differences in the wellness domain. This study focuses on the wellness constructs of emotional intelligence and self-actualisation.

Besides having a direct impact on a person's ability to cope with life stressors and demands, emotional intelligence and self-actualisation have both been proposed as necessities for living an optimal, healthy and productive life (Goleman 1998; Schulz 1977). With regard to emotional intelligence, Goleman (1998) states that it leads to effective performance and increased organisational productivity. Because it was less of a novice construct than emotional intelligence, before the 1990s, self-actualisation received much attention in classical humanistic perspectives on personal development and optimal functioning (Cilliers, Koortzen & De Beer 2004). Nevertheless, according to Bar-On (2000), the definition of self-actualisation includes a general achievement drive, which is an important determinant of work performance and productivity.

Herbst (2003) contends that emotional intelligence and self-actualisation have a positive effect on workplace behaviour. Emotionally intelligent and self-actualising employees show characteristics of effective intra- and interpersonal behaviour, as well as constructive work-related attitudes and behaviour. Such workers realise their full potential and make productive contributions in organisations. This applies to other aspects of their lives as well (Herbst 2003). Stein and Book (2001) also emphasise the powerful links suggested between emotional intelligence and definitions of success that incorporate self-actualisation in the workplace.

In light of the above, scientific exploration of emotional intelligence and self-actualisation is valuable in human relations management. It is particularly useful in employment practices, as well as training and development, to attain and develop emotionally intelligent employees who display self-actualising behaviour. From a broader perspective, research on wellness constructs may aid in the promotion of a healthy workforce, which is ultimately a productive workforce (Murphy & Cooper 2000). The aim of this study was specifically to explore and evaluate any relationship between emotional intelligence and self-actualisation.

2 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Literature on the emotional intelligence construct contains confusing terminology with no generally accepted definition (Herbst 2003). Terms of reference include social intelligence (Thorndike 1920), personal intelligence (Gardner 1993), interpersonal intelligence (Gardner 1983), emotional intelligence (Goleman 1996; Salovey & Mayer 1990), emotional literacy (Meehl 1990) and emotional quotient (Bar-On 2000; Cooper & Sawaf 1997; Goleman 1996). However, two distinct approaches to emotional intelligence, namely a process perspective (Mayer & Salovey 1997; Pfeiffer 2001; Sternberg 1988) and a construct perspective (Drucker 1994; Goleman 1996; Stein & Book 2001) can be distinguished. The construct perspective is followed in this research, with special emphasis on the competency approach to emotional intelligence (Bar-On 1997; Gardner 1999; Goleman 1996, 1998). In terms of this competency perspective, emotional intelligence is defined as a broad array of noncognitive abilities, competencies and skills that influence one's ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures (Bar-On 1997).

The impact of emotional intelligence on personal success and work performance has received particular attention in the competency perspective on emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is based upon competencies that enable people to demonstrate intelligent use of their emotions in managing themselves and working effectively with others (Boyatzis 1982; Goleman 1996; Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee 2002). Cooper and Sawaf (1997) contend that people with high levels of emotional intelligence experience more career success, build stronger personal relationships and enjoy better health than those with low emotional intelligence. High levels of emotional intelligence relate to effective leadership behaviour (George 2000; Goleman 1998) as well as to improved organisational productivity (Goleman et al 2002).

The importance of emotional intelligence is thus evident in the impact it has on self-management at work, effective work relationships and both career success and leadership behaviour.

3 SELF-ACTUALISATION

Supporters of the human potential movement suggest that there is a desirable level of growth and development that goes beyond "normality" --- hence the need for human beings to strive towards that advanced level of growth, in order to realise or actualise all of their potential (Schultz 1977). Such a lifelong journey of personal development and growth is conceptualised as the journey towards self-actualisation. Although a variety of behaviours have been ascribed to self-actualisation (Cilliers & Coetzee 2003; Cilliers et al 2004), the two main perspectives on self-actualisation are defined in the theories of Maslow (1971)

and Rogers (1961). These self-actualising theories emphasise an innate drive towards achieving one's potential.

Both Rogers (1959, 1961, 1975) and Maslow (1954, 1968, 1971) view the actualising tendency as a process of growth in which Rogers emphasises the self-concept of the individual and Maslow the self-actualising ideal of the individual. More recently, Covey (1989) also emphasised the importance of striving for continuous personal growth and optimal functioning of the self, which if ignored may result in disappointment and frustration, in both personal and professional life. There are many definitions of the self-actualisation concept (Cilliers et al 2004) and a seemingly appropriate one would be to say that self-actualisation is a process through which a person strives to fully achieve his or her inherent potential, abilities and talents. This process requires growth and development, which lead to optimal functioning and wellbeing.

4 POTENTIAL CONSTRUCT SIMILARITIES BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SELF-ACTUALISATION

A responsible, reliable worker and colleague, the emotionally intelligent and self-actualising worker is likely to apply his or her energy constructively and productively in and around the workplace (Jourard & Landsman 1980). Self-actualisation can be regarded as another way of defining optimal behaviour, which may be conducive to productivity at work. In their description of emotionally intelligent people, Stein and Book (2001) state that those individuals who really enjoy their work, show empathy, set personal goals and make the extra effort to excel are the ones who achieve success. In the same vein, Bar-On (1997) and Cooper and Sawaf (1997) suggest that people with high levels of emotional intelligence experience more career success, build stronger personal relationships and enjoy better health than those with low emotional intelligence. The above authors further state that people with high emotional intelligence motivate themselves and others to accomplish more.

From a theoretical review of the constructs in question, it would seem that many of the characteristics that have been used to describe emotional intelligence have also been applied to self-actualisation. Behaviour that is characteristic of assertiveness and independence allows emotionally intelligent and self-actualising people to be self-reliant, work autonomously and feel secure in their ability to express themselves in a nonaggressive, but highly effective way (see Herbst 2003; Maslow 1971; Rogers 1975; Stein & Book 2001). Both emotionally intelligent and self-actualising people are involved in continuous learning and growth, which help them to perform effectively to realise their personal and team goals (Herbst 2003). Sternberg (1988) writes that intelligence normally focuses on a purpose, implying that it is directed towards goals, however vague or subconscious these may be. One could therefore argue that emotional

intelligence and the actualisation of personal goals and objectives are interrelated.

Table 1 below is an attempt by Herbst (2003) to indicate some implied theoretical similarities between the underlying constructs of emotional intelligence and self-actualisation. These similarities are categorised into intrapersonal, interpersonal and work-related characteristics.

TABLE 1 THEORETICAL SIMILARITIES BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND SELF-ACTUALISATION

	Emotional intelligence	Self-actualisation
Intrapersonal characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional self-awareness (Van Rooyen 1999) • Interpersonal relationships and stress tolerance (Van Rooyen 1999) • Reality testing (Bar-On 2000; Van Rooyen 1999) • Flexibility (Van Rooyen 1999) • Problem-solving ability (Van Rooyen 1999) • Self-directed and self-controlled (Covey 1989; Van Rooyen 1999) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional self-awareness (Maslow 1971) • Positive regard for and understanding of others (Rogers 1961) • Stress tolerance (Allport 1961) • Reality perception (Maslow 1971) • Openness to experience (Rogers 1959) • Problem-solving ability (Ellis 1983; Maslow 1971) • Inner directedness (Ellis 1983; Maslow 1971)
Interpersonal characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy (Bar-On 2000) • Social responsibility (Van Rooyen 1999) • Interpersonal relationships (Van Rooyen 1999) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy (Covey 1989; Maslow 1971) and altruism (Antonovsky 1985) • Acceptance of self and others (Maslow 1971) • Good interpersonal relationships (Allport 1961; Maslow 1971)
Work-related characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal goals (Stein & Book 2001) • Constructive, productive (Jourard & Landsman 1980) and continuous learning and growth (Goleman 1998) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total involvement, commitment and internalised goals (Frankl 1969) • Growth motivated (Maslow 1971)

From the preceding discussion and table 1 it would seem that theoretical links between the constructs of emotional intelligence and the characteristics of self-actualisation may actually exist. From Herbst's (2003) exploration of the relevant literature it is evident that emotionally intelligent and self-actualising workers show characteristics of good intra- and interpersonal behaviour as well as of general work-related characteristics. Both emotional intelligence and self-

actualisation have also been posited as possible causal factors in productivity at work and general psychological health and wellbeing.

5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND DESIGN

This study focuses on the wellness constructs of emotional intelligence and self-actualisation. A quantitative research approach was adopted to determine whether there is a relationship between emotional intelligence and self-actualisation.

6 RESEARCH METHOD

6.1 Sample

A convenient sample (Anastasi 1990) comprising 71 respondents was used; it consisted of employees from two different companies. Forty-nine respondents were drawn from a mining company, referred to as company 1. Another 22 were obtained from an organisation that manufactures mining equipment, referred to as company 2.

The average age of the respondents who participated in the research was 38 years and the average number of years employed 9,55. The sample consisted of a majority of males (77,5%) and fewer females (22,5%). Whites were predominantly represented within the sample (80,6%). Blacks were considered the second largest race category (13,9%), followed by Indians (4,2%) and Coloureds (1,4%). It was found that most respondents were married (78,9%), followed by fewer respondents who were single (14,1%), while only 7% of the respondents in this sample were divorced. The sample consisted statistically of 11 (15,5%) administrative, 8 (11,3%) human resources, 20 (28,2%) mining, 1 (1,4%) marketing, 19 (26,8%) supervisory, 3 (4,2%) safety, 7 (9,9%) maintenance, 1 (1,4%) quality and 1 (1,4%) draughting member(s) of staff. The majority of employees belonged to a supervisory category; 33 members of staff in the sample belonged to the nonmanagerial category, and 38 employees fell into the managerial category.

6.2 Measuring instruments

6.3.1 The BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (BarOn EQ-I)

Bar-On (1997) developed a model of "nonscognitive" intelligences consisting of interrelated emotional, personal and social abilities. The model specifically includes intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, stress management and general mood constructs, providing the basis for the measuring instrument, the

BarOn EQ-i (Bar-On 1997) with five composite scales representing the constructs elucidated in table 2 below.

TABLE 2 THE MAJOR CONSTRUCTS IN THE BAR-ON (1997) MODEL

Construct	Definition	Subcomponents
Intrapersonal	The intrapersonal area concerns a person's ability to know and manage himself (Stein & Book 2001). Success in this area indicates that a person is able to express his feelings adequately, live and work independently, and has the necessary confidence to express his ideas and beliefs comfortably.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-regard • Emotional self-awareness • Assertiveness • Independence • Self-actualisation
Interpersonal	This area refers to what is known as "people skills". People who function well in this area tend to be responsible and dependable; they understand, interact with and relate well to others in a variety of situations (Van Rooyen 1999: 47).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Social responsibility • Interpersonal relationships
Adaptability	The adaptability area of emotional intelligence reveals how successfully the respondent is able to cope with environmental demands and to deal with problematic situations as they may arise (Stein & Book 2001).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reality testing • Flexibility • Problem solving
Stress management	This area of emotional intelligence involves a person's ability to withstand stress without giving in, falling apart or losing control. Success in this area indicates a person who is usually calm, hardly ever impulsive and someone who copes well under pressure. These skills are vital in the workplace, especially when one is continuously faced with deadlines and a variety of demands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress tolerance • Impulse control
General mood	General mood refers to a person's outlook on life, the ability to enjoy himself and others and an overall feeling of contentment and satisfaction (Stein & Book 2001).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimism • Happiness

Bar-On (1997) cites research conducted over a 12-year period with more than 6 300 respondents as evidence of the reliability and validity of the BarOn EQ-i. According to Bar-On (1997), the average Cronbach alpha coefficients are high for all the composite scales, ranging from 0,69 (social responsibility) to 0,86

(self-regard), with an overall average internal consistency coefficient of 0,76. Average reliability coefficients were found in the South African environment – 0,85 after one month and 0,75 after four months (Bar-On 1997). Bar-On (1997) further shows that the BarOn EQ-i possesses good construct, divergent and convergent validity and highly satisfactory levels of predictive validity.

6.3.2 *The Personal Orientation Inventory (POI)*

Shostrom (1967) developed the POI to measure self-actualisation behaviour. The POI was designed around the characteristics, values and behaviours that are considered to be important in the development of the self-actualising person (Knapp 1976). The POI is based on concepts of dynamic traits of personality and was developed for the purpose of measuring development (Knapp 1976; Shostrom 1974). The POI consists of 12 scales, depicted in table 3 below.

TABLE 3 DESCRIPTION OF THE POI SCALES

<p>Time competence This reflects the degree to which the person lives in the present rather than in the past or future.</p>	<p>Inner directedness This scale is designed to measure whether a person's mode of reaction is characteristically</p>
<p>Self-actualising value This measures the affirmation of the primary values of self-actualising people.</p>	<p>Existentiality This measures the ability to situationally or existentially react without rigid adherence to one's own principles.</p>
<p>Feeling reactivity Sensitivity and responsiveness to one's own needs and feelings are measured.</p>	<p>Spontaneity The freedom to react and express one's feelings spontaneously or to be oneself is measured.</p>
<p>Self-regard This measures affirmation of self, in the light of one's own worth or strength.</p>	<p>Self-acceptance This measures the affirmation or acceptance of oneself in spite of one's weaknesses or deficiencies.</p>
<p>Nature of man constructive This involves whether humankind is generally perceived as good or evil, masculine–feminine, selfish–unselfish and spiritual–sensual: dichotomies in the nature of man.</p>	<p>Synergy This would indicate whether a person sees opposites as meaningfully related or as antagonistic.</p>
<p>Acceptance of aggression This measures the ability to accept one's own natural aggressiveness – as opposed to defensiveness, denial and the repression of aggression.</p>	<p>Capacity for intimate contact This subscale measures the ability to develop warm, intimate and meaningful relationships with other human beings, free of expectations and obligations.</p>

Although the strength of the POI lies in the theoretical concepts upon which it is based, there seem to be different views on the strength of the psychometric properties of the POI. Research by Knapp (1976), Shostrom (1976) and Weinach and Knapp (1976) provides evidence of construct validity where the POI differentiates between self-actualised and nonself-actualised persons. Cilliers and Coetzee (2003) also refer to extensive reliability and validity studies by Knapp and Shostrom from 1964 to 1976 that demonstrate acceptable reliability and validity of the POI. Coan (1972) concludes that the validity studies conducted on the POI have sufficiently demonstrated its soundness and validity as a research tool. Schulz (1994) also provided proof of the validity and reliability of the POI when used for South African students. According to Cilliers and Coetzee (2003), research findings by Fogarty indicated that despite criticism of the psychometric properties of the POI, it does appear to measure dimensions related to self-actualisation.

6.4 Research hypotheses

H0: There is no significant correlation between the different factors of emotional intelligence and the factors of self-actualisation.

H1: There is a significant correlation between the different factors of emotional intelligence and the factors of self-actualisation.

6.5 Data collection and processing

The BarOn EQ-i and the POI, as well as a biographical questionnaire, were administered to small groups of 8 to 10 people. The SPSS computer program (SPSS Inc 1998) was used to process the data. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (r) was calculated for the five different composite scales of the BarOn EQ-i and the 12 scales of the POI. Cohen's guideline was used to interpret the practical significance of correlations between constructs where $r = 0,10$ indicates a small effect, $r = 0,30$ a medium effect and $r = 0,50$ a large effect for the practical significance of correlations between constructs (McGuire 2002).

7 RESULTS

The results show a significant statistical relationship between some of the different factors of emotional intelligence (as measured by the BarOn EQ-i) and some of the factors of self-actualisation (as measured by the POI). Below is a discussion of the descriptive statistics of the two instruments. This is followed by a discussion of the results of the five composite scales on the BarOn EQ-i,

correlated with the 12 POI scales.

7.1 Descriptive statistics of the BarOn EQ-i composite scales

The descriptive statistics of the BarOn EQ-i composite scales are presented in table 4 and average scores range from 93,56 (general mood) to 100,11 (intrapersonal). The standard deviation scores range from 15,42 (stress tolerance) to 19,42 (general mood). From the average scores obtained, all the respondents appear to have fallen within the effective range of functioning with regard to emotional intelligence. The effective range of functioning is from 90 to 110 and is based on normative scores (Bar-On 1997). Seeing that respondents in this sample on average scored much higher on the intrapersonal level (100,11), this indicates that most individuals in this sample feel positive about themselves, are aware of their own feelings and emotions, are assertive, are independent and occupy themselves with meaningful tasks and activities in order to achieve their goals. The score on general mood (93,56%) still falls within the emotionally intelligent effective range of functioning, which depicts respondents as having the ability to look on the brighter side of life and to maintain a positive and hopeful attitude, even in the face of adversity.

TABLE 4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE BARON EQ-I COMPOSITE SCALES

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Intrapersonal	69	62,0	138,0	100,11	17,18
Interpersonal	69	47,0	138,0	96,31	16,46
Adaptability	69	51,0	138,0	96,82	17,14
Stress tolerance	69	67,0	131,0	94,47	15,42
General mood	69	16,0	128,0	93,56	19,42
Valid n*	69				

*Occasional discrepancies in the tables of respondents may be explained by the fact that not all respondents filled in all the required information.

7.2 Descriptive statistics of the POI scales

The descriptive statistics of the POI scales are presented in table 5. Average scores range between 6,11 on the synergy scale and 74,38 on the inner-directedness scale of the POI. The standard deviation scores range between

1,91 on the nature of man scale and 12,86 on inner directedness. Most scores obtained on the POI are lower than 50 points (with the exception of spontaneity and self-regard), which indicates aspects of self-actualising behaviour that are less apparent.

TABLE 5 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF THE POI SCALES

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Time competence	70	70	96,0	15,38	10,41
Inner directedness	70	180	102,0	74,38	12,86
Self-actualising value	70	110	24,0	18,61	2,82
Existentiality	70	60	24,0	14,94	4,37
Feeling reactivity	70	60	20,0	14,20	2,93
Spontaneity	70	50	16,0	12,02	2,43
Self-regard	70	60	19,0	12,21	2,12
Self-actualisation	70	70	21,0	12,70	3,48
Nature of man	70	60	15,0	10,75	1,91
Synergy	70	30	18,0	6,11	2,06
Aggression	70	60	22,0	15,25	3,58
Capacity contact	69	60	25,0	15,71	4,05
Valid n*	69				

*Occasional discrepancies in the tables of respondents may be explained by the fact that not all respondents filled in all the required information.

7.3 Correlation of BarOn EQ-i composite scales and POI scales

Table 6 shows the correlations between the 5 BarOn EQ-i composite scales and the 12 POI scales.

TABLE 6 PEARSON CORRELATION OF THE BARON EQ-I COMPOSITE SCALES WITH THE POI SCALES

	INTER- PERSONAL	INTER- PERSONAL	ADAPTABILITY	STRESS TOLERANCE	GENERAL MOOD
TIME COMPETENCE	0,30*	6	0,44*	0,31*	0,32 *
INNER DIRECTEDNESS	27	7	0,34*	23	18
SELF- ACTUALISATION	0,30*	0,29	0,35*	0,30*	15
EXISTENTIAL LIVING	1	-	15	17	6
FEELING REACTIVITY	0,32*	18	0,33*	15	18
SPONTANEITY	27	7	0,25	10	21
SELF-REGARD	0,47*	0,24	0,57**	0,51**	17
SELF- ACCEPTANCE	7	-	12	9	1
NATURE OF MAN CONSTRUCTIVE	14	2	20	15	2
SYNERGY	21	8	0,32*	23	6
ACCEPTING AGGRESSION	0,39*	9	0,41*	14	0,31*
INTIMATE CONTACT	0,35*	7	0,45*	0,31*	29

*r= 0,30 a medium effect and ** r= 0,50 a large effect for the practical significance of correlations between constructs

From the above table it is evident that self-regard on the POI correlates positively with the intrapersonal (medium effect), adaptability and stress tolerance (both large effect) composite scales on the BarOn EQ-i. Time competence on the POI correlates positively with the intrapersonal, adaptability, stress tolerance and general mood composite scales on the BarOn EQ-i (all medium effect). Inner directedness on the POI correlates positively (medium effect) with adaptability on the BarOn EQ-i. Self-actualisation on the POI correlates positively (medium effect) with the intrapersonal, adaptability and stress tolerance BarOn EQ-i composite scales. Feeling reactivity on the POI correlates positively (medium effect) with both the intrapersonal and adaptability BarOn EQ-i composite scales. The synergy scale on the POI shows a positive correlation with a medium effect only with one BarOn EQ-i subscale, namely

adaptability. Acceptance of aggression scale correlates positively with intrapersonal, adaptability and general mood, showing medium effect. Capacity for contact (POI) correlates positively with intrapersonal, adaptability, stress tolerance and general mood on the BarOn EQ-i (medium effect).

The adaptability subscale of the BarOn EQ-i seems to be the EQ subscale that correlates with the most POI scales, including time competence, inner directedness, self-actualisation, feeling reactivity, self-regard, synergy, acceptance of aggression and capacity for contact. The intrapersonal subscale on the BarOn EQ-i shows the second highest number of correlations with the POI scales and correlates positively with time competence, self-actualisation, feeling reactivity, self-regard, acceptance of aggression and capacity for intimate contact. Stress tolerance on the BarOn EQ-i correlates with four of the 12 POI scales, namely time competence, self-actualisation, self-regard and capacity for contact. General mood on the BarOn EQ-i correlates positively with only three of the 12 POI scales, namely time competence, acceptance of aggression and capacity for intimate contact. From table 5 it is evident that the interpersonal subscale on the BarOn EQ-i does not show any significant correlations with any of the POI scales. It is also clear that three of the 12 POI scales, namely existential living, self-acceptance and nature of man constructive, have no significant correlations with any one of the BarOn EQ-i composite scales. Based on these results, the alternative hypothesis is rejected.

8 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The strong positive correlations between the adaptability and stress tolerance composite scales on the BarOn EQ-i and self-regard (POI) may indicate that people displaying a strong affirmation of personal worth and strengths (self-regard) in this sample also reflect behaviour typical of adaptability and stress tolerance. One would expect people in this sample with a higher self-regard to display a more flexible, yet realistic orientation to life; they will tend to feel more resourceful and display greater confidence in their ability to generate effective solutions to problems and to adapt to unfamiliar and unpredictable circumstances. People with a higher self-regard in this sample also display a higher level of stress tolerance and impulse control.

It is interesting to note that both the time competence and capacity for intimate contact scales of the POI correlated significantly with the intrapersonal, adaptability, stress tolerance and general mood composite scales on the BarOn EQ-i (all medium effect). People in this sample who displayed the ability to live in the present (time competence) and have a higher capacity for intimate contact generally appear to be more assertive, independent and to feel more self-actualised. They are more adaptable, have a higher stress tolerance and display an overall positive and optimistic mood.

Inner directedness, self-actualisation, feeling reactivity, synergy as well as capacity for intimate contact on the POI correlate positively (medium effect) with the adaptability composite scale on the BarOn EQ-i. This means that people in this sample who display higher levels of inner directedness, self-actualisation, feeling reactivity, synergy and capacity for intimate contact on the POI are also people who are more in touch with reality, more flexible and open to change and are able to solve problems more conscientiously and systematically.

People in this sample with a higher level of self-actualisation behaviour, feeling reactivity and acceptance of aggression (as measured by the POI) also display higher levels of self-regard, self-awareness, assertiveness, independence and self-actualising behaviour (as measured by the intrapersonal scale on the BarOn EQ-i).

The acceptance of aggression scale also correlates positively with the BarOn EQ-i composite scale of general mood (medium effect). This implies that people who accept their own aggression and who are not usually defensive (acceptance of aggression) are more prone to having a generally optimistic and positive orientation to life.

Lastly, self-actualisation behaviour (on the POI) seems to be endorsed by a higher level of stress tolerance and impulse control as measured by the BarOn EQ-i (stress management scale).

9 LIMITATIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study shows that certain limitations need to be considered in the duplication of the research. For one thing, there seem to be differences in the research findings on the psychometric properties of the POI scales (Cilliers & Coetzee 2003). This study also preceded the latest confirmatory factor analysis of the POI in the South African context, which has shown poor similarities to previously reported factor structures of the POI (Cilliers et al 2004). Although these results caution against the use of the POI in quantitative research in the South African multicultural scenario, the authors recommend a revision of the POI to ensure that self-actualisation remains a valid construct in positive psychology (Cilliers et al 2004).

A further shortcoming in this research is that the small number of respondents used to obtain the results could have limited the generalisability of the results. These results should be confirmed by comparison with other samples and through other similar research projects.

However, the results support the expectation of conceptual links between the two constructs, which resulted from exploring possible theoretical links. Positive

correlations in most areas of self-actualisation emerged from the results, predominantly with adaptability and intrapersonal behaviour, as an intricate part of an individual's emotional intelligence.

It is suggested that effective performance by employees could be improved by giving due consideration to the overall process of emotional intelligence competencies during the recruitment and selection process. Establishing the behavioural or emotional competencies of a job would enable and assist a person to perform better. In this research, assessing candidates' emotional intelligence competencies, such as adaptability and intrapersonal behaviour, could potentially help an organisation to employ workers who will be more prone to self-actualising behaviour and general psychological wellbeing in delivering the outputs of their jobs.

Further research could be undertaken in the area of training and development. By assessing a person's current potential against future requirements for a job or position, his or her ability to achieve and actualise this potential could be greatly enhanced. In the workplace, a pool of succession employees identified for future promotions or growth could be assisted in various ways to improve their emotional, social and self-actualising skills. Interventions could include leadership development programmes, coaching, mentoring or emotional competency training.

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