ABSTRACT

Emotional intelligence (EI), perhaps one of the most popular and the most researched psychological constructs of the 21st century (Ashkanasy, 2003; Bar-On 2006), emphasizes on the role of emotions in an individual’s success or failure in workplace and in life. Popularized by Goleman (1995), the concept of EI has inspired applied research in every field be it management, academics, life sciences or psychology.

This study in particular focuses on bringing the theory of emotional intelligence closer to the common man. To make the theory comprehensible to the common man, to study the theory from a different cultural background and to ascertain whether emotional intelligence can be used negatively, the researcher chooses four characters from the great Indian epic ‘The Mahabharata’ through which the theory of emotional intelligence will be analysed. The four characters chosen for the study are Duryodhana, Dhritharashtra, Yudhishtra and Arjuna. This study does not include any women characters in spite of their powerful presence in the epic as it would be branching off to a sub study of emotional intelligence where research is going on to find whether gender has any effect on the emotional abilities of an individual.

Thus, this research aims to theoretically analyze the theory of emotional intelligence against the select characters of Mahabharata and questions whether

- emotional intelligence helps a person to manage stress, assists in problem solving and be successful in relationships
- a role model of an emotionally intelligent person can be identified for the common man, and
- there is a possibility that EI can be used negatively

Of the three existing models of emotional intelligence, the ‘ability model’ as proposed by Mayer and Salovey is taken for the study.

The Mahabharata in translation by K.M.Ganguli (the only complete translation of the epic in English, so far) is the text followed for the research work.