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## Effect of Demographic Variables on Emotional Intelligence of Tour Leaders in Egypt

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### Keywords

Emotional Intelligence,  
Tour leaders,  
Demographic Variables,  
Gender,  
Age,  
Level of Education.

### Abstract

This study is an attempt to find out whether or not demographic variables such as gender, age and education have influenced the emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders. Cognitive intelligence is not enough to make a successful tour leader. Emotional intelligence is an important ability along with cognitive intelligence. Emotional intelligence deals with understanding the feelings of others and oneself. Accordingly, emotional intelligence has an impact on the personality of the tour leader and his performance at work, and also affects job satisfaction. One hundred and fifty Egyptian tour leaders, in Cairo governorate, have filled out the emotional intelligence questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale has been used for the measures. To measure tour leaders' emotional intelligence, the 16-item Wong and Law emotional intelligence scale (WLEIS) has been adapted. T-test and ANOVA were used for the analysis. The study has confirmed that there are no statistically significant differences between the Egyptian tour leaders' emotional intelligence according to age, gender and level of education.

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## **1. Introduction**

Tourism industry heavily relies on multiple encounters and interactions with customer (Koc, 2019). Therefore, service providers are supposed to have the ability to manage, regulate and control their emotions to achieve positive and effective interaction with customers (Tsaour and Ku, 2019). Emotional intelligence considerably takes emotion into account since it is the ability to understand and evaluate the feelings of oneself and others, distinguish between them, and use the information obtained by these processes to guide one's thinking and actions. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to control impulses and manage emotions (Tekeli and Ozkoc, 2022).

Occupations that include high levels of emotional abilities in interacting with customers considerably require emotional intelligence. Tour leaders need emotional intelligence to manage their performance and regulate the feelings of tour members in order to achieve effective interaction with these members (Min, 2014). Emotionally intelligent individuals are able to create positive emotions and avoid negative emotions such as anger (Coon et al., 2016). Moreover, numerous studies have shown that demographic factors influence people's emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence increases due to age and experience since age and experience qualify it as ability rather than a personality trait (Akurathi et al., 2019). The study presents an analysis of the effect of different demographic variables such as age, gender, and educational level on emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders.

The study measures the level of emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders. The study is an attempt to find out whether or not demographic factors such as gender, age, and education level affect the emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Emotional Intelligence**

The concept of emotional intelligence has been first introduced in 1990 (Martines, 2008; Wesley, 2006). Emotional intelligence is an individual's ability to observe and perceive one's own feelings and others and use information to guide one's thinking and attitude (Pistikou et al., 2021; Cherniss and Goleman, 2001). Emotional intelligence is an individual's ability that includes four dimensions. These four dimensions are self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, regulation of emotion and use of emotion (Fulford, 2011). People with a high degree of emotional intelligence are self-aware and considerate. In addition, they are optimistic, friendly and flexible (Serrat, 2017).

Emotional intelligence is an essential component of organizational success and provides a more balanced work life. The concept of emotional intelligence has emerged to demonstrate the ability, of people, to deal with issues related to emotions such as problem solving. Emotional intelligence is an indicator of success. It expresses how people apply knowledge in urgent situations. Proven hypotheses have emphasized the importance of emotional intelligence in the work environment. However, tourism scholars are not keen on emotional intelligence, despite meetings, contacts and interactions that characterize tourism industry. It is essential for professionals in this industry to have the ability to manage and control their emotions in order to effectively and constructively interact with others (Min, 2012).

Emotional intelligence refers to non-cognitive skills and abilities that affect an individual's ability to deal efficiently with environmental demands and pressures

(Dickson and Tholl, 2020; Cassady and Eissa, 2008). Tour leaders' emotional intelligence is their ability to identify, regulate, and use their own emotions and those of tour members in order to promote positive emotional states (Tsaur and Ku, 2019).

## **2.2. Tour leader**

Group package tours (GPTs) are tours that offer a pre-arranged package of services. Among these services there are transportation, accommodation, attractions and others. GPTs include a tour leader who is in charge of escorting and providing services to tour members. The performance of tour leader affects the reputation and respect of the travel agency by tourists. Moreover it affects the satisfaction and the loyalty of tourists, so tour leaders have a key role in GPTs (Hushiung and Tu, 2019).

A tour leader is also known as a tour manager. A tour leader is a front line employee in tourism industry as s/he is a representative of the travel agency. Tour leaders should always be available whenever tourists need them to fulfill their needs. In addition, they resolve issues and disputes resulting from arranging tours and handle tourist complaints properly. Tour leaders have to deal with the changing itinerary, deal with emergencies, and calm the emotions of tourists (Luoh and Tsaur, 2013).

The performance of tour leaders distinguishes one tour from another offered by competitors (Weiler and Black, 2015). They engage in physical, intellectual and emotional labor through frequent and intense interaction with the participants of the tour (Wong and Wang, 2009). Tour leader acts as an intermediary between the travel agency and its customers (Hall and Brown, 2006). Moreover, tour leaders have a great role as a source of information and assistance and provide information on the destination in terms of behavior, culture and other elements (Leslie, 2012).

It is necessary for tour leaders to enhance their emotional intelligence to be able to deal with different and crucial circumstances and interact appropriately and effectively with tour members. Tour leaders with emotional intelligence are able to accomplish interpersonal relationships and interactions, assess and understand tourists' needs and expectations and provide maximum satisfaction. In addition, tour leaders who have high emotional intelligence are more aware of their feelings and more effective in dealing with work pressures (Tsaur and Ku, 2019).

## **2.3. Demographic Variables and Emotional Intelligence**

The study investigates whether or not demographic variables significantly influence the level of emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders. Many studies have reported that demographic variables significantly and positively affect emotional intelligence (Tetteh et al., 2021; Gautam and Khurana, 2019). This study has included only three demographic variables, which are gender, age, and level of education. These variables do not comprehensively represent all factors affecting emotional intelligence. There are multiple demographic variables whose impact on emotional intelligence can be studied, such as work experience, annual income level and marital status (Uslu, 2020).

According to some studies, there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and age. Emotional intelligence increases and develops due to age and experience (Sharma, 2017; Shabani et al., 2011). The literature confirms that the elderly are more aware, wise and disciplined showing a higher degree of emotional intelligence, which indicates that, some emotional intelligence competencies must be developed through training (Gupta and Rajak, 2017). It is assumed that elderly in society have experienced much more circumstances than the youth. Therefore,

elderly have a better ability to adapt to their social interactions while dealing with their emotions. Although some studies have confirmed that there is a positive relationship between age and emotional intelligence. Other studies have shown that this relationship is controversial. Research on this issue has continued (Marengo and Chinyamurindi, 2018). Previous research such as Sharma (2017) has identified age as one of the demographic variables most relevant to the development of emotional intelligence. Despite the conflicting results of few studies, they all have indicated the importance of age in the development of emotional intelligence (Meena, 2022; Fernandez-Berrocal et al., 2012).

**H1:** There are no significant differences in Emotional Intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to age.

Gender is a factor that helps with the development of emotional intelligence. Males and females represent different physiological and biological characteristics. In addition, some studies have revealed that females have a higher level of emotional intelligence (Ali et al., 2021). Other studies have shown the opposite whereas others that do not tend to show gender differences in emotional intelligence (Gautam et al., 2019; Mokhlesi and Patil, 2018). Although intensive research has been conducted to explore the effect of gender on emotional intelligence, a clear picture of the situation has not been provided yet. The role of women has changed in society since they have presented an important part of the workforce. Females have participated with males in all work fields. Numerous studies on emotional intelligence have revealed that females are able to identify their own emotions much clearer. Moreover, they are more empathetic with better interpersonal relationships. Some have studies also found that males are more confident, optimistic, and resilient than females, and they have a better ability to deal with stress. Nevertheless, some studies have explained that males are more empathetic and rational, that women have dealt with stressful circumstances, (Kanwal et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2009). Although there are studies that have demonstrated significant differences in emotional intelligence based on gender, there are other studies that have not indicated these differences due to the convergence of gender roles at the present time. This means that the effect of gender on the level of emotional intelligence is still under study and with the continuation of research, a new trend may emerge (Marengo and Chinyamurindi, 2018).

**H2:** There are no significant differences in Emotional Intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to gender.

Another demographic variable that can influence the level of emotional intelligence is the level of education. Higher levels of education have been closely associated with higher levels of emotional intelligence (Samuel and Osman, 2022). From my point of view, emotional intelligence is not necessarily related to the level of education. Despite the high level of education of some people, they are not able to understand or deal with the feelings of others.

**H3:** There are no significant differences in Emotional Intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to level of education.

### **3. Methodology**

One hundred and fifty Egyptian tour leaders, in Cairo governorate, have filled out the emotional intelligence questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale has been used for the measures. To measure tour leaders' emotional intelligence, the 16-item Wong and Law emotional intelligence scale (WLEIS) from Lapalme et al. (2016) was

adapted. Emotional intelligence based on the ability model has four dimensions. These dimensions are others' emotion appraisal, use of emotion, self-emotion appraisal and regulation of emotion. The statistical program for social science (SPSS program V26) software has been used to analyze survey data. Data analysis has included several statistical techniques. These techniques are frequencies and percentages among the study variables, descriptive statistics for all main variables and their dimensions, T- test and ANOVA.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Egyptian Tour Leaders

These questions have clarified the distribution of the tour leaders sample according to age, gender and level of education.

**Table 1 Demographic variables of tour leaders**

demographic variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	109	72.7
	female	41	27.3
Age	20-30	64	42.7
	31-40	56	37.3
	over 41	30	20.0
Level of education	High school	18	12.0
	Bachelors	102	68.0
	Post graduate study	30	20.0
	Total	150	100.0

The results in Table 1 show that 72.7% of tour leaders are males, while 27.3% of tour leaders are females. The percentage of tour leaders aged "20-30" is 42.7%, the percentage of tourists aged "31-40" is 37.3%, while the percentage of tourists aged is 20-39 is 44.7%. Due to the level of education, tour leaders that the level are 12%, tour leaders representing bachelors are 68 % while tour leaders presenting Post graduate study are 20%.

### 4.2. The level of emotional intelligence among Egyptian tour leaders

To investigate the level of emotional intelligence among Egyptian tour leaders, the arithmetic means, standard deviations, the percentage of the mean and estimate have been calculated of axes of emotional intelligence.

**Table 2 Emotional intelligence among tour leaders**

Dimensions	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	relative weight	Trend
Others' emotion appraisal	150	3.96	0.93	79%	Agree
Use of emotion	150	4.10	1.01	82%	Agree
Self-emotion appraisal	150	3.91	1.02	78%	Agree
Regulation of emotion	150	4.02	0.89	80%	Agree
<b>Emotional Intelligence</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>4.10</b>	<b>0.88</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>Agree</b>

By presenting and analyzing the results of the table 2, it is clear that the degree of availability of the emotional intelligence dimension was high “Agree”. That is, the presence of a high score and mean (4.10) lies between (3.40 - 4.19). It came in the first place under the theme “Use of emotion.” With mean (4.10) located between (3.40 - 4.19) and a standard deviation (1.01), relative weight is 82% and trend “Agree” has ranked the second “Regulation of emotion.” With mean (4.02) located between (3.40 - 4.19) and a standard deviation (0.89) , relative weight is 80% and trend “Agree” has ranked penultimate " Others' emotion appraisal" With mean (3.96) located between (3.40 - 4.19) and a standard deviation (0.93) , relative weight is 79% and trend “Agree” , while it has ranked the last “ Self-emotion appraisal” With mean (3.91) located between (3.40 - 4.19) and a standard deviation (1.02) , relative weight is 78% and trend “Agree”. This shows that the availability of emotional intelligence among Egyptian tour leaders was high “Agree”.

### 4.3. Hypotheses Testing

ANOVA test has been used to found whether or not there are significant differences in Emotional Intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to age and this verifies the first hypothesis.

**Table 3 Emotional intelligence according to age**

Emotional Intelligence					
age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
20-30	87	62.6667	12.75044	1.263	0.286
31-40	44	64.6591	17.10153		
over 41	19	68.0526	9.62909		
Total	150	63.9333	13.88141		

The results in Table 3 show that there are no significant differences in emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to age (Sig more than 0.05 =  $\alpha$ ). This result is not consistent with Sharma (2017), who has stated that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and age, since emotional intelligence increases with age.

T- test have been used in the study to indicate whether or not there are significant differences between the male and female due to emotional intelligence and this verifies the second hypothesis.

**Table 4 Emotional intelligence according to Gender**

Emotional Intelligence						
Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence	Male	109	63.4312	14.97922	-0.721	0.472
	Female	41	65.2683	10.46189		

The results in Table 4 show that there are no significant differences in emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to gender (Sig more than 0.05 =  $\alpha$ ). This result is not consistent with Mokhlesi and Patil (2018), who has stated that Emotional intelligence is closely linked to gender.

ANOVA test used to found if there are significant differences in Emotional Intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to Level of education and this verifies the third hypothesis.

**Table 5 Emotional intelligence according to level of education**

Emotional Intelligence					
Level of education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
High school	18	60.8333	18.88432	0.666	0.515
Bachelors	102	64.7255	13.78632		
Post graduate study	30	63.1000	10.49581		
Total	150	63.9333	13.88141		

The results in Table 5 show that there are no significant differences in emotional intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders according to level of education (Sig more than 0.05 =  $\alpha$ ). This result is not consistent with Samuel and Osman (2022), who have confirmed that higher levels of education are closely related to higher levels of emotional intelligence.

## 5. Conclusion

The results of the study have indicated that the availability of emotional intelligence among Egyptian tour leaders was high since the study has proved that Egyptian tour leaders have high emotional intelligence. This makes them able to read other people's emotions, develop close relationships with tourists and able to use tourists' emotions as important information to manage service interaction. The study has proved that demographic variables do not influence the level of emotional

intelligence of Egyptian tour leaders; therefore, emotional intelligence can be as an element in the training of Egyptian tour leaders, regardless of gender, age or educational level.

Tour leaders are the main factor influencing the successful execution of the tour, and their service performance influences tourists' perceived travel quality and their rating of the travel agency. The higher the quality of trips has been conducted through travel agencies, the greater the satisfaction gained by tourists. It is highly recommended for travel agencies to prioritize trainings provided to tour leaders in order to enhance emotionally intelligent personalities and problem-solving skills. Improving emotional intelligence allows tour leaders to become more confident in order to complete tasks successfully.

Travel agencies need to adopt training programs that develop emotional intelligence. In addition, travel agencies can identify the skills linked to emotional intelligence in order that provide training for these skills. Travel agencies should select their tour leaders based on their emotional intelligence abilities and their potential and willingness. For this, recruiters can ask questions that require tour leaders to give examples of how they can behave in situations that require emotional intelligence. Travel agencies should provide incentives for tour leaders to develop their emotional intelligence abilities.

The effective management of tour leaders' emotions leads to productivity, happiness, job satisfaction and it also helps to enhance the relationship with their tour members. Therefore, emotional intelligence helps the tour leader to improve their skills and to build a common ground by understanding the emotions of tour members. Emotions need to be properly understood by contacting better with other people. The ability to express and control one's emotions is significant among tour leaders. This attitude leads to balance tour leaders work environment. Similarly, time the ability to understand, interpret and respond to the emotions of tour members is highly required.

Results of the study have conclusively proved that there is no difference in emotional intelligence level with respect to the demographic variables such as age, gender and educational level among Egyptian tour leaders. Therefore, tour leaders need to gear up and update themselves in order to enhance their customer interaction, for which they should be emotionally able to handle customers in highly stressful conditions.

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## تأثير المتغيرات الديموغرافية على الذكاء العاطفي لقادة الرحلات السياحية في مصر

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### المستخلص

هذه الدراسة هي محاولة لمعرفة ما إذا كانت المتغيرات الديموغرافية مثل الجنس والعمر والتعليم تؤثر أم لا على الذكاء العاطفي لقادة الرحلات السياحية المصريين. الذكاء المعرفي لا يكفي لجعل قائد رحلة ناجح. الذكاء العاطفي هو قدرة مهمة إلى جانب الذكاء المعرفي. يتعامل الذكاء العاطفي مع فهم مشاعر الآخرين والنفس. وعليه ، فإن الذكاء العاطفي له تأثير على شخصية قائد الرحلة وأدائه في العمل ، كما يؤثر على الرضا الوظيفي. قام مائة وخمسون من قادة الرحلات السياحية المصريين بمحافظة القاهرة بملء استبيان الذكاء العاطفي. تم استخدام مقياس ليكرت المكون من خمس نقاط للمقاييس. لقياس الذكاء العاطفي لقادة الرحلات السياحية ، تم تكييف مقياس الذكاء العاطفي (WLEIS) المكون من 16 عنصراً. تم استخدام T- test و ANOVA للتحليل. أكدت الدراسة على عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الذكاء العاطفي لقادة الرحلات السياحية المصرية حسب العمر والجنس والمستوى التعليمي.

### الكلمات الدالة

الذكاء العاطفي  
قادة الرحلات السياحية  
المتغيرات الديموغرافية