

Impact Factor – 6.625

ISSN – 2348-7143



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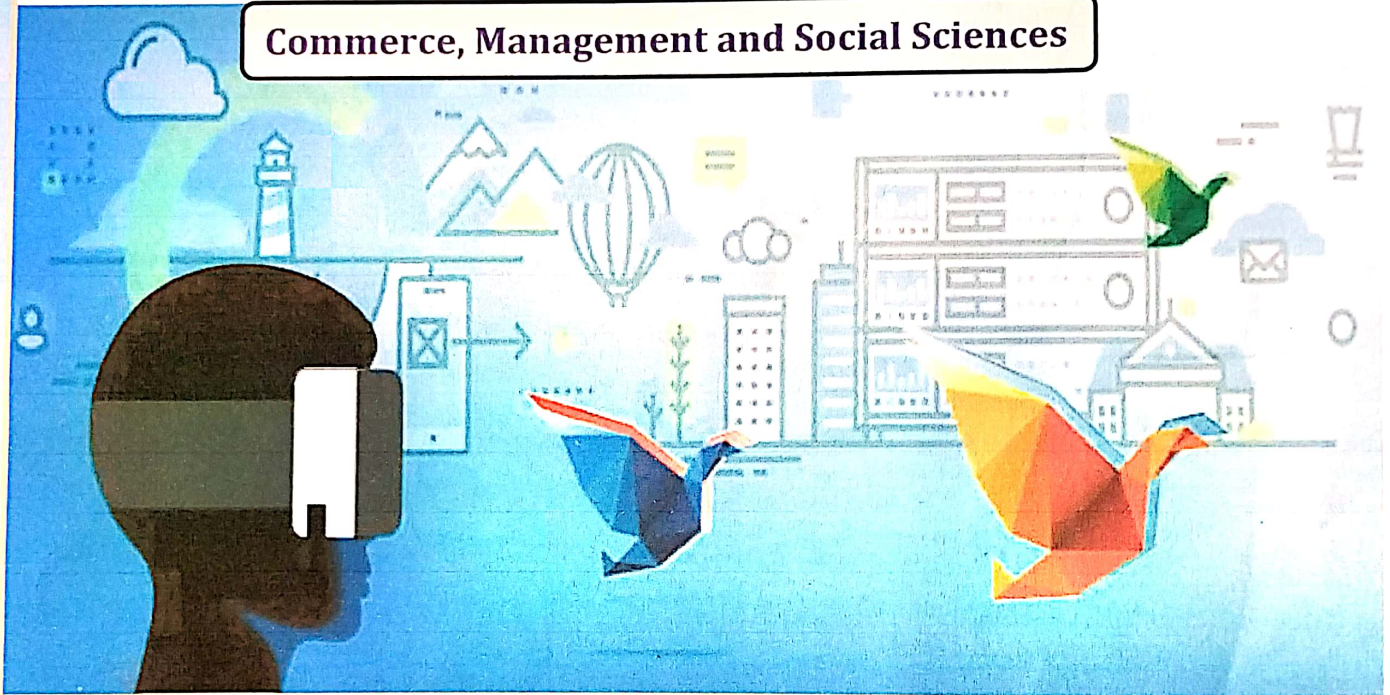
**RESEARCH JOURNEY**

Multidisciplinary International E-Research Journal

PEER REFREED &amp; INDEXED JOURNAL

December-2019 Special Issue – 208 (B)

Commerce, Management and Social Sciences



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RESEARCH JOURNEY  
 An International E-Research Journal  
 Volume 10, Issue 12, December 2019

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## Social Intelligence, Its Relevance in the Modern Business World

**Dr. Sabiha Asif Faras**

Assistant Professor, Department of English,  
Rajarshi Chhatrapati, Shahu Cillege, Kolhapur  
sabihafaras123@gmail.com

### Abstract:

*The present paper seeks to explore the concept of social intelligence or the Interpersonal Intelligence highly valued in the fast changing business scenario. It is an exclusive and unique quality of our personality which enables us to successfully build relationships and navigate social environment. Daniel Goleman, the popular science writer, while studying social neuroscience threw light on the links between social behavior and the way brain works. Edward Thorndike defines it as the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relations. Researchers claimed that artificial intelligence is already hyper present across the globe. We are witnessing how technology made us self-sufficient. Even an exceptionally intelligent person lacking social competence can experience failure in business life as adaptation skills are equally necessary to adjust ourselves according to different working environment. Social conscience is an innate quality referred to as tact or street smart, can be acquired and mastered with practice. These subtle social cues no doubt can boost the business in general.*

Man being a social animal is expected to acquire adaptation skills to maintain his social life. Business strategist **James Moore in his 1993 Harvard University Review article "predators and prey : A New Ecology of Competition"** suggested how company should be viewed as a member of a business ecosystem comprising suppliers, distributors, customers, competitors, government agencies and so on. Each entity in this ecosystem should be flexible and adoptable to survive in the business world. No two individuals are identical in a sense their thought processes along with the physical features differ along with their interpretation of the world around us. Different personality traits and approaches are responsible for difference of opinions. Social intelligence has been widely studied by social scientists since last three decades. Social Intelligence being an extension of emotional intelligence is one of new areas in psychology and the fields like organizational management. While emotional intelligence is the ability to manage emotions of the self and others, social intelligence is the skill set learned from success and failures in various social settings. **Edward Thorndike (1920)** conceptualized the term as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relations" "It's an ability to accomplish interpersonal tasks. Marlowe (1986) equated it with social competence by defining it as "the ability to understand the feelings, thoughts, and behavior of persons, including oneself, in interpersonal situations and act appropriately upon that understanding" (1986, p.52) **Moss and Hunt** defined it as the "ability to get along with others." **Vermon's** definition covers wide range of aspects. "ability to get along with people in general, social technique or ease in society, knowledge of social matters, susceptibility to stimuli from other member of a group, as well as insight into the temporary moods or underlying personality traits of strangers". The present paper is an effort to show how social intelligence can be an effective tool for successful business relationships. Social intelligence can be defined as the ability to control emotions and feelings; therefore it can aid mental activities, decision





making and communication. More recently however **Daniel Goleman's** seminal work on Social Intelligence in late 2006 attracted much attention towards the concept. **Daniel Goleman**, the popular science writer, while studying social neuroscience observed that those having high social intelligence know how to control and channel their own and other's emotions and feelings (Goleman,1998:94) He identified the two broad categories of social intelligence as social awareness and social facility. Based on the results of **Goleman (1998)**, the people who have amazing social intelligence know how to switch and channel their own and other's sentiments and spirits. Person's potential is no more measured by IQ, but the theory of Multiple Intelligences advanced by Professor Howard Gardner of Harvard University is widely accepted in recent years. Social Intelligence is nothing but an ability to "get along with people" An individual is supposed to acquire such ability as he grows.

But many people lack insights and competence in dealing with others. The social intelligence can play a decisive role in the corporate world. The managers are expected to achieve organizational efficiency. Technically efficient manager lacking in social skills may not be able to manage tensions and crisis arising in day to day business situations..

Artificial Intelligence at workplace maximized our level of productivity and enabled us to share and transform ideas in a more efficient manner...It has become much accessible in each field. From the mundane to the breathtaking, artificial intelligence is already disrupting virtually every business organization. If taken positively, it can create a more successful working environment, and give employees more time to engage in critical thinking which is the unique trait of human beings only. No doubt, technological advancement has made us self-sufficient. The social media presents us effectively but, dooming us to isolation. **Small and Vorgan (2008-Pg.117)** note that young people immersed in technology have poor development of social skills, direct communication skills, and ability to read nonverbal cues occur. Which may create a "social and emotional distancing" from friends and families. Advances in communication technology have provided more opportunities to interact ever before in human history. To make this techno-savvy generation more society oriented, Internet can be used creatively for establishing rapport with distant people using social media and the social skills. It has been observed that, in the company's organizational performance certain factors play important role. Neither academic excellence nor efficient technical skill is the key to be successful in modern business scenario. So the relevance of social intelligence is valued much in this digital era. Paying close attention to subtle social cues. Socially intelligent person is a keen observer of the social situations. He has the necessary people skills enabling him to interact confidently in the society. Corporate world is the place where individual has to be an efficient communicator by respecting different personality traits.

1. **Increasing Emotional intelligence:-** For regulating other's emotions, its needed to control your own emotions so as to empathize with others. The negative feelings like frustration, anger may affect the impression about your personality in social setting.
2. **Respecting Cultural Differences:-** Most of the people skills are found to be culturally embedded. Naturally; our responses in different situations are affected by the customs, traditions of a particular community. Multicultural population at workplace in corporate world demands mastery over the people skills.
3. **Practicing Active Listening:-** An effective communicator is an active listener. The golden rules of communication are, thinking before responding, so as to interpret the



situation. For smooth communication, process its necessary to have active listening skill. It affects our capacity to comprehend the situation.

4. **Appreciation of the people:**-Socially intelligent person can handle all the relations using tact. Paying attentions to the emotions of the family members can create good rapport among the family members. It is one of the positive gestures to acknowledge other's likes and dislikes.
5. **Learning to play social roles:**-In various situations an individual has to play different social roles. Accordingly, he is expected to respond and reflect. Here managing others and self-emotions becomes the priority.

The socially intelligent fellow has the ability to carry on the conversations with a wide array of people. In a sense, they have social expressiveness skills. It has the tremendous potential when it comes to the leadership qualities like motivating the team or taking important decisions during critical situations in the business.

### 1. Understanding the customer psychology:

The likes and dislikes are to be taken in to consideration while handling the business organizations. The social skill definitely help us to create a rapport with various components of business like suppliers, customers, dealers. Promotion and sale being the integral parts of business equally need people skills only. The advertisements are strategically devised by the companies. They intend to emotionally appeal their prospective customers. The cultural aspect of advertisements highlights the fact that, the particular community being the target group is considered here. Indian cultural heritage is well defined in the ads of the day. Indian customers value religion, Ayurveda, herbal products. Accordingly amalgamation of these cultural traditions and customs is so finely presented by the organization through advertisements to project goodwill among the people.

### 2. Respecting cultural diversity:

The workplace in this digital age has heterogeneous population belonging to various cultural backgrounds. Obviously, one has to keep the cultural sensitivity for the smooth communication process. To be successful and live harmoniously, individuals need to become effective intercultural communicators by which they can overcome cultural barriers encountered in their lives. However, before people are able to become effective intercultural communicators, and show respect for other's cultures (Bhuk & Brislin, 1992) Proper understanding of intercultural norms, values definitely adds to the cultural sensitivity. With the advances of communication technology, social interaction is gaining much importance. The theorists highlight two common components of social intelligence as understanding of others and capacity to adjust in various social situations.

### 3. Managing Human Resources :

Any organization tries to achieve efficiency for the organizational success. Apart from other factors, the human factor is the most challenging and complex to manage. Any organization has an administrative structure having hierarchy among the employees. Each aspect carries its own importance in this structure. An effective manager is a master in accomplishing the social skill set enabling him to handle the human resources more efficiently to maximize the





employee performance. He has to resolve variety of work conflicts. The competitive workplace demands him to be creative and a critical thinker at the same time.

**Empathy**-During the interaction with employees, empathy can be one of the skills to handle the critical situation by expressing genuine concern for the issues.

**Cooperation**-Being a team leader is really a difficult task. A successful team leader can seek other's cooperation to achieve goals of the organization.

**Communication**-An ability to express with clarity needs the effective communication skill either in person, on phone, through presentations, discussions .Even writing e-mails, text, letters, report equally displays your capacities as a communicator.

**Non-verbal Communication**-The non-verbal cues or body language as it is called, like facial expressions ,gestures, postures, eye contact are more effective than the mere verbal expressions. These are a few aspects of the relevance of social skills in the business world.

Social Intelligence is supposed to be an innate quality of the personality referred to as a tact. It is an ability to tell the truth by considering other's feelings. Fittingly, corporate world is the place where the employee are expected to follow a kind of decorum .They have to be tactful, resourceful and diplomatic while dealing with people or while handling the sensitive issues. One of the examples outlined below would specify the importance of tact in the organization.

Your boss expects you to share some of her workload,so as to leave earlier. But you are already overstressed. In such situation a socially intelligent person's response would be as follows. "Thank you so much for trusting me with these additional responsibilities. I am extremely sorry this time as I am already having my pending workload. Is there any thing I could help you with next week, when I will be absolutely free?" The present paper intends to underline the fact that social, interpersonal, people skills or intelligence can be achieved only after the exposure to various situations in our social life. A commonplace situation quoted above tells a lot more than the theoretical background of the concept of social intelligence.

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