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# **Mentoring and Career Success among middle-level Managers: Analyzing the Mediating role of Emotional Intelligence**

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**Abstract.** Mentoring is proven to be a significant factor in building one's career. Every successful story build under various underlying elements where mentoring is count as one of those. Similarly, there are many predictors that are responsible for one's success personal as well as professional. It is very possible that these predictors may have interrelations and tendency to influence directly or indirectly. Therefore, the study attempt to study the influence of emotional intelligence as mediating variable between mentoring and subjective career success among the mid-level managers working in the financial institutions (nationalized banks) in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. A structured questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection which was carried out through face to face surveys and online surveys via. Google forms. The respondents for the study were mid-level managers (n=252) working in a nationalized bank in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. The software package viz. SMART PLS 3.0 (trial version) and SPSS version 21 were used for data analysis and mediation analysis. The output shows that Emotional intelligence has a mediating effect on mentoring and career success. The very nature of mediation effect of emotional intelligence was found to be full mediation. As much as predictive relevance of the obtained model, the results shows that the derived mediation model has a medium predictive relevance. The outcome of this study will add value to the multifaceted nature of the relationship of mentoring with career success.

## **1. Introduction**

Most scholars who have given particular attention to career selection issues of all staff and organizations in the area of human resources administration have concentrated intensely and studied thoroughly. [1] have especially discussed the dynamic nature of productive employment and having a

background of career success and its interactions will help human resources administrators appreciate career management as a method. This paper further extends their work and analyses the relations of career success and mentoring of middle-level managers working in nationalized banks in the study area.

### *1.1. Mentoring*

Mentoring is defined as a “reciprocal relationship with an intentional agenda, designed to communicate explicit content along with life wisdom from one individual to another [2]. It is clear from the above definitions that mentoring does not happen by accident. Mentoring is acknowledged as a vital developmental source for people in organizations [3] and has been described as the most powerful and influential one-on-one progressive affiliation [4]. Scholars from different time argued that mentoring is of utmost importance for the progress of human capitals [5]; [6]. [7] in their work found that mentoring has impacted significantly in personal learning. [8] mentions the work by [9] and [10] which provokes for following research in the area. Both the writers projected it was advantageous to a protégé’s outcome due to access to a mentor. [10] added it to be a significant growing development in majority. [9] observed that apart from desirable occupations for wards, mentoring also enables them to the authority structures in the organizations. Furthermore, he associated with rejuvenation and satisfaction to the mentor as certain benefits of assisting others. Scholars like [11] also addressed the adult development for both mentee and mentor through mentoring facilitates whereas [12] addresses the psychological development of both mentoring partners. To add, scholars like [13] and [10] states that the connection acts as a prospect for mentors. Apart from these, since the forthcoming leaders are equipped through mentoring, the organization also benefits out of it [14]. Further, commitment and satisfaction are also found for those employees who are mentored [15]. Also, mentoring adds significantly in higher pay [16], salary progress and promotion rate [23] and career fulfilment [17].

### *1.2. Career Success*

Career success has been defined as “the positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements that one has accumulated as a result of one’s work or work experience” [18]; [1]. Success includes both the real and perceived achievements individuals have accumulated as a result of their work experience [1]. Due to the positive outcomes like salary level, promotion, job satisfaction etc. career success has become a significant in one’s life [19]. It is also critical for an organization since productive employees are able to add value which influences organization efficiency. [20] It has contributed to a large degree of curiosity in its forecast.

### *1.3. Mentoring and Career Success*

Mentoring has been related to career progress and development by many scholars [21] [22] [24] [25] [26] [27]. The findings of [28] suggests that there is a key role played by mentoring in the career development in senior management positions in the NHS Scotland. Mentoring has also been associated to career success, [29] and is confirmed by scholars to be beneficial for career success [30] [31]

***H1: Emotional intelligence mediating in the relationship between mentoring and subjective career success of mid-level managers.***

### *1.4. Mentoring and Emotional Intelligence*

Good mentors are socially self-aware and self-regulating, recognize how their attitude impacts on their colleague & subordinates, and have empathy, understanding, and sincere engagement in helping others. Such aspects of emotional intelligence are particularly relevant in order to successfully mentor among genders, generations and relationships. Emotional intelligence is critical for a mentor. The association between emotional intelligence and the degree of faith a mentor has in them was favourable among the mentors [32]. There are also several skills that a trainer or instructor may usefully build. Strong empathy seems to enhance brighter career and mental support [32]. It is necessary to measure EI, explore, and both mentor and mentee to develop self-awareness of their respective emotional intelligence to ensure optimum result from mentor-mentee relationship [33]. This synergy between both will enrich learning, strengthen interpersonal relationship, retention and improve HRD. [34] suggested the elements of empathy, physical awareness, and relationship building to be incorporated in the training along with emotional connection for better engagement, change management, resilience, leadership and motivation among trainee. Emotions architect social relationship and, as such, a mechanism like mentoring would tend to be viewed via. prism of emotions, with interpersonal and social contacts at its heart [35].

*H1a: There is a significant relationship between Mentoring and Emotional intelligence among mid-level managers.*

### **1.5. Emotional Intelligence and Career Success**

*Emotional Intelligence* is comprised of several key components as outlined by [36]. According to them, it is “the ability to understand, recognize, and express emotions in oneself; the ability to understand and empathize with the emotions of others; the capacity to manage and control emotions in oneself and others; the ability to manage change, adapt to changing environments and conditions; and the ability to use the knowledge of emotional states to solve problems and make decisions.” An individual’s level of emotionality has an effect on their workplace experiences and career decisions [37] [38]. It has also been suggested that when emotions are well understood and make good use of it, it positively influences the successful career [39] [40]. Similar findings have been resulted by [41] which indicated that emotional intelligence and career adaptability have positive relationship. Studies have shown that people with high levels of emotional intelligence have greater career success, foster stronger personal relations, have effective leadership skills and are healthier than those with low emotional intelligence [42]. According to [43], emotional intelligence is an important aspect in shaping career success while [44] believes it stimulates how people engage in workplace situations and career decision making. Another interesting finding has been presented by [45] where they stated better prepared to take care ambiguity and on-the-job stressors are the ones with high EI. The study conducted on mid-level service managers in the least density populated state in India, analyzing the relationship between emotional intelligence and subjective career success has also found significant positive relation [46]. The result obtained were inconsonance with earlier similar studies. Thus, through existing literature, it may be concluded that having a strong emotional intelligence is crucial for career advancement & success and to be fruitful in the workplace.

*H1b: There is a significant relationship between Emotional intelligence and career success among mid-level managers.*

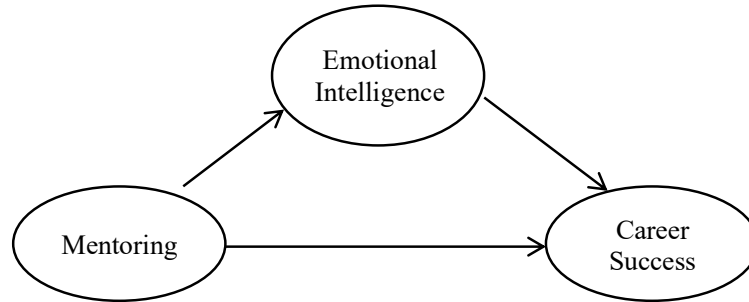


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the study

Hence, the present study aims to explore the relationships between the three variables.

## 2. Research Methodology

### 2.1. Data Collection

In this study, a questionnaire was used for data collection. The data were collected for a period of 6 months i.e. from July 2019 – January 2020. The sample respondents were mid-level Managers working in financial institutions, i.e., nationalized banks and NBFCs operating in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. Based on the quota sampling method, 300 (Three hundred) samples were surveyed out of which 252 (two hundred fifty-two) were selected after eliminating 48 respondents who failed to respond or responded inappropriately. The adopted scales incorporated with demographic questions in the form of an online questionnaire and hard copies were used to collect the data. The data was collected through face to face surveys and email surveys via. Google-form.

### 2.2. Sample characteristics

In the demographic profile of the sample respondents, the majority of the sample respondents (N=252) range from 26-35 years of age. In terms of gender, 38 respondents were female and 214 were male. Over half (54%) had completed their graduation, 38.9% held a post-graduation, 4.8 % held diploma, 1.6% held M.Phil. About 60% (n=152) of the respondents were having working experience in the range from 6 - 10 years, in their field, followed by the range 11-15 years (n=70). In terms of income level, 29.9% of the respondent have the income level of range from 75,001 - 1, 00,000 (INR) followed by 27% from the range of 1, 00,001 - 1, 25,001 (INR).

### 2.3. Research Instrument

The research instrument (questionnaire) contains 33 questions which were classified into two parts. The first part covers the demographic information which contains 8-question e.g., name, age, income, experience, educational qualification, etc. The second part of the instrument covers the variables to be measure for the study which consists of 26 questions of interval scale that are designed based on 5-point Likert Scales.

#### 2.3.1. Measurement, reliability, and validity of scales

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the items in the instrument for the study were drawn from various authentic sources under the guidance of experts. For the reliability of the whole instrument the scale reliability was conducted and the results reveal that the Cronbach's alpha of the instrument was found to be above-accepted value ( $\alpha > 0.7$ ).

### 2.3.2. Subjective career success

'Subjective career success' was measured via 'career satisfaction'. Items of the scale were rated on a 5-point Likert Scale (1= Strongly Disagree; 5= Strongly Agree). [47] five-item measure was used to measure 'career satisfaction', sample items: "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals", "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals", "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income", "I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement". The measuring scale for subjective career success was proved to be reliable with Cronbach's  $\alpha = .88$ .

### 2.3.3. Emotional Intelligence

'Emotional intelligence' was measured by the '10-item "Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale (BEIS – 10)" retrieved from [48]. Items of the scale were rated on 5-point Likert Scale (1= "not at all characteristic"; 5 = "very characteristic"). The sample items were; "I know why my emotions change", "I easily recognize my emotions as I experience them", "I seek out activities that make me happy". The measuring scale for emotional intelligence was proved to be reliable with Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.92$ .

### 2.3.4. Mentoring

To measure mentoring, we used the 11-item scale developed by [49] mentoring scale. The scale measures two different dimensions of mentoring i.e. career development and psychological support. The first 6-items of the scale measures the 'career development' aspect and the next 5-items measure 'psychological support' aspect of mentoring. Items of the scale were rated on a '5-point Likert Scale' (1= 'Strongly Disagree'; 5= 'Strongly Agree'). Mentoring was operationalized as an average of 11-items. The sample items of the scale are: "My mentor takes a personal interest in my career", "My mentor gives me special coaching on the job", "I shared personal problems with my mentor", "I exchange confidence with my mentor". The measuring scale for mentoring was proved to be reliable with Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.91$ .

### 2.3.5. Demographic variables

At the end of the questionnaire, some demographic information were asked which included 'gender' (1 = 'male', 2 = 'female'), 'age', 'educational level' (1 = 'upto higher secondary level', 6 = Ph.D.) 'current working experiences' (1 = 'upto 5 years', 5 = 'more than 20 years'), 'monthly income' of the family (1= 'upto 75,000' INR, 7= 'more than 2 lakh' INR).

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and correlations among the study variables are presented below in Table no. 1. Results in Table-1 showed that mentoring was positively correlated with Emotional Intelligence and Career Success (0.610\*\* & 0.404\*\*,  $p < 0.01$ ) Furthermore, it was found that "Age" was negatively associated with "Gender" (-0.216\*\*,  $p < 0.01$ ) and positive relation with Emotional Intelligence (0.127\*\*,  $p < 0.05$ ). Finally, results depicted in Table 1 also reveals that age was positively linked to career success also (0.191\*,  $p < 0.01$ ), however, educational qualification had no significant association with any of the study variables.

**Table 1. Mean, Standard deviation and correlation**

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender	1.15	.36	1					
2. Age	2.48	.73	-.216**	1				
3. Education Qualification	3.40	.65	.033	-.093	1			
4. Mentoring	3.21	.708	-.021	.065	-.037	1		
5. Emotional Intelligence	3.84	.616	-.001	.127*	.003	.610**	1	
6. Career Success (CS)	3.63	.723	-.013	.191*	-.095	.404**	.538**	1

N=252

\*\*0.01 level (1-tailed).

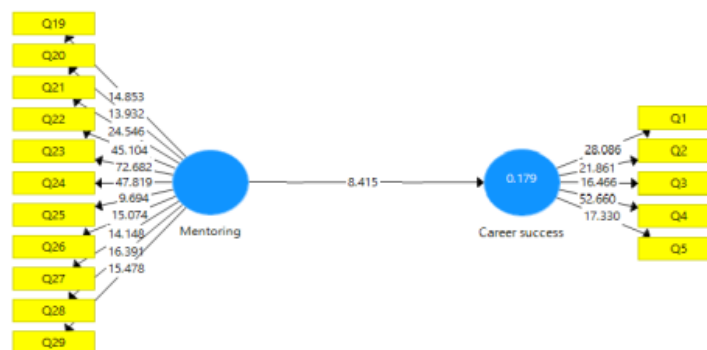
\* 0.05 level (1-tailed).

For the mediation study, we have checked the significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The path model was assessed via bootstrapping without the interaction of a mediator (Figure 2). The results show that the relationship between mentoring and career success is found to be significant statistically (t-value = 8.415,  $p < 0.05$ , subsample: 50000).

**Table 2. Path Analysis (Direct effect)**

Path	B	Std. error	t-values	p-value	Decision
Mentoring → Career Success	0.179	0.05	8.415	.000*	Accepted

\* $p < 0.05$  (1-tailed)



**Figure 2:** Direct effect between Dependent variable and Independent variable

### 3.2. Measurement Model

The measurement model consisted of three latent variables: Subjective Career Success (CS), Emotional Intelligence (EI), and Mentoring. Career success (5- items), Emotional Intelligence (10- items), and mentoring (11- items) were modeled by their respective items. The result obtained from the smart PLS shows that the convergent validity and discriminant validity of the data set for the

variable was adequate (Alpha >0.7, Roh-A> 0.8, CR>0.7 and AVE>0.5). Table no. 2 highlights the details measurement model.

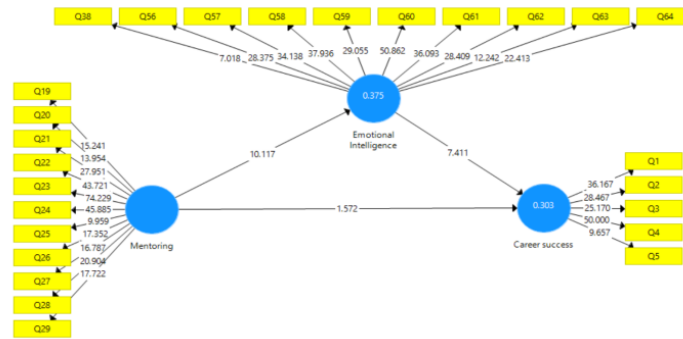
**Table 3. Reliability and AVE**

Construct	Loading	No. of Items	Alpha	Roh A	CR	AVE
Career Success	0.653 - 0.831	05	0.864	0.877	0.867	0.570
Emotional Intelligence	0.601 - 0.824	10	0.917	0.927	0.921	0.542
Mentoring	0.606 - 0.874	11	0.918	0.928	0.918	0.512

Source: Smart PLS 0.3 output

### 3.3. Structure Model

Henceforth, the inclusion of the variable viz. emotional intelligence as a mediator was meaningful enough to proceed further. For the mediation, we require the addition of indirect paths to verify that Emotional intelligence mediates the relationship between mentoring and career success. To test the model and hypothesis, the path model was assessed via bootstrapping, without the interaction of a mediator (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: In-direct Effect between the variables (Bootstrapping)**

The t-value of the indirect path “Mentoring→ emotional intelligence” was 10.116 with a p-value of 0.00\* at 5% significant and path “Emotional intelligence → Career success” was 7.411 with a p-value of 0.00\* at 5% significant (Table, 4). However, the direct path between mentoring and career success was found to be insignificant with  $t = 1.52$  and  $p = 0.058$ . Since direct relation found to be insignificant, it is interpreted that the obtained model is of full mediation.

**Table 4. Path analysis for median effect**

Path	B	S.D	t-statistics	p values	Inference
EI → CS	0.556	0.065	7.411	0.000*	Significant
Mentoring → CS	0.073	0.064	1.572	0.058	Not Significant
Mentoring → EI	0.660	0.061	10.116	0.000*	Significant

\*p<0.05, EI : Emotional Intelligence, CS : Career Success



Hence, the presence of emotional intelligence in between mentoring and career success has a full or complete mediation between the variables in the obtained model. Consequently, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Hence, the proposed hypothesis is supported and accepted.

**Table 5. Testing of model and PLS output**

Set/model	Independent variable	Mediating variable	Dependent variable	PLS output	Hypothesis results
Structure model	Mentoring	Emotional Intelligence	Career success	R2= 0.367, Q2 = 0.19, f2 = 0.771, 0.21	Supported

Source: Smart PLS 3.0 output

Further, the blindfolding was performed in the model with omission distance of five (table no. 5), which reveals that the predictive relevance (Q2) of the model has a medium predictive relevance from the study (i.e. Q2 = 0.19) and effect size (f2) between Mentoring– Emotional intelligence and Emotional intelligence – career success was 0.771 and 0.27 which is significant and hence hypothesis results are supported.

#### 4. Scope for further studies

The present study attempts to understand the mediating role of Emotional Intelligence between Mentoring and Career Success. Since there was one mediating variable so the study was simple mediation analysis. There are various predictors associated with career success and one can undertake higher level mediation study like parallel mediation, serial mediation, moderating mediation analysis etc. to understand the complex picture of career success.

#### 5. Conclusion

To understand the degree of mediation effect in this empirical analysis, a model was hypothetically examined and attempt has been made to explain it through an illustrative model. Results obtained from the initial analysis i.e. table 3 showed the significance of the direct path between the dependent and independent variables. Further, the significant indirect paths were found in *table 4*. The presence of mediating variables in the between independent and dependent variables affect the direct effect between them and led to the relation insignificant resulting in the full mediation effect of the mediating variable i.e. emotional intelligence. Finally, predictive relevance and effect size of the model was medium and found (R2= 0.367, CV-Redundancy= 0.19, f2= 0.771, 0.21) to be significant i.e. effect of mentoring on career success is explained via Emotional intelligence. Given this, it can be assumed that emotional intelligence has a full mediation and plays a significant role in between mentoring and career success. Hence, it can be concluded that career success can be strengthened and enhanced by the addition of emotional intelligence among mid-level managers.

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