



GEN Z AFFECTIVITY: A POWER INFLUX TO THE GEN Z STUDENTS IN HYBRID LEARNING MODE FOR AFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING (ADM)

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Abstract

The present study aims at understanding the affectivity of the Gen Z generation and regulating emotions through emotional intelligence for better affective decision-making in the present hybrid learning mode. According to the American Psychological Association (APA), the term affectivity can be defined as the degree of a person's response/susceptibility to pleasure, pain, or any emotional stimuli. Emotion is a conscious state of mind. It's the feelings, thoughts and behaviours which happen to the students due to brain electrochemical reactions through neurotransmitters. They are spontaneous feeling for someone or some responses to internal or external situations/stimuli. Gen Z students experience varieties of emotions for the same situations/events indifferent time intervals. Some emotions are short-lived and some are long-lived. Affect can be called a surface trait; it is an outward expression of feelings and behaviours. The basic primary emotions are grouped into positive and negative emotions; they are also called positive affect and negative affect. Positive affects are happy, joy, excited feelings; etcetera whereas negative affects are fear, sad, annoyance and so on. Positive affects would encourage building on new competencies for life whereas negative affects would prepare for fight or flight responses. Decisions are made in a holistic manner based on emotions and feelings with the help of the affects in daily life. The hybrid learning mode is one of the most favourable ways of learning for Gen Z students. It provides flexible learning, reaches remote areas, and familiarizes students with modern technology which is an essential part of their education. Online learning mode and traditional classroom learning, demands good maintenance of interpersonal skill for a better group learning spirit in achieving career goals as well as personal advancements. The present Gen Z generation has geared up in the development of Emotional Intelligence in all domains for a successful life. According to Goleman, Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive, use and manage one's emotions and also other's emotions effectively. This study will recognise the affects clouding students in up scaling their knowledge in hybrid learning mode and affective decision making (ADM) through emotional intelligence.

Keywords: *Gen Z Students, Emotions, Hybrid Learning Mode, Emotional Intelligence, Positive Affect, Negative Affect, Affective Decision Making.*

1. Introduction

Generation Z are the population who are still college students and future new workforce. Gen Z are the group born in the technologically saturated world. They are also called as iGeneration, iGenners, Gen Z and Generation Now. They are addicted towards the digital technology in every aspect of their lives. This is a social media generation, they can be online anytime, anywhere and express their thoughts, emotions on technological platform often. Gen Z forms two identity- personal identity and social identity which are the two main competence of emotional intelligence - (personal competence about self-awareness and self-management and social competence about empathy, social-awareness and relationship management). Generation Z are mentally mature than their age but emotionally it's not possible for them to process violent or aggressive stimulation.

All human brain process thoughts and feelings in the presence of both positive and negative affects. Understanding self is essential to differentiate between positive and negative affect themselves. The higher positive affect induces positivism, so tapping all the positive affects into right direction in an intelligent way is the main function of emotional intelligence. If the Gen Z inculcate EI certainly the regulation of negative affect becomes easier thus, reflects in affective decision-making process. Every situations/stimulus are the results of thoughts, feelings and behaviour which requires appropriate response/action for this, a precise affective decision-



making is essential. So, that the response for the stimulus will be appropriate. Affective decision-making is the process where the positive and negative affects are being considered in order to make decision by applying positive thoughts, feeling segregating it from negative affects. Staying optimistic always boost students in reaching their goals of life but sometimes considering negative affect is also necessary to take fight or flight response in appropriate situation. The emotional intelligence help to avoid negative affect over crowding the positive affect for better Affective Decision-Making process.

Amanda Nicole. M has conducted study on Generation Z's positive and negative attributes and the impact on empathy after a Community based learning suggested that females gained empathy in emotional connections than male university students. According to the study during negative experiences men may stay away from the negative emotions by distancing themselves whereas females responds to the negative emotions with more positive affect (Ochsner, Mauss, Gross, McRae, & Gabrieli, 2018) Jennifer, L.B and Deborah A.G (2008) gave relationship between Affective Decision Making (indexed by gambling task) and Autonomic Nervous system (ANS) suggested that decision making can be supported by attenuated sympathetic activation during an emotion inducing task. Angela Prencipe, Philip David Zelazo (2005) studied development of Affective Decision Making in self and others in 3 years and 4 years old suggested that 4 years old perform better in self condition than 3 years old as the children grows their perspective also changes. Ethel, Feng and Thomas (2021) demonstrated the nature and significance of emotion in strategic management from broad range of perspectives across different levels of analysis and also suggested the scope conditions of emotion research in strategic decision making. Adam Wood, Svetlana S. Holt (2018) studied emotional intelligence contributions towards the performances and happiness in goal fulfillment. Emotional intelligence processing helps to recognize the required sensitive events. It has found the support for the impact of both wisdom and emotional intelligence on levels of happiness. It is evident that emotions are very powerful tool which are in both positive and negative forms. This should be handled carefully for giving appropriate responses/ affective decision-making with the help of emotional intelligence.

2. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose/objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the positive and negative affect with respect to emotional intelligence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.
2. To identify higheraffective decision-making competence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

3. Hypothesis of the Study

Hypothesis are framed based on the above objectives to prove or disprove the statements.

1. **Hypothesis 1 (H0):** There is no significant relationship between positive affect and emotional intelligence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.
2. **Hypothesis 2 (H0):** There is no significant relationship between negative affect and emotional intelligence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.
3. **Hypothesis 3 (H0):** There is no significant difference in affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and P-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.
4. **Hypothesis 4 (H0):** There is no significant difference in affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and N-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode

4. Sources of Data Collection

A source of data collection includes both primary & secondary data.

1. Primary Data: The participants in this study were university students who are the future leaders and the youngest Gen Z who were born between 1997-2012(20-25 years) and pursuing masters in Tumkur University, Karnataka. The sample is composed of 200 post-graduate students from Master of Business Administration(MBA), Master of Commerce(M. Com), Master of Science(MSc) and Master of Arts(MA) studying at Tumkur University Campus.



2. Secondary Data: Through Scholarly Articles, Journals from Google Scholar, Web of Science, and Internet sources.

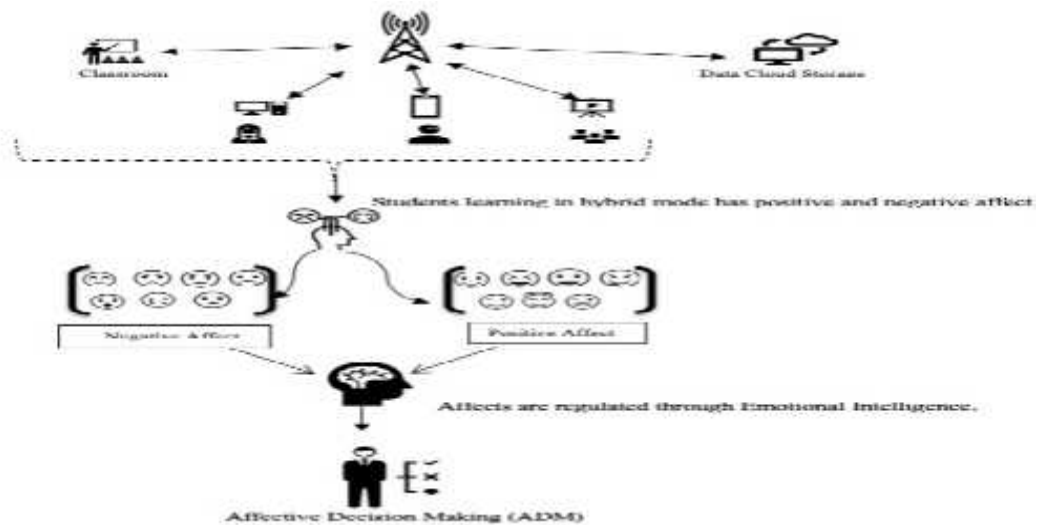
5. Research Methodology & Sample Design

A descriptive research methodology is adopted for the study.

1. Sampling Method: Stratified and simple random sampling method is used. The research methodology employed in this study is F-Test and One-way ANOVA. This design was selected as the study aims at understanding the relationship between the positive, negative affect with emotional intelligence level of the Gen Z students who are studying in the present hybrid learning mode. The primary data was collected by administering the structured objective questionnaire with 5-point Likert’s rating scale.

2. Instrument: The positive and negative affects were assessed with the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS-SF: Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. 1988) and the level of Emotional Intelligence of the different educational background Gen Z students were measured by The Schutte Self Report Emotional Intelligence Test (SSEIT: Schutte et al. 1998). To study further association between positive, negative affect with emotional intelligence and how it influences in affective decision making will be examined.

6. Research Model



7. Findings, Results and Discussion

Course	n	M	F	PA %	NA %	EI %
MCOM	n1 = 50	M = 16	F = 34	65%	42%	75%
		F = 34				
MBA	n2 = 50	M = 23	F = 27	69%	45%	73%
		F = 27				
MSC	n3 = 50	M = 15	F = 35	67%	45%	74%
		F = 35				
MA	n4 = 50	M = 16	F = 34	57%	49%	73%
		F = 34				

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data Collected from PG Gen Z Students Studying in Tumkur University Campus, Karnataka. May 2022



Hypothesis H0 1: There is no significant relationship between positive affect and emotional intelligence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

Table 1.2: Results of one way ANOVA on EI with P-AF across MCOM, MBA, MSC AND MA (N=200)						
COURSE	N	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	F-Critical value	F	p
Gen Z	200	32.37	8.135	1.263	1.916	0.000002
Source: Field Survey and Primary Data Collected from PG Gen Z Students Studying in Tumkur University Campus, Karnataka. May 2022						

Table 1.2 shows the relationship between positive affect and emotional intelligence of all the Gen Z students through F test. The calculate F value= 1.916 which is greater than F-Critical Value = 1.263. The p-value < 0.05 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected. Hence, there is a statistically significant relationship between positive affect and emotional intelligence level among Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

Hypothesis H0 2: There is no significant relationship between negative affect and emotional intelligence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

Table 1.3: Results of one way ANOVA on EI with N-AF across MCOM, MBA, MSC AND MA (N=200)						
COURSE	N	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	F-Critical value	F	p
Gen Z	200	22.66	8.135	1.263	3.034	0.000000001
Source: Field Survey and Primary Data Collected from PG Gen Z Students Studying in Tumkur University Campus, Karnataka. May 2022						

Table 1.3 shows the relationship between the negative affect and emotional intelligence of all the Gen Z students through F test. The calculate F value= 3.034 which is greater than F-Critical Value = 1.263. The p-value < 0.05 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis (H02) is rejected. Hence, there is a statistically significant relationship between negative affect and emotional intelligence level among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

Positive affect has a positive relationship with emotional intelligence, an increase in positive affect (i.e., positive emotions) there is always a greater chance of inducing emotional intelligence level. If the students are optimistic, has proper control over regulating emotions of themselves as well as others. This influx of emotional intelligence levels among Gen Z students helps them in affective decision making while choosing the suitable domain to build their competence and career. Negative affects are those emotions like anger, sadness, loneliness, agitated and so forth. When negative affects have a negative relationship with emotional intelligence means higher the negative affects lower the emotional intelligence. Increase negative affect disturbs the emotional regulating control, this state can be called emotional instability/neuroticism. If the Gen Z students possess neuroticism, then there won't be any scope for emotional intelligence. Decision making becomes a big hurdle due to fluctuating emotions in a negative direction.

Hypothesis H03: There is no significant difference in affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and P-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.



COURSE		N	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	F-Critical value	F	p
MCOM	EI WITH P-AF	N=50	32.52	8.114	1.607	1.684	0.035
MBA	EI WITH P-AF	N=50	34.68	7.08	1.607	2.224	0.002
MSC	EI WITH P-AF	N=50	33.64	7.847	1.607	2.224	0.002
MA	EI WITH P-AF	N=50	28.64	8.361	1.607	2.108	0.005

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data Collected from PG Gen Z Students Studying in Tumkur University Campus, Karnataka. May 2022

Table 1.4 shows the relationship between affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and P-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode through F test. The calculate F value of M. Com, MBA, MSc and MA are 1.684, 2.224, 2.224 and 2.108 which are greater than F-Critical Value = 1.607. The p-value < 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that the PG Gen Z students have different affective decision-making competence. So, the null hypothesis (H03) is rejected. Hence, there is a statistically significant difference in affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and P-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

The mean score suggests the highest affective decision-making among the entire Gen Z PG course. The mean score of MBA is 34.68 which is highest than rest other scores. Hence the MBA students possess the highest affective decision-making competence among the Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

Hypothesis H04: There is no significant difference in affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and N-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

COURSE		N	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION	F-Critical value	F	p
MCOM	EI WITH N-AF	N=50	20.92	6.288	1.607	2.804	0.0002
MBA	EI WITH N-AF	N=50	22.66	6.563	1.607	2.588	0.0005
MSC	EI WITH N-AF	N=50	22.64	5.84	1.607	4.015	0.000001
MA	EI WITH N-AF	N=50	24.44	6.833	1.607	3.156	0.00004

Source: Field Survey and Primary Data Collected from PG Gen Z Students Studying in Tumkur University Campus, Karnataka. May 2022

Table 1.5 shows the relationship between affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and N-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode through F test. The calculate F value of M. Com, MBA, MSc and MA are 2.804, 2.588, 4.015 and 3.156 which are greater than F-Critical Value = 1.607. The p-value < 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that the PG Gen Z students have different affective decision-making competence. Hence, the null hypothesis (H04) is rejected. Hence, there is a statistically significant difference in affective decision-making competence w.r.t EI and N-AF among the M. Com, MBA, MSc, and MA Gen Z students in hybrid learning mode.

8. Implication

Gen Z students generally possess higher emotional intelligence than the previous generation (Gen Y) so they have excelled in traditional learning mode. Times and things have changed due to pandemic, post pandemic, there is upsurge in hybrid learning culture benefiting Gen Z students to have flexible learning, increased active participation, enhanced access to learning, personalized learning, better utilization of commuting hours, so on and so forth. Gen Z students should not ignore the challenges which are being posed by the present hybrid learning mode. Generally, Gen Z are technology savvy and afflicted to the digital knowledge-gaining as well as sharing



but the interpersonal relationship gradually reduces as students opt for learning hybrid mode. This inhibits vicarious learning process, hindrance in learning and understanding emotions of their fellow students. Most of the time learning in hybrid mode causes stressful life and feeling being left out. Gradual reduction in interpersonal relationship leads to emotional pandemonium.

9. Conclusion

Emotions are the key source for making decisions in Gen Z students life, as they originates from feelings, behaviour and thought process. In this study it shows that positive affect (positive emotions) are directly proportional to the level of emotional intelligence of the university students (youngest Gen Z). The optimistic feeling, thought process induces decision making, as feeling leads to making choices in life. Affects are dynamic in nature, induces the positive affect by understanding self through self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, resilience and better social relations which are the components of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence will help in making decision by being optimistic gives rise to better affective decision making in students-learning and personal life choices. The negative affects are feelings which triggers emotional instability leads to dilemma while making better choice decisions. University Gen Z students have high positive affect and emotional intelligence which reflects in constructive affective decision making in future. They have better emotional intelligence level with moderate negative affects, this might get varies in near future by nurturing emotional intelligence. Emotions are erratic in nature from situation to situation or from time to time for the same situations. Hence it's important to focus on continuously updating self through emotional intelligence for Affective Decision Making.

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