

“Empathy Scaling and Its Impact on Employee’s Eustress” - A Study With Special Reference to Autonomous Colleges in Mangalore

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Abstract:- In order to formulate a parsimonious tool to assess empathy, a self-report measure named Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) is used. It demonstrates clearly the strong convergent validity, correlating positively with behavioural measures of social decoding exhibiting a good internal consistency and high test-retest reliability. In order to reach at accurate research conclusions, questions were re-worded to assess frequency of behavior rather than to pose general statements or tendencies. Responses were collected from a sample of hundred teachers from autonomous colleges in Mangalore city, and performances were ranked using a 5-point Likert-scale corresponding to various levels of frequency (i.e., never, rarely, sometimes, often, always). As the stress increases, we become less able to solve the real problems, costing billions of dollars, reducing the quality of life, driving economic meltdown and even destroying the environment (Distress). Hence, emotional competencies have proven to contribute more towards workplace productivity through the cognitive and social development of an individual (Eustress).

Keywords: TEQ, Likert- scale, Distress, cognitive, Questionnaire, Eustress.

I. INTRODUCTION

Empathy is a form of social cognition meant to understand and respond adaptively to other’s emotions; succeeding in emotional communication and promoting a pro-social behaviour. The term “empathy” is derived from Titchener’s (1909; Wispé, 1986) translation of the German word *Einfühlung*, meaning “feeling into” (Wispé, 1987). Generally speaking, it refers to the consequences of perceiving the feeling state of another as well as the capacity to do so accurately. To be “empathic” means, to be perspective taking, sympathetic, personal-eustress, emotional-cohesiveness and a mindfulness conception. Cognitive accounts of empathy, although not mutually exclusive to affective accounts, emphasize aspects of social responding involving the ability to take the perspective of another (Allport, 1961; Mead, 1934), role-taking (Mead, 1934) and the ability to infer and predict another’s behavior or mental state. Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (TEQ) is a self-report measure, used as a tool to assess empathy. The TEQ contains sixteen questions that encompass a wide range of attributes associated with the theoretical facets of empathy. The affective aspect of empathic responding is thought to be related to such phenomena as emotional contagion (Lipps, 1903; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987), emotion comprehension (Haxby, Hoffman & Gobbini, 2000), sympathetic physiological arousal (Levenson & Ruef, 1992) and con-specific altruism (Rice, 1964); all of which are represented in TEQ items.

Assessments in TEQ:

1. Item numbers 1 and 4 specifically target the perception of an emotional state in another that stimulates the same emotion in oneself.
2. Item number 9 assesses emotion comprehension in others.
3. The other items address the assessment of emotional states in others by indexing the frequency of behaviours demonstrating the appropriate sensitivity (items 2, 7, 8, 12, 15)
4. Besides this, the TEQ contains items that tap sympathetic physiological arousal (items 3, 6, 10 and 11) and altruism (items 5, 14 and 16)
5. Pro-social helping behaviour is a high-order empathic responding listed in item 13.
6. Eight items are negatively scored (2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14 and 15), reflecting the situational indifference towards another individual on the above discussed parameters.
7. Finally, the scores are summed to get the total for the Toronto Empathy Questionnaire.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To know the meaning for empathy and its relationship with employee’s stress level.

- To identify the concepts on eustress and how it's related with empathy rating scales.
- To analyse how far the teachers in autonomous colleges are empathic and if they are not too stressed.

Hypothesis:

H0: There is no impact of teacher's empathy on their eustress.

H1: Empathic teachers create a direct impact on everyone's eustress.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study involved a sample of hundred people (involving assistant and associate professors, professors, management heads and office-bearers) from Autonomous colleges. Primary data were collected based on a pre-designed Toronto Empathy Questionnaire, where questions were prepared on a 5-point Likert scale. The scope of the study was limited only to Mangalore city. The researcher has used ANOVA and Friedman Chi-Square test to prove the hypothesis using SPSS software.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent research into empathy emphasizes the distinction between cognitive and emotional components of the construct (Preston & de Waal, 2002). On the contrary, cognitive empathy involves an intellectual or imaginative apprehension of another's emotional state, often described as overlapping with the construct of theory of mind (understanding the thoughts and feelings of others) and used interchangeably by some authors (Lawrence, Shaw, Baker, Baron-Cohen, David, 2004). Whereas emotional contagion (also referred to as personal distress) involves the perceiver assuming the emotional state of the target, sympathy is thought to reflect a state of "feeling sorry" for the target with or without an associated behavioral response (Preston & de Waal, 2002). Perspective taking, in contrast, involves the apprehension of another's thought and feeling states through the assessment of visual, auditory or situational cues (Rankin, Kramer & Miller, 2005), without any personal emotional response. Indeed, the current corpus of self-report measures of empathy reflects these differing constructs, resulting in significant heterogeneity among measures (Ickes, 1997).

The Empathy Scale (Hogan, 1969), one of the first measures to achieve widespread use, contains four separate dimensions: social self-confidence, even-temperedness, sensitivity, and nonconformity. A recent psychometric analysis of the scale, however, indicates questionable test-retest reliability and low internal consistency, along with poor replication of its previously hypothesized factor structure (Froman & Peloquin, 2001). Indeed, several authors suggest that the four factors measured by this scale are better suited to the measurement of social skills, broadly speaking, than a central tendency towards empathic behavior (Davis, 1983; Baron-Cohen & Wheelwright, 2004). Hogan's (1969) Empathy Scale has been widely employed as a measure of cognitive empathy (e.g. Eslinger, 1998), but has recently been supplanted in popularity by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1983).

V. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Scale: Impact of Empathy scales on Employee's Stress

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	100	98.0
	Excluded ^a	2	2.0
	Total	102	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Lambda	1	.183
	2	.310
	3	.194
	4	.099
	5	.255

N of Items	6	.479
		19

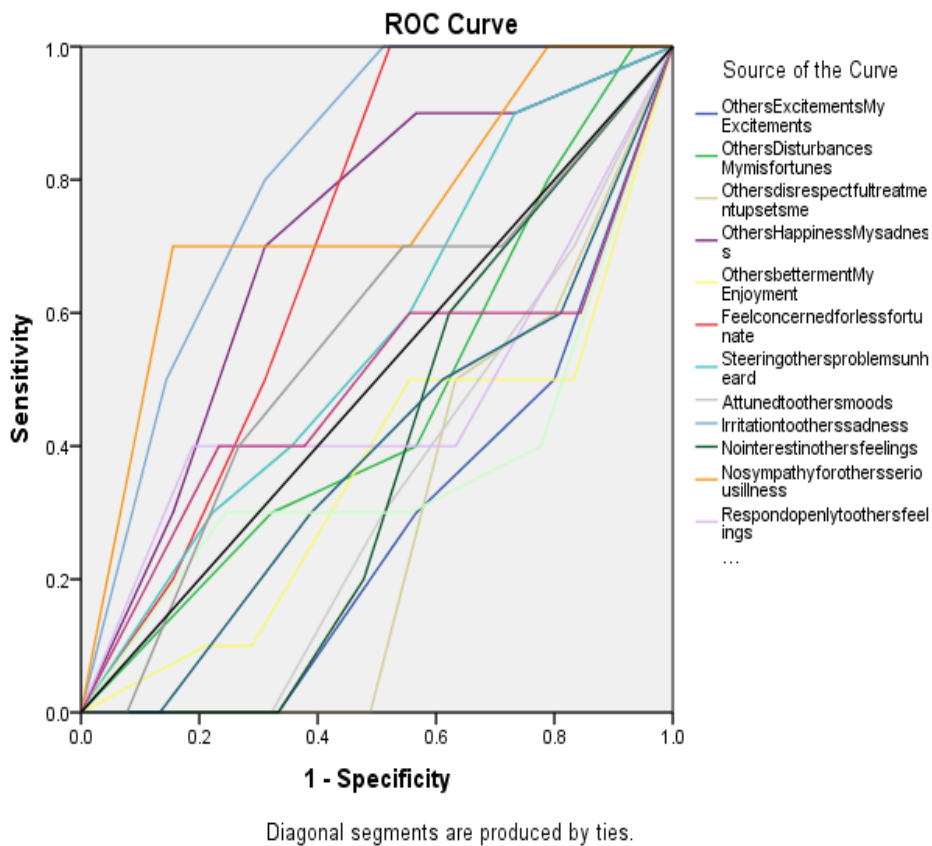
ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Friedman's Chi-Square	Sig
Between People	219.757	99	2.220	6.869	116.790	.000
Between Items	221.320	18	12.296			
Within People	3189.733	1782	1.790			
Residual	3411.053	1800	1.895			
Total	3630.810	1899	1.912			

Grand Mean = 1.9900

The Alternative study (H1) that ‘Empathic teachers create a direct impact on everyone’s eustress’ is proved satisfactory since the ‘p’- value under ANOVA and Friedman Chi-Square Test is .000 which is lower @ 5% level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

a) The below given chart highlights on how the empathy- based factors are related to stress, based on age:



Case Processing Summary

Age ^a	Valid N (listwise)
Positive ^b	10
Negative	90
Missing	2

Larger values of the test result variable(s) indicate stronger evidence for a positive actual state.

a. The test result variable(s): Helping others has at least one tie between the positive actual state group and the negative actual state group.

b. The positive actual state is below 30 years.

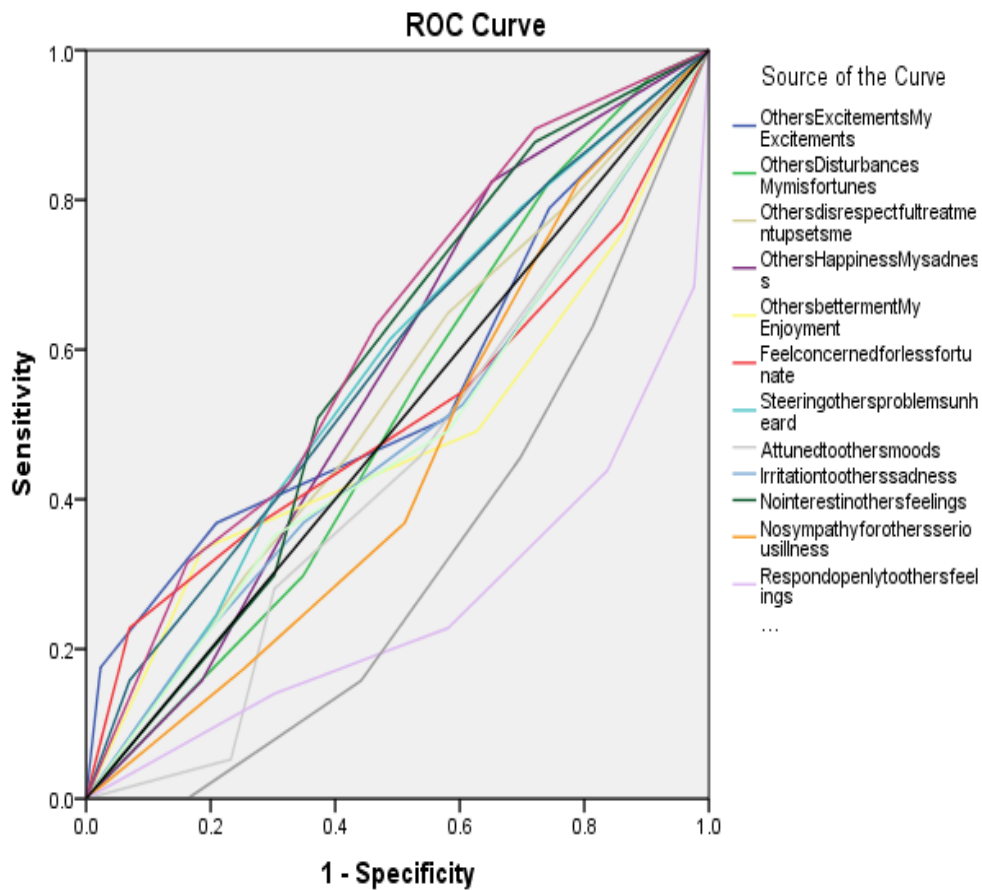
Area Under the Curve

Test Result Variable(s)	Area	Std. Error ^a	Asymptotic Sig. ^b	Asymptotic 95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Others Excitements My Excitements	.278	.072	.022	.136	.420
Others Disturbances My misfortunes	.464	.094	.709	.280	.648
Others disrespectful treatment upsets me	.288	.064	.028	.162	.413
Others Happiness My sadness	.709	.081	.031	.550	.868
Others betterment My Enjoyment	.362	.099	.154	.168	.556
Feel concerned for less fortunate	.706	.059	.033	.590	.823
Steering others problems unheard	.567	.090	.491	.391	.742
Attuned to others moods	.331	.074	.081	.186	.476
Irritation to others sadness	.813	.053	.001	.709	.917
No interest in others feelings	.374	.069	.194	.240	.509
No sympathy for others serious illness	.744	.091	.012	.565	.923
Respond openly to others feelings	.471	.118	.761	.239	.703
Helping others	.388	.094	.248	.204	.573
Feel pity for others unfair deeds	.363	.113	.158	.142	.585
Not recognizing others happiness	.491	.118	.927	.260	.722
Protect others when insecure	.553	.098	.585	.361	.745

The test result variable(s): Others Excitements My Excitements, Others Disturbances My misfortunes, Others disrespectful treatment upsets me, Others Happiness My sadness, Others betterment My Enjoyment, Feel concerned for less fortunate, Steering others problems unheard, Attuned to others moods, Irritation to others sadness, No interest in others feelings, No sympathy for others serious illness, Respond openly to others feelings, Helping others, Feel pity for others unfair deeds, Not recognizing others happiness, Protect others when insecured has at least one tie between the positive actual state group and the negative actual state group.

- a. Under the nonparametric assumption
- b. Null hypothesis: true area = 0.5

b.) The below given chart highlights on how the empathy- based factors are related to stress, based on Gender:



Diagonal segments are produced by ties.

Case Processing Summary

Gender ^a	Valid N (listwise)
Positive ^b	57
Negative	43
Missing	2

Larger values of the test result variable(s) indicate stronger evidence for a positive actual state.

a. **The test result variable(s):** Helping others has at least one tie between the positive actual state group and the negative actual state group.

b. The positive actual state is Male.

Area Under the Curve

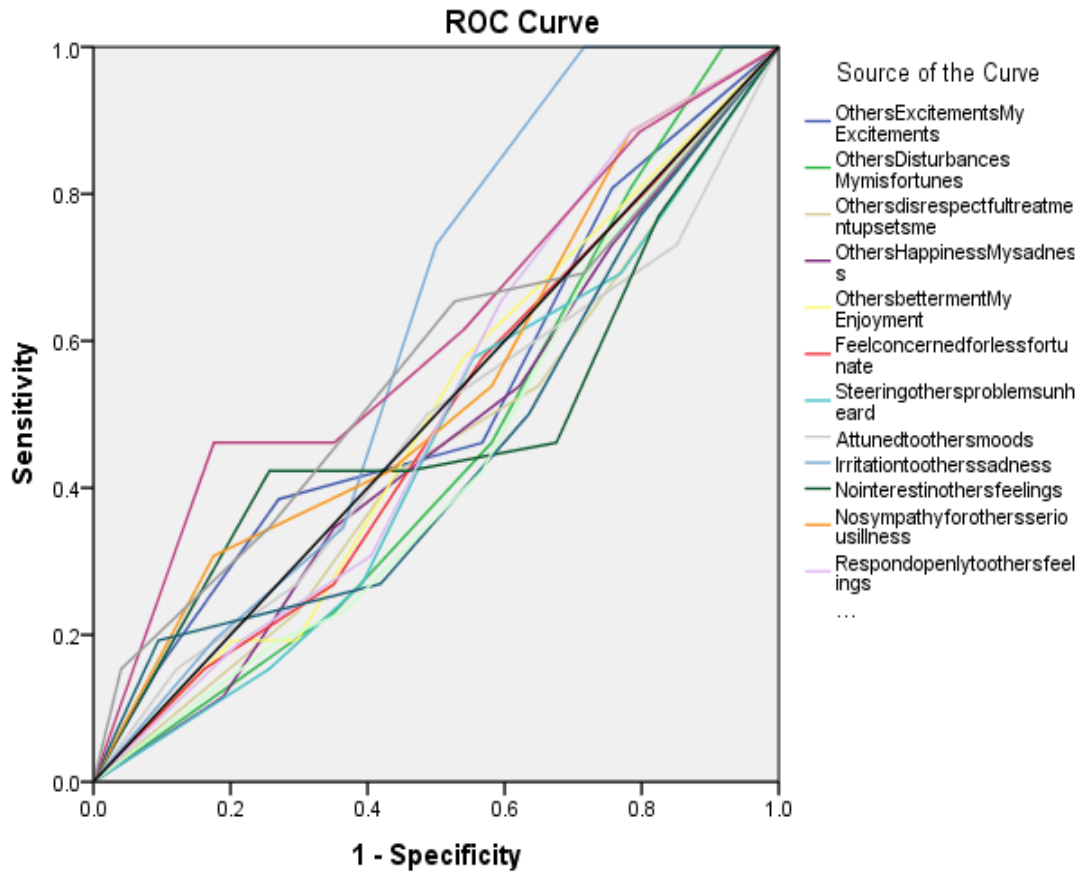
Test Result Variable(s)	Area	Std. Error ^a	Asymptotic Sig. ^b	Asymptotic 95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Others Excitements My Excitements	.550	.058	.390	.437	.664
Others Disturbances My misfortunes	.514	.060	.810	.397	.631
Others disrespectful treatment upsets me	.531	.058	.592	.417	.646
Others Happiness My sadness	.562	.060	.292	.445	.679
Others betterment My Enjoyment	.480	.058	.733	.366	.594
Feel concerned for less fortunate	.511	.058	.854	.397	.624
Steering others problems unheard	.568	.058	.246	.454	.682
Attuned to others moods	.441	.059	.318	.326	.557
Irritation to others sadness	.483	.058	.773	.369	.597
No interest in others feelings	.578	.059	.186	.461	.694
No sympathy for others serious illness	.453	.059	.419	.336	.569
Respond openly to others feelings	.256	.049	.000	.160	.352
Helping others	.579	.057	.177	.467	.692
Feel pity for others unfair deeds	.482	.058	.759	.368	.596
Not recognizing others happiness	.619	.057	.043	.507	.730
Protect others when insecure	.316	.055	.002	.208	.423

The test result variable(s): Others Excitements My Excitements, Others Disturbances My misfortunes, Others disrespectful treatment upsets me, Others Happiness My sadness, Others betterment My Enjoyment, Feel concerned for less fortunate, Steering others problems unheard, Attuned to others moods, Irritation to others sadness, No interest in others feelings, No sympathy for others serious illness, Respond openly to others feelings, Helping others, Feel pity for others unfair deeds, Not recognizing others happiness, Protect others when insecure has at least one tie between the positive actual state group and the negative actual state group.

a. Under the nonparametric assumption

b. Null hypothesis: true area = 0.5

c.) **The below given chart highlights on how the empathy- based factors are related to stress, based on Profession:**



Diagonal segments are produced by ties.

Case Processing Summary

Profession ^a	Valid N (listwise)
Positive ^b	26
Negative	74
Missing	2

Larger values of the test result variable(s) indicate stronger evidence for a positive actual state.

a. The test result variable(s): Helping others has at least one tie between the positive actual state group and the negative actual state group.

b. The positive actual state is Assistant Professors.

Area Under the Curve

Test Result Variable(s)	Area	Std. Error ^a	Asymptotic Sig. ^b	Asymptotic 95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Others Excitements My Excitements	.520	.069	.759	.386	.655
Others Disturbances My misfortunes	.452	.062	.467	.330	.574
Others disrespectful treatment upsets me	.450	.066	.451	.320	.580
Others Happiness My sadness	.464	.065	.588	.336	.592
Others betterment My Enjoyment	.492	.065	.906	.366	.619
Feel concerned for less fortunate	.483	.065	.801	.356	.611
Steering others problems unheard	.449	.064	.437	.322	.575
Attuned to others moods	.472	.069	.677	.336	.609
Irritation to others sadness	.611	.056	.092	.501	.722
No interest in others feelings	.483	.074	.792	.338	.627
No sympathy for others serious illness	.540	.067	.543	.409	.672
Respond openly to others feelings	.508	.062	.900	.386	.631
Helping others	.449	.068	.444	.315	.583
Feel pity for others unfair deeds	.436	.064	.332	.311	.561
Not recognizing others happiness	.607	.068	.105	.474	.740
Protect others when insecured	.560	.070	.366	.423	.697

The test result variable(s): Others Excitements My Excitements, Others Disturbances My misfortunes, Others disrespectful treatment upsets me, Others Happiness My sadness, Others betterment My Enjoyment, Feel concerned for less fortunate, Steering others problems unheard, Attuned to others moods, Irritation to others sadness, No interest in others feelings, No sympathy for others serious illness, Respond openly to others feelings, Helping others, Feel pity for others unfair deeds, Not recognizing others happiness, Protect others when insecured has at least one tie between the positive actual state group and the negative actual state group.

- a. Under the nonparametric assumption
- b. Null hypothesis: true area = 0.5

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Among the aforesaid factors influencing employee’s empathy, all the negative reflections of interpersonal behaviour has to be reduced and weightage should be given for the positive approach to be more empathic towards others.
- What all matters is to understand others, accept them and respond openly to their feelings. This could be the best way to more ‘empathic’ and promoting eustress (reduced stress, improved growth & development) at workplace.
- In a nutshell, every highly empathic employee could promote eustress in their area of work, provided that they are aware about themselves, environment and the organization.

VII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

To be more ‘Empathic’ means to understand others by positioning ourselves into their feelings. Feeling somebody else’s pain can alter the judgments what we have about ourselves. But, Research findings have shown that ‘when stress rises, empathy really

breaks down.' Use of Humor, Living in Present, becoming more creative are some better ways estimated that could become stress-busters and motivate the employees towards higher productivity and better performance appraisal.

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