

Embracing Artificial Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence towards Succession Planning

Mukesh Mihir, Research Scholar

Dr. Bhawna Sharma Padroo, Professor and HoI, Amity Business School Amity University Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

People are using various Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to increase efficiency, improve accuracy and optimize cost. As Human Resources (HR), they also use Thought Intelligence (TI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI). Higher standards are set, where employees must learn AI tools and work diligently. Behavioural competencies are required in the current era over and above functional competencies. This is why employment of HR is still relevant. Succession Planning (SP) maps the key & critical leadership roles. This study encompasses the impact of TI and EI on SP with recommendation of Learning and Development (L&D) interventions to improve competencies of current workforce.

Key Words: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Thought Intelligence (TI), Emotional Intelligence (EI), Succession Planning (SP), Learning and Development (L&D)

INTRODUCTION

Human Resources (HR) needs to be developed continually for meeting the requirement of the present and future need. They are the biggest asset to an organization, which needs to be managed, utilised and mapped properly for the current and future growth of the organization. Sustainability is the need of hour. Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools have come up recently to achieve an efficient and faster way to complete the job with optimum cost. There is a big question arising whether it going to reduce the need of manpower and thus affect employment in the corporate world. Organizations have already started reducing their manpower in the name of AI as if it has replaced humans for their jobs. Thousands of people are losing their jobs and facing unemployment due to lack of awareness about uses and usage of these AI tools.

The matter is of great concern in view of socioeconomic environment. Various AI tools are being used by workforce to execute their job. There is a firm believe that it can results into accurate and faster output and results.

The following basic questions arise in view of the above:

- Do AI tools replace the Human Resources?
- Is it really going to affect the employment?
- How HR can play a role in this context?
- What competence is desired from the workforce in this AI era?
- What is the impact of Thought and Emotional Intelligence over Succession Planning (SP) in an organization?

1. Purpose of research

The study is done to find answer to the above questions. The purpose is to analyse the awareness based on the feedback to find a solution to achieve a successful Succession Planning for current and future key and critical leadership roles. This study would also suggest the possible solutions to manage the Talent within the organization by identifying, developing and retaining Human Resources with respect to their functional and behavioural competence. This study would give a wholistic idea on developing the Emotional Intelligence (EI) and using Thought Intelligence in Decision Making and Actions towards achieving the organizational goal. Upcoming competencies required to sustain with continual organizational growth would also be discussed through this study. The objective of the whole exercise is to find out the impact of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Thought Intelligence (TI) on Succession Planning (SP) through decision making and actions of Human Resources in an organization.

Thus, the purpose is to explore, discuss current HR practices and develop a model of hybrid work – diversity, inclusion and Talent Management.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW & DISCUSSIONS

Several studies have been done on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI). There are few papers covering Thought Intelligence (TI) as well. But the idea of combining these three and their impact on Succession Planning (SP) has not been reviewed.

Zhylin, M.; Bondarevych, S.; Kotliar, L.; Dikol-Kobrina, O.; Dzhezhyk, O. in their study titled “Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Succession Planning: Strategies for Identifying and Developing Future Leaders” investigates the relationship of leadership identification and development with emotional intelligence and leadership succession planning. It also outlines the effective strategies for identification of potential leaders and leadership development. The survey involved five companies operating in the information technology, car repair enterprise, sewing business, and food and beverages producers in the Western and Central regions of Ukraine. The result shows that leadership identification and development is implemented through certain strategies, which include the use of feedback, culture of high engagement, performance assessment, leadership training programs, identification of skill gaps, future needs and introduction of continuous learning culture in an organization. The use of these strategies should be implemented in the individual, group and organizational levels. The study contributed to elaborate the model of leadership identification and development in an organization. (Zhylin et al., 2024)

Supramaniam, S.; Singaravelloo, K. in their study “Impact of emotional intelligence on organisational performance: an analysis in the Malaysian public administration” analyses the impact of EI on organisational performance (OP) in the Malaysian public sector. The results affirm the significant positive effect of EI on OP, suggesting the need for an increase in the EI of civil servants by including EI indicators and measures in the areas of recruitment, learning and development, workforce planning, succession planning, and organisational development. It recommends that EI should actively be adopted to increase awareness and maturity, which would thus enable civil servants to embrace the current challenging agile environment. (Supramaniam & Singaravelloo, 2021)

Amal Alnamrouti, Husam Rjoub and Hale Ozgit in their study titled “Do Strategic Human Resources and Artificial Intelligence Help to Make Organisations More Sustainable? Evidence from Non-Governmental Organisations” provides theoretical and practical guidance on how to apply the findings to assist non-profit organisations’ management in utilising organisational learning, corporate social responsibility, artificial intelligence, and strategic resource management practices. It helps them run their internal operations in a more efficient and sustainable manner over time. (Alnamrouti et al., 2022)

Nadin Alherimi, Sara Abdulkaksoud, Vian Ahmed and Zied Bahroun in their study titled “A Systematic Literature Review of Artificial Intelligence Advancements in Green Human Resource Management” analysed and revealed five primary research themes, highlighting AI’s significant role in enhancing green recruitment,

training, and performance management, while also underscoring critical challenges related to ethical considerations and organizational readiness. Moreover, this study directly contributes to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), through emphasizing the strategic significance of AI-enabled Green HRM in fostering organizational sustainability.(Alherimi et al., 2025)

Krešimir Ćosić , Vanja Kopilaš & Tanja Jovanović in their paper “Importance of mental readiness in highly stressful professions” explores the role of mental readiness in high-stress professions, emphasizing its impact on performance, safety, and mental health. It also examines emerging AI-based methodologies and psychological strategies designed to enhance resilience, improve decision making, and foster long-term occupational sustainability. By integrating these approaches, organizations can better prepare individuals and team members for the psychological demands of their roles, reducing the likelihood of stress-induced errors and improving overall professional effectiveness.(Ćosić et al., 2025)

Many more papers are elaborating the subject EI with different models. Yet the idea of integrating AI, EI and TI with the Succession Planning (SP) is yet to be explored and studied for a better understanding. This study aims to establish the relationship between these variables and its impact on Succession Planning by using all the 3 variables.

3. METHODOLOGY

Stratified Sampling method is adopted to collect samples from the subgroups of Senior Management, Middle Management and HR Managers of top 10 Indian Public Sector Units (PSUs) working under them in Managerial Cadre. These organizations are the leading Indian PSUs in their respective sectors based on total number of employees working under them. Questionnaire is prepared and feedback is received about the employees’ perception on Self Awareness (SA1), Social Awareness (SA2) and Relationship Awareness (RA) as Independent Variables. Feedback on use of AI along with TI and EI together were also collected as Mediating Variables. Data on Succession Planning, as secondary data, is collected based on number of employees promoted in the sample organizations in last 3 years. Data is analysed and the impact of independent variable on Mediating Variable (AI, EI and TI) is established. Also, the significance and impact on Succession Planning is analysed for these Mediating variables. Result and outcome are established combining these two. Thus, the impact of SA1, SA2 and RA on SP is established.

4. Conceptual Framework

The diagram shown below explains the process and the conceptual framework about how a successful Succession Planning can be achieved for mapping the right Talent for Key and Critical Leadership roles. It is done by identifying actions and decision making by leaders of the organization based on their Thought and Emotional Intelligence and application of AI.

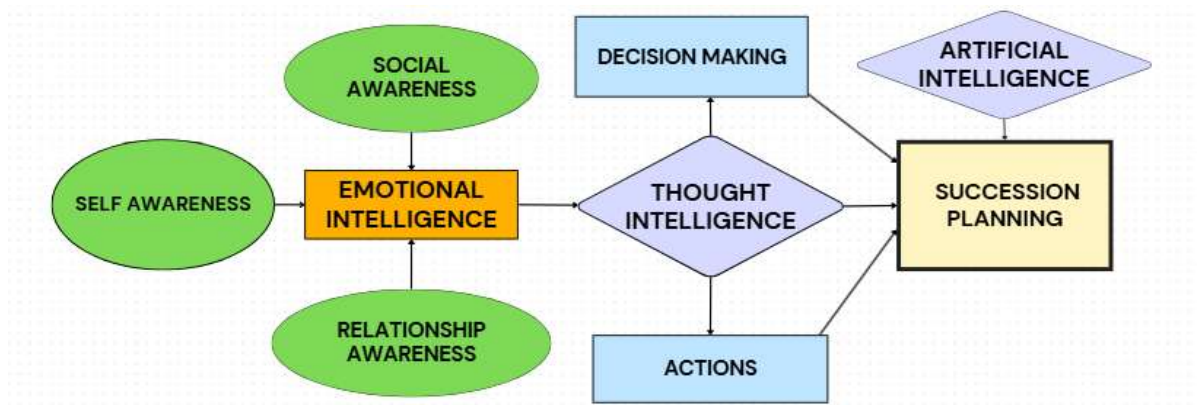


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is described as self-management with Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness. The emotions and thought can be restructured and thus, decision making and actions can be made for achieving higher performance level and broader vision towards continual growth. Based on these data a successful SP can be planned. Continual organizational performance and growth would further lead to Organizational Sustainability.

5. Data Specification

A sample of 10 nos. management executives each from 10 PSUs of different sectors were considered as respondents for assessing the awareness through a questionnaire. The questionnaire is designed to collect feedback on their perception about Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness as Independent Variable. Decision Making and Actions based on Thought and Emotional Intelligence is the mediating variable. Data on promotions collected as Secondary Data, which is the dependent variable in this study. The significance and impact of independent variables, i.e., the perception of employees about the use and usage of AI along with Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness on dependent variable impacting Succession Planning is analysed and studied to achieve the results.

6. Prediction and Results

Based on the collected data, it is observed that 60% employees from management cadre of the sample organizations are aware of the use and usage of AI tools. Similarly, almost 40% of respondents are aware of Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness along with the use of EI and TI in their decision making and actions. The performance management data shows that those respondents having aware of EI and TI in addition to AI, are having higher Performance Ratings and thus promoted in last 3 years in comparison to others. The impact of combining AI, EI and TI on Succession Planning (SP) is significant and evident. Use and usage of AI is a functional competence, whereas EI and TI are behavioural competence. Both these competencies are required to be upgraded continually with various HR interventions.

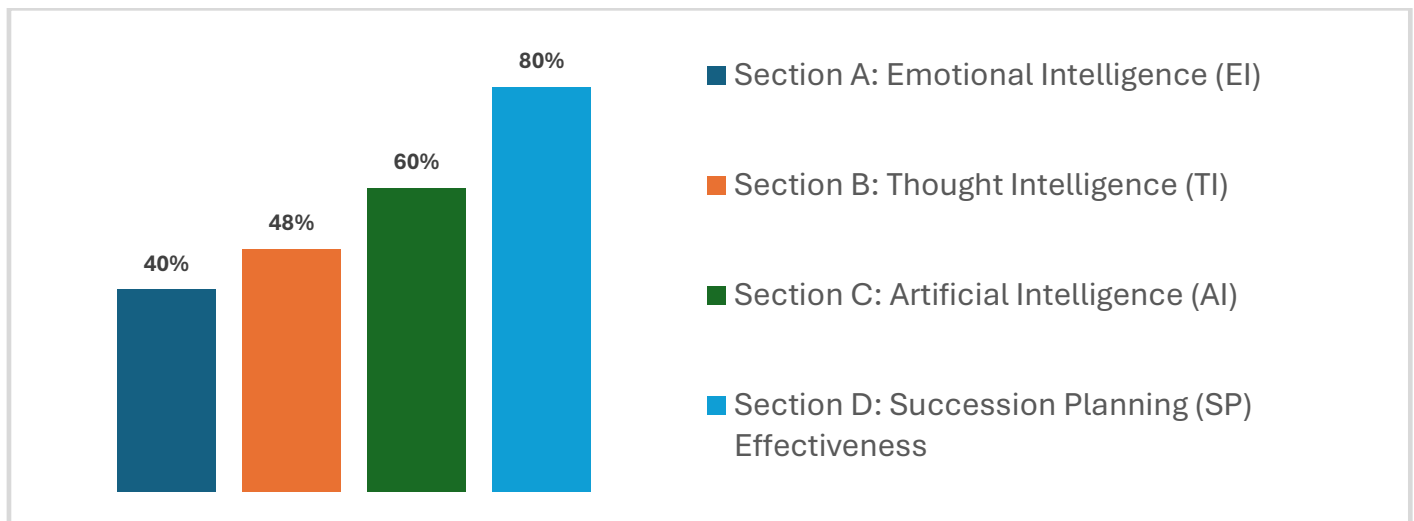


Figure 2: Feedback of Employees on AI, EI, TI and SP

The survey showed that emotional intelligence leads to improvements in an organization. Based on the responses, we found that positive effects mostly relate to strong Emotional Intelligence (40 % responses), Thought Intelligence (48%) and Artificial Intelligence (60%) for Succession planning (80%). Also, EI, TI and AI combined has significant impact upon Succession Planning (SP). The findings also confirms that use of EI and TI in leadership has a significant positive impact on employees' intellectual growth. This, in turn, can help in development of employees' mental capacities, or knowledge and encourage continuous learning. At the same time, respondents also stated that in some cases leadership emotional intelligence causes leadership subjectivity and inability to adapt to sudden changes. The survey proves that emotional intelligence is a critical quality of

today's leadership and makes positive changes in the professional environment. This means it should be introduced while identifying and developing future leaders in an organization.

The findings show different attitudes towards Succession Planning among managerial personnel. The clarity and structural framework, Strategic long term organizational goal, ability to manage under pressure, conflict management and strong cognitive flexibility had the most positive effects upon identification and development of future leaders according to respondents. Also, AI based analytical accuracy, reducing bias, predictive leadership readiness and objective evaluation of employee's assessments were regarded as positive effect of planned leadership succession. Strategic Thinking, problem solving, creative thinking, decision making ability, when implemented or managed properly can lead to Thought Intelligence, which is having a significant positive impact on Succession Planning exercise. According to a few respondents, lack of diversity and inclusion can hinder organizational adaptability and retard innovation development. The respondents, who have in-depth knowledge in the industries and were found involved in leadership identification and development procedures, state that efficient succession planning is an important strategic process, and it can ensure a smooth transition of leadership and maintain organizational stability. **Figure 2** shows feedback of respondents towards application of EI, TI, AI and Succession Planning (SP) to identify and develop future leaders.

Feedback on SA1, SA2 and RA: The responses of respondents were collected through a questionnaire designed of 20 questions with 5-point Likert Scale. The Questionnaire was designed so as 1-7 questions were related to Self-Awareness, 8-14 to Social Awareness and 15-20 questions were related to Relationship Awareness. The feedback on perception of respondents was collected through digital survey.

The following graph plots the respondents scores against each question for their perception on Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness. A mix response was observed for the same. However, it is noted that the employee with high Emotional Intelligence were able to manage themselves are having high performance outcome and hence considered for the increment ladder. That means they are considered as future leaders under Succession Planning process. The following graph also figures out the competence under EI and TI over AI. (**Figure 3**):

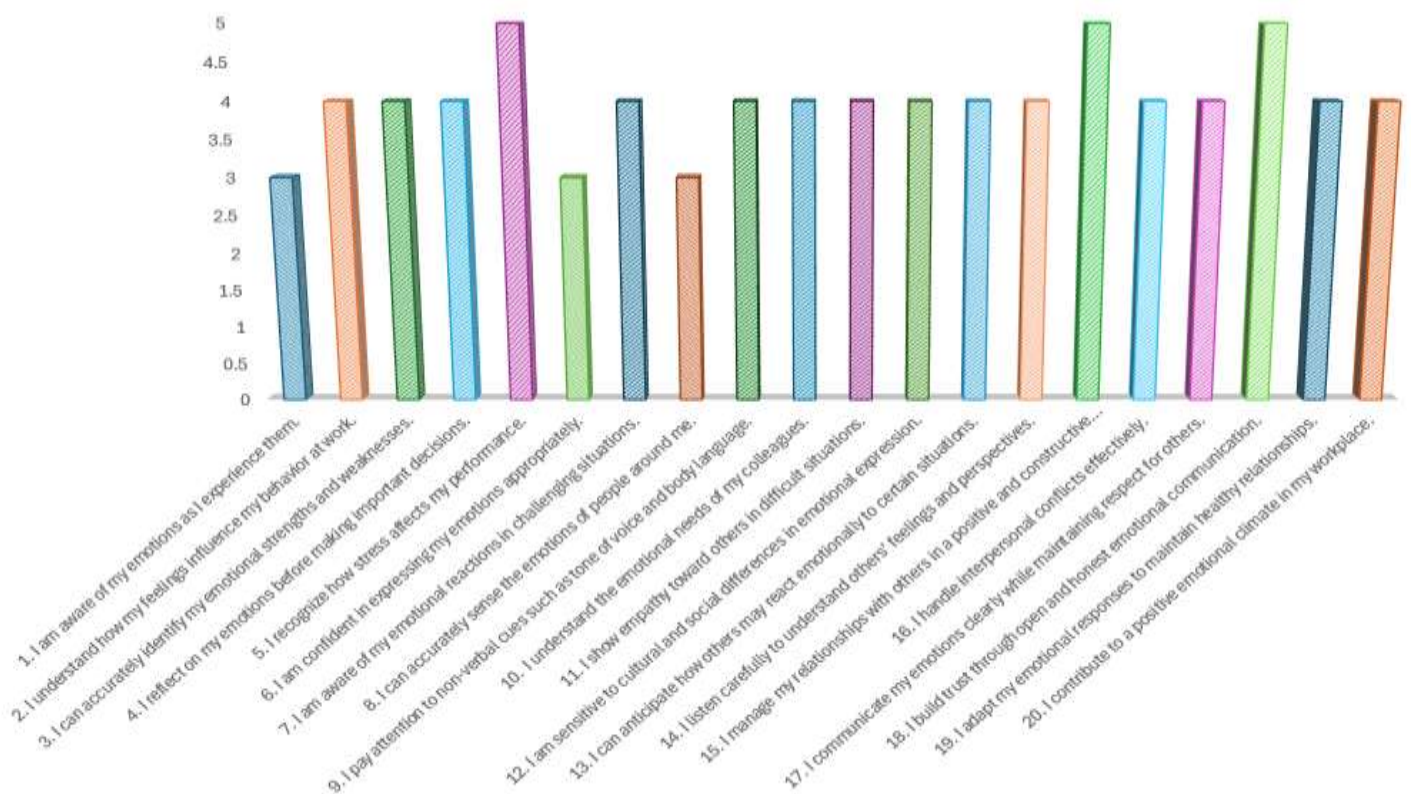


Figure 3: Feedback on SA1, SA2 and RA

The Mean score of the feedback of the respondent on Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness is shown in **Figure 4**.

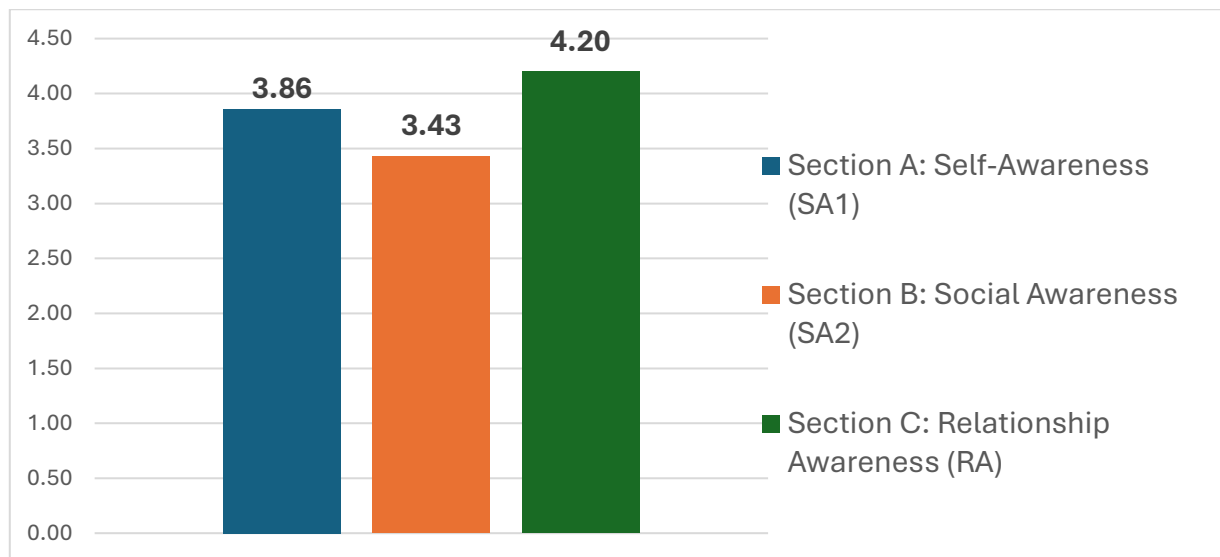


Figure 4: Feedback on SA1, SA2 and RA

With descriptive analysis, linking the Mean Scores gives us the following result:

Factors	Code	Mean	Relevance
Self-Awareness	SA1	3.86	Moderate–High self-awareness
Social Awareness	SA2	3.43	Moderate social awareness
Relationship Awareness	RA	4.20	High relationship awareness

This strengthens showing practical relevance. That means there is a significant positive relationship between Self-Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness on Emotional Intelligence.

The result shows that there is a significant impact of Self-management of Self Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness on Actions and Decision Making based on the EI and TI along with AI together, which has significant positive impact on Succession Planning.

7. Observations and discussion

It is observed that the employees with higher performance ratings are mostly using EI and TI along with AI in their job execution. They are aware of emotions of themselves, their team and give importance to relationship awareness. The secondary data says that people carrying this competence are more in numbers who got promotions in last 3 years. However, people using AI without applying EI and TI could not perform and hence could not get promoted. The application of AI however is a common competence for all.

What is Emotional Intelligence and why is it important?

Emotional intelligence has been shown to be one of the most important skills a person can have for overall success. Emotional intelligence is the capacity to be aware of and manage one's own emotions, and the emotions of others. Managing emotions is not only incredibly important in one's own life but is also critical in the workplace. In order to be successful, it is essential to be able to understand and keep in mind the emotional states of those around you. Some of the benefits of being emotionally intelligent include better communication, stronger relationships, increased productivity, and greater creativity.

What are the characteristics of emotional intelligence?

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to be aware of and to manage one's own emotions, and the emotions of others as well. It is generally said to include three behavioral skills: self-awareness, empathy, and self-regulation. Individuals with high emotional intelligence are typically better able to regulate their emotions, respond effectively to the emotions of others, and are aware of their own emotional states. They are also more likely to have fulfilling and successful relationships.

There are three models of emotional intelligence.

1. **The ability model:** This model argues that to be emotionally intelligent, you need to possess certain competencies. The four branches of ability model of Emotional Intelligence, detailed in Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2004, p. 200), argue that you need to be able to follow the following four steps:

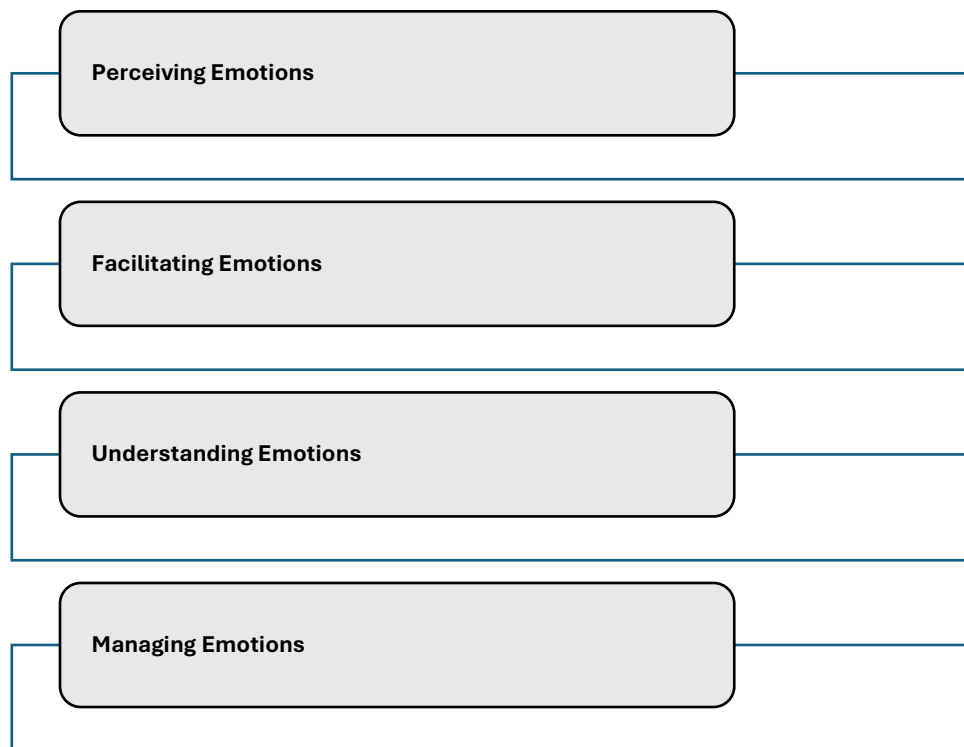


Fig 5: The Ability Model

2. **The trait model:** This model, such as that developed by Petrides (2001, pp. 425–448), breaks from the idea that emotional intelligence is based on abilities. It argues that people have emotional self-perceptions and traits that form part of their personality. These are self-identified by the person rather than scientifically measured and might include self-identifying levels of assertiveness, self-esteem and happiness, for example.

3. **The mixed model:** This model combines several types of emotional intelligence qualities. These might include:

- skills (being empathic, for example)
- traits (such as optimism)
- other qualities (such as being able to read facial expressions, being able to inspire others)

4. **Genos Model of Emotional Intelligence:** Genos EI was originally conceptualized by Ben Palmer and Con Stough at Swinburne University as a specific need was felt to design a model that meets the unique and specific needs of business leaders, human resource professionals and occupational psychologists to identify employees

for learning and development at the workplace Palmer, Stough, Harmer & Gignac (2009). The model has six core emotional intelligence competencies (indicated in the centre column of figure below):



Figure 6: Genos Model of Emotional Intelligence)

(Source: <https://www.genosinternational.com/emotional-intelligence/>)

The above model is organised to reflect the role of emotional intelligence competencies listed below in giving rise to either productive or unproductive states:

- Emotional self-awareness:** being aware of the way one feels as well as the impact one's feelings can have on decisions, behaviour and performance.
- Emotional awareness of others:** perceiving, understanding and acknowledging the way others feel so as to demonstrate empathy.
- Authenticity:** openly, honestly and effectively expressing oneself, being transparent and keeping commitments.
- Emotional reasoning:** considering and using your one's and others' feelings decision making, integrating with facts and technical information as well as communicating this process to others
- Self- management:** managing one's own mood and emotions, time and behaviour, even in high pressure and demanding contexts.
- Positive influence:** creating positive and healthy work environment by impacting others' feelings through problem solving, feedback and support.

These core skills help people demonstrate productive being states such as being present, empathetic, genuine, expansive, resilient and empowering, as opposed to the unproductive being states of disconnected, insensitive, untrustworthy, limited, temperamental and indifferent.

Daniel Goleman in his book titled "Emotional Intelligence" explains that emotions can be studied, and people can be taught how to understand and manage their own emotions. According to Daniel Goleman, people have grown to have two minds – the emotional and the rational. The reason is the neocortex, the center of thought, which is bigger in humans than in other species. With the help of neocortex, we can analyse our feelings and



ideas – and we can have feelings about feelings. However, the neocortex doesn't govern our emotional life. In “emotional emergencies”, it's the limbic system that takes charge.

How to increase Emotional Intelligence: Emotional Intelligence is a behavioural competence, which can be improved on by developing and exercising following actions:

- Utilize an assertive style of communication
- Respond instead of reacting to conflict
- Utilize Active Learning Skills
- Be motivated
- Practice ways to maintain a positive attitude
- Practice self-awareness
- Take critique well
- Empathize with others
- Utilize leadership skills
- Be approachable and sociable

Emotional Intelligence is rewiring the thoughts by changing neuron path in human brain and hence changing the thought and making decision for suitable action.

The following diagram shows the four windows, which need to be kept open to practice Emotional Intelligence.

Self-Awareness (SA1) Emotional Self Awareness Accurate Self-Assessment Self Confidence	Self-Management (SM) Emotional Self Control Transparency Adaptability Achievement Initiative Optimism
Social Awareness (SA2) Empathy Organizational Awareness Service	Relationship Management (RA) Inspirational Leadership Influence Developing Others Change Catalyst Conflict Management Building Bonds Teamwork and Collaboration

Human mind can be developed on the above aspects, and this is how the Emotional Intelligence of a person can be increased by practicing self-management with Self-awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Management.

Relevance of Thought Intelligence (TI): Thought Intelligence is the ability to combine application of AI tools with Emotional Intelligence (EI) of a leader to execute the job towards the strategic goals of an organization. The business goals and individual goals are aligned and strategies are defined to meet these goals in efficient and effective ways. TI leads to save time as well as cost while applying the AI tools for the relevant jobs. The leaders who are able to apply TI, while expediting their roles and responsibilities are mostly identified for the key and critical roles as a part of Succession Planning.

The above actions cannot be undertaken by AI or a machine.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

A model inclusive of AI, EI and TI is developed for a successful Succession Planning with following recommendations by way of applying decision making and actions by the employees and management:

- Self-Awareness, Social Awareness and Relationship Awareness, if managed properly can lead to different approach to execute the job.
- Emotional Intelligence is the need of hour in the era of Artificial Intelligence, when human is expected to deliver their output with diligence and humility.
- Human Resources are expected to learn the use and various usage of different AI tools to perform better so that it can result into a successful Succession Planning.
- Learning and Development of employees in the field of EI and TI is equally important while learning the use and usage of AI tools.
- While using AI with EI and TI, the Performance of an employee can be improved.
- A successful Succession Planning includes combining actions and decision-making ability in line with Thought Intelligence and Emotional Intelligence of individuals.

9. CONCLUSION

The study encompasses that the Succession Planning is the need of hour, which can be achieved by making timely decisions, applying actions by combining Artificial Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence and Thought Intelligence together. Use of Artificial Intelligence can lead to efficiency with time & cost saving. But the expectation from human resources is even more. Every employee needs to learn and apply EI and TI along with AI in the current changing environment so that Succession Planning can be done for key and critical leadership roles. HR has an important role to play in this field. Every employee needs to understand the limitations of AI and application of EI & TI to execute their job. The update of functional as well as behavioural competence is important for Human Resources. HR has a vital role to play under Learning and Development in developing employees both in Functional and Behavioural competence. HR also has a role to identify, develop and retain the inhouse Talent for the key and critical leadership roles to achieve Organizational Sustainability. This inclusive model of Succession Planning discusses about the current HR practices of hybrid work, where AI, EI and TI together with diversity and inclusion is combined for Talent Management.

10. Limitations and Future Studies

The study is done with the managerial cadre employees of Indian PSUs only, that too with a small sample size of 10 each from different Indian PSUs. This can be extended to different geographical context and in MNCs

(Multi-National Companies), Govt. Sector and Private Sector Organizations to study the impact of AI, EI and TI over SP. The study can also be extended by considering a greater number of different independent variables affecting the decisions and actions by the management and the effect on SP can be assessed.

About Authors

Mukesh Mihir: A Mechanical Engineer from MNREC, Allahabad and HR Professional from NMIMS, Mumbai. He has obtained additional qualifications on “The Cutting-Edge Programme” from IIM, Ahmedabad, Courses on “Sustainability” from University of Illinois, “Politics and Economics of International Energy” from Paris School of International Affairs (SciencesPo), “Harvard Manage Mentor” from Harvard Business Publishing and ECIN programme from Energy Conservation Centre under Association for Overseas Technical Scholarship, 37 | P a g e Japan. He has versatile Industry Experience in O&M, Cryogenics, Sales & Marketing, Technical Services, Institutional Business and Human Resources at different levels. He has also worked under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gases, Govt. of India as Joint Director, Petroleum Conservation Research Association. While pursuing as a research scholar, he has presented papers in National and International conferences. As an author - his Articles/Papers have been published in various National/International Journals. An experienced faculty on Energy Conservation, having worked in managerial cadre in the Energy Sector for three decades, he is currently into Learning & Development.

Dr. Bhawna Sharma Padroo: Professor, Amity Business School, Mumbai. She is also holding additional responsibilities of International Programs, e-cell and chief mentor at Amity University, Maharashtra. She is the recipient of Faculty Best Researcher Award – Management Domain for three consecutive years in 2015, 2016 and 2017 by ADMAA. She is having more than 20 years of experience in higher education and business school administration. She is honoured with President Award given by Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

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