ABSTRACT

The constant flow of new graduates each year makes the Indian job market highly competitive. Enabling these new job seekers to acquire a decent employment is a challenge to stakeholders in education. The job search process therefore merits research interest. There is a need to understand the nuances of the search process, the engagement of the first time job seeker, and the psychological resources that enable job search success. This research focuses on Emotional Intelligence (EI) and its impact on predictors and outcomes of the job search process.

The major objective of this research is to understand the role of EI in the job search process. The study also attempts to understand the role of coping strategies employed by a job seeker in the job search process and the impact of EI and coping strategies over the psychological wellbeing of a job seeker.

The predictors of job search process considered in this study are EI, academic performance and coping strategies. The job search behaviors considered in this study are intensity of job search, the source used to collect job information and the amount of job information collected. The job search outcomes considered in this study are performance in the interview, the number of job offers received and the number of attempts made to get a job. Employment qualities considered are employment satisfaction index and the
overall satisfaction with the job offer. The other variable studied is the psychological wellbeing.

The respondents of the study are the job seekers who have found a first job but are yet to join the organization. Convenience sampling method was used. In all 830 responses were obtained. A questionnaire was especially designed for this purpose. This questionnaire was administered to collect the primary data.

Reliability and validity of the questionnaire were established. The factor structures of the major tools used were tested using exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis.

EI predicts coping strategies. Stepwise regression shows that EI predicts the intensity of job search where as EI does not predict the source used to collect job information and the amount of job information collected. Similarly, coping strategies predict the intensity of job search. However, they do not predict the source used to collect job information and the amount of job information collected. Coping strategies also mediate the relationship between EI and intensity of job search.

Stepwise regression shows that EI predicts the performance in the interview, number of job offers received and the number of attempts made to get a job. Intensity of job search predicts the performance in the interview, number of job offers received and the number of attempts made to get a job. Job search outcomes predict employment satisfaction index and the overall satisfaction with the job offer. EI also predicts employment satisfaction index

Based on the results, a job search model for the first time job seekers is proposed and the model has been tested with male respondents. The model is found to be a good fit. Based on the results of the study, the implications are discussed for the various stakeholders in education.