

감성지능 개념화의 문제점

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Problems in Conceptualization of Emotional Intelligence

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This study would review how important to define emotional intelligence could be in measuring individual differences in emotional experience. For this purpose, the definitions of emotion, built by psychological theorists, would first reviewed, in connection to the newly developed techniques in the area of emotional engineering. Comparing peripheral theories of emotion and cognitive appraisal theories, the multi-facets of emotional experience would be illustrated and it would discussed what these facets mean to predict emotional health of individuals.

Keyword : emotional intelligence, peripheral theories of emotion, cognitive appraisal theory

Emotional Intelligence would be what Emotional Quotient are purposed to measure. Since a concept, emotional intelligence has been introduced by Goleman in 1995, numerous trials have been made to measure it. In spite of tremendous amount of interest taken, any conspicuous accomplishments assessing it have not been made. What does this fact imply? The most plausible reason would be difficulties defining emotional intelligence.

Like other psychological concepts,

emotional intelligence should be first defined operationally and then could be measured. Academically, Salovey and Mayer(1990, 1997) have defined emotional intelligence as emotional awareness and expression of self and others, emotional regulation of self and others, and utilization of emotional states to motivate himself or herself. Many emotional psychologists do not disagree that there are these phases in emotional experience. However, they are pessimistic about that emotional experience itself can be intelligent.

Specifically peripheral theorists of emotion, mainly psychophysicists (Ledoux, 1989; Leventhal, 1984) pointed out basic forms of distinctive emotional experience must be so universal that it would be unnatural to hypothesize the existence of cultural differences or individual differences in experiencing emotion such as fear. However, psychologists, who emphasize the cognitive features of emotion experience, are somewhat optimistic about conceptualizing emotional capability. Including attributional theorists like Weiner(1974), cognitive theorists advocate an individual's mental health would depend on his or her appraisal of outward events. Lararus(1991, 1994) emphasized emotion can be experienced by the quality of relationships with others and appraisal process related to those relations. Cognitive therapists pointed out that the symptoms of depression are originated from maladaptive attributional style of negative events. According to the viewpoint of these theorists, emotional problems are matter of interpretation made maladaptively. This group of psychologists admit that emotionally capable individuals have healthy appraisal process and this characteristics can be educated.

Why these two viewpoints are so different about the existence of emotional intelligence? Reason for this would be related to what their study subjects are. Peripheral theorists are mainly focused on physiological process of organism. Therefore, it is unnatural to propose that there is variation in instinct responsive system of individuals when they face natural enemy. The immediate pattern of

emotional arousal are hardly different in spite of individuals' respective dispositions. However, there is strong possibility for later emotional processes to be varied once the emotional elements of stimuli has been grasped. This is the major issue of dispute about emotional intelligence as a factor to differentiate individuals.

Another major dispute about emotional intelligence is what it tries to predict. Originally the concept of intelligence had been developed to predict students' academic adjustment at school. Later, with inefficacy to forestall individuals' success in society, academic aptitude was substitute for social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920), or tacit knowledge known as practical intelligence (Sternberg & Wagner, 1982). These new concepts of intelligence was originally designed to predict individuals' social success. Then, What emotional intelligence is trying to anticipate? An answer seems to be emotional health and successful interpersonal relationship. Then what is emotional health? An answer for this question gets difficult at the most. Imagine a person who is socially successful but internally denies all emotional conflicts and never be expressive. Some people regard him patient but psychologically he cannot be said healthy. Pannebaker(1992) pointed out that an important element for an individual's mental health would not be how much emotionally expressive he or she is but be how much conflict expressing emotion he or she would experience internally. In order to measuring a person's emotional healthiness, we should assess this kind of

subjective degree of craving for emotional expression. At one glance, this kind of assessing work is not simple at all.

Next controversy on emotional intelligence is if it is regarded as capability. If it is obvious which pattern of experiencing emotion is the best, it is possible to rank individuals' emotional experience. To come emotional intelligence into existence as a form of intelligence it is necessary who is more capable than others. As it is difficult to define emotional healthiness, it is also difficult to conceptualize emotional intelligence as capability. To speak straightforwardly, we cannot be sure if an emotionally reticent person is more capable than emotionally peevish person.

Besides these questions, many insoluble problems can be submitted on defining emotional intelligence. Especially, traditional methodology, representatively questionnaire is holding a measurement problem, response bias. Whether it is intentional or not, response bias is the most serious problem measuring as individual's emotional dispositions. There is no other way obtaining reliability without supposing answers from responders only to reflect true variance of emotional intelligence. However, when questionnaires are used for the purpose of screening individuals, this kind of supposition as hardly realized. Owing to this weakness, researchers cling to developing performance measures, obtrusive tests. Recent scientific development reports some physiological measurement tools can guarantee more stability of scores. If we can obtain stable

parameters from physiological data caused by emotional activation, it seems more realistic to find individual differences on that measure (Davidson, 1992; Gray, 1990). Also, many encoding and decoding studies of facial expression (Ekman, 1982) and vocal characteristics (Scherer, & Banse, 1996) present there must be individual differences in expressing emotion and reading others' emotion. These research endeavors are lightening up the future defining and measuring emotional intelligence.

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